

Title: **WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR MY PASTOR?**
Text: Isaiah 52:7-10
Subject: *The Duties of Churches to their Pastors*
Date: Thursday Evening — November 29, 2007
 Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
 Princeton, New Jersey
Reading: *Ephesians 4:1-16*
Introduction:

What, do you suppose, would be the greatest blessing you could have in this world? — What do you think might be the greatest act of judgment that could fall upon you, the greatest curse God almighty could send upon you in this world? Listen carefully, and I will tell you. I am going to make five statements that I want you to hear and remember.

1. The greatest blessing can ever bestow upon any people in this world is to send them a man to preach the gospel to them.
2. The greatest blessing God can bestow upon any local church is to give them a pastor who faithfully, boldly, and consistently preaches the gospel of Christ to them without compromise, without courting the favor of me, or fearing the frowns of men.
3. The greatest blessing God can bestow upon any town or community in this world is to establish in their midst a gospel church with a gospel preacher, holding forth in their midst the gospel of God's glory and grace in Christ.
4. And the greatest judgment, the greatest curse God almighty can bring upon any people, any church, any town, or any community is to silence the voice of his prophet, to remove his candlestick, to silence his witness, and leave them to themselves, to grope about in darkness until they go to hell.
5. Nothing on this earth is so important, so absolutely needful to you and your family, as the preaching of the gospel.

Several years ago, I read an article in a religious periodical which made this statement: "Preaching is not to be the sum total of the activity, nor even necessarily the most important aspect of the assembly." The article went on to suggest that one of the greatest problems in our churches is that we spend too much time preaching. What nonsense!

Our Lord's last great command is — "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel.*" This was Paul's dying charge to Timothy — "*Preach the Word.*" And preaching was the one business of the great apostle's life. He

wrote, “*Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.*” God calls men, whom he has gifted and qualified for the work, to preach the gospel. And he sends them forth into the world for this one purpose. And he gives but one reason for doing so. — “*It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*”

GOSPEL PREACHING IS VITAL

All who know the gospel of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ appreciate those who preach it; but very few, I fear, understand that the preaching of the gospel is **absolutely vital to their souls**. This is the ascension gift of the exalted Christ to his church (Eph. 4:8-11). Not only is it true that God sends his Word to heal his elect and to deliver us from our deserved destruction (Psa. 107:20), it is also true that **all God’s works of grace in chosen, redeemed sinners are accomplished by the ministry of the gospel**.

If God speaks to a sinner’s heart, if God teaches any man anything, if God reveals anything to any of us, he does it through the instrumentality of gospel preaching. **Is gospel preaching really that important?** Let the Word of God alone decide the issue. The Scriptures plainly tell us that the preaching is absolutely necessary for **faith** in Christ (Rom. 10:17), — for **the new birth** (James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23-25), — for **understanding** in the Word of truth (Acts 8:30-31), — for the **edification** of God’s saints (Eph. 4:8-16).

Without the preaching of the gospel, there is no possibility of salvation, sanctification, spiritual growth, spiritual direction, or spiritual stability. God did not give his church the gift of the ministry for nothing. Gospel preaching is not an optional add-on, but a vital necessity to the worship of God. This ascension gift of Christ is not something a person may choose to avail himself of or despise without consequence. If God’s people could get along without pastors and teachers to guide them in and with the Word of truth, he would not have given them.

There was a time when God did not speak for four hundred years. His last word in the Old Testament was given by the prophet Malachi. After that, God sent no prophet into the earth. No angel was sent from heaven. No vision was granted. No word was spoken from the throne of God to anyone upon the earth. **What was the result?**

WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR MY PASTOR?

Israel had the law and prophets. The Lord had given them revelation after revelation for two thousand years. Throughout their long history, they alone had been given the Word and worship of God. God sent his prophets to Israel in abundance, and to Israel alone. Surely, that would be enough. Having the written Word of God would surely hold the nation in a steady path. Surely, there would be no need for a mere man to lead the nation in the knowledge and worship of God. Surely, they did not need a man to instruct them in the ways of God.

Think again. — After four hundred years of silence, after four hundred years of men and women acting as their own prophets, the worship of Israel had degenerated into utter abomination. Oh, no, they did not turn to the idols of the Gentiles. They did worse. They turned the law and ordinances of God into idolatry! Without the preaching of the gospel you cannot know God, hear from God, worship God, or walk with God.

GOD'S GIFT

In Jeremiah 3:15 God promised his church, *“I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”*

A faithful, God-given pastor, a pastor according to God's own heart, is a man who feeds the flock of God. — He does not fleece the sheep, beat the sheep, use the sheep, or abuse the sheep. He feeds the sheep! His life work is the business of feeding the people of God; and he gives himself to his work ardently.

Those men whom God gives to his church as pastors feed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. — Those who are called of God to feed his people have a God-given knowledge of divine truth and a God-given understanding of the needs of his people in this world, and they feed them accordingly.

In these dark days the church of God has suffered much abuse at the hands of unfaithful, self-seeking, self-serving pastors, who make merchandise of men's souls and handle the Word of God deceitfully. But God promised to give his church pastors who would be faithful to their souls, and he does what he promised. When our Lord Jesus Christ ascended up into heaven as

WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR MY PASTOR?

the Head of his church, one of his ascension gifts to the church was “*pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*” (Eph. 4:11-12). These men are the angels of God to his churches (Rev. 1:16-20). They are heaven-sent messengers of grace and truth.

I am fully confident God has given you such a pastor. I have chosen for my subject tonight a question that I hope each of you are asking, a question I hope you will continue to ask throughout the days of your service together for the glory of God. — “**What can I do for my pastor?**”

BEAUTIFUL FEET

If ever you come to see that the preaching of the gospel is absolutely vital to your soul, vital to your eternity bound sons and daughters, you will understand the meaning of Isaiah’s words in my text tonight — Isaiah 52:7-10.

(Isaiah 52:7-10) “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! (8) Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. (9) Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. (10) The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

Here the prophet of God describes the attitude that ought to prevail in the hearts of God’s saints towards those men who are sent of God to preach the gospel to them.

The picture is of a city in captivity which begins to rejoice as she hears the sound of an army coming across the mountains to deliver her. The church of God’s elect is by nature in captivity, taken captive by Satan, held in the bondage of sin and shut up under the curse of God’s holy law. **God’s servants are an army of men, coming over the mountains, proclaiming deliverance by our great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and they are highly valued by those who know their need of deliverance by**

Christ. Those men and women who have heard and experienced the salvation of God in Christ cherish the men who are sent of God to proclaim deliverance to their hearts. God’s servants are “*watchmen.*”

- They are divinely appointed watchmen over your souls.
- The watchmen all see eye to eye. — They all preach the same gospel.
- They are watchmen by whom the Lord comforts his people, his redeemed, by whom he makes wasted souls fruitful.
- They are watchmen by whom — “*The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*”

Look again at the prophet’s words in verse 7. **By divine inspiration Isaiah speaks as the representative of God’s church:** “*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*” Obviously, these words **do not apply to every man who calls himself a preacher** and claims to come in the name of the Lord. False prophets, preachers of free-will, works religion, are not beautiful or desirable, for they do not bring good news. They are not to be treated with respect, but with contempt. They are not to be received, but shunned. Isaiah tells us plainly who those preachers are who’s feet are beautiful, who’s coming is desirable to the church of God. They are the men who are sent of God to preach the everlasting gospel of his free, sovereign, saving grace in Christ (Rom. 10:15).

They bring “good tidings!” — They bring good tidings from the heart of God to the hearts of needy sinners, declaring that **righteousness is established** and redemption is accomplished for all who believe by the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:4; Heb. 9:12).

They publish “peace!” — God’s servants never tell helpless sinners to make peace with God. How can a traitor, a rebel, a felon make peace with the sovereign he has offended? If peace is made it must be made by the sovereign. God’s servants proclaim that **peace has been made for sinners** by the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-21; Isa. 40:1-2).

(2 Corinthians 5:18-21) “And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses

unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

(Isaiah 40:1-2)"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. (2) Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

They bring "good tidings of good!" — God's preachers do not offer good advice. They proclaim good news. Justice is satisfied! Atonement is made! Redemption is finished! Sin has been put away! God is reconciled! God forgives sin! God accepts sinners! God is merciful to the guilty! God saves graciously! God freely receives sinners as objects of his everlasting love through faith in the blood and righteousness of his dear Son, the sinner's substitute, Jesus Christ! (Rom. 3:19-28).

They publish "salvation!" — Gospel preachers do not tell helpless, depraved, dead sinners what they must do to save themselves. We publish salvation, salvation purposed by God, purchased by God and performed by God! We proclaim to the helplessly lost sons of Adam how that God sovereignly saves his elect for the glory of his grace by blood atonement, imputed righteousness and effectual power (Ps. 65:4; 110:3; Rom. 5:12-21; Eph. 1:3-14; 2:1-10).

They say "unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" — Every man who is sent of God as a messenger of grace to needy sinners proclaims, in clear and unmistakable terms, the glorious, absolute and universal sovereignty of God — in creation (Gen. 1:1), — providence (Rom. 8:28; 11:36) — and grace (Rom. 9:11-23). — "*Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased*" (Ps. 115:3). — "*Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places*" (Ps. 135:6). Every message from every faithful gospel preacher sets forth the glorious sovereignty of God.

Any man who does not preach these things is not sent of God and must not be received, heard, or aided in any way by God's church (2 John 9-11). Any man who does preach these things is to be heard and received by the church

of God and treated as the angel of God among them. He is God's messenger.

Robert Hawker observed, "What glorious tidings of salvation must they be, when the very feet of those who bring them, are accounted by the Lord himself to be beautiful!" Truly, this is indeed good news from a far country to the soul that hears the joyful sound and knows, by heart-felt experience, that God our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ "*reigneth!*" He reigns over all; and now we delight that it is so, and rejoice that he reigns in and over our affections. This is "*joy unspeakable and full of glory.*"

Not only are the feet of God's servants beautiful in the eyes of those who hear the good news of gospel grace from their lips, the Lord Jesus himself holds the feet of his servants, those men he has sent out to publish salvation, in high honor as beautiful, so much so that he stoops to bathe them (John 13:3-5).

(John 13:3-5)"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; (4) He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. (5) After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded."

As I read these words in Isaiah, I cannot help thinking of our blessed Redeemer, he who is the great Watchman over our souls. How beautiful his feet are, when we behold him coming over the mountains of sin, in our nature, and publishing peace in his blood! How beautiful his feet are in our eyes, as we see him on Mount Calvary, with his feet nailed to the cursed tree for us and for our salvation! Truly, our Lord Jesus Christ is the unequalled pattern of everything good, lovely and beautiful!

THINGS YOU CAN DO

But my particular concern tonight is to be of help to this congregation, as you labor together in our Master's kingdom. Because you know the value of your soul, the preciousness of Christ and his blood and the blessedness of the gospel, you cherish that man who has been sent of God to preach the

WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR MY PASTOR?

gospel to you. You have expressed to me your desire to treat him as the messenger of God to your souls, your desire do everything you can for him. I am confident that you are very interested in the answer to this question: — “What should I do for my pastor?” I have searched the Scriptures and found ten answers to that question. Here are ten things revealed in the Word of God which every church and every believer within the church should do for the man who preaches the gospel of Christ to them, labouring for their souls’ eternal good.

1. **Know him** (1 Thess. 5:12)

(1 Thessalonians 5:12)”And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.”

Obviously, this means more than having a bare acquaintance with him. It is unthinkable that a church might have a pastor with whom it is unacquainted. To know your pastor is to **acknowledge him as your pastor**, as the messenger of God to your soul. Every believer should get to know, and show his care for, every faithful pastor, preacher, missionary and evangelist that he can. God’s people need to build strong relationships with God’s servants everywhere. I pastor a local church, and I highly encourage the people of our assembly to write to, visit and get to know every faithful gospel preacher they can. (God’s servants are not jealous or fearful of one another!) But there should be a special relationship between a pastor and the congregation which he serves. **Your pastor is to be acknowledged by you, above all others, as God’s messenger to you. That makes him special to you.**

To know your pastor is to **love him**. The word “know” is often used for “love” in the Scriptures, and every member of the church should have a distinct love for the man who is the instrument of God to minister to the needs of his people. **The man who devotes his life to securing your soul’s comfort, edification and strength is worthy of your love.**

To know your pastor is to **hold him in respect**. Paul admonished the Philippians to hold their pastor in reputation, to honor him (Phil. 2:29). God’s people are to give honor to those men who are God’s ambassadors. They are to be treated as God’s ambassadors (Luke 10:16).

To know your pastor is to **show concern for his comfort, welfare, safety and protection.** David used the word “know” in this way (Ps. 142:4).

(Psalms 142:4) “I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.”

Churches should be greatly concerned for the safety and welfare of their pastors in the discharge of their responsibilities. Pray for your pastor’s spiritual safety and well-being. Protect his name and reputation from the slanderous gossip of evil men, and always endeavour to encourage him in his work.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:12 Paul gives three reasons why you should make it your business to know your pastor.

1st. **He labors among you.** — God has given you a faithful pastor, a man who labors for your soul. He fills his hours with diligent work, studying hard, praying earnestly, preaching fervently. He corresponds with needy people. He visits the sick. He writes articles, tracts, etc. The vast majority of his work is unseen by those for whom it is done. Let it never be unappreciated. A faithful pastor is a laboring pastor.

2nd. **He is over you by divine appointment.** God has placed your pastor over you as your spiritual guide and ruler in his kingdom. If you would follow his faith, you need to know him.

3rd. **He admonishes you.** Your pastor continually reminds you, in public and in private, of things which you need to know. He reminds you of your past **experiences of grace** (Isa. 50:1-2). He faithfully preaches and instructs you in the **doctrine of the gospel** (1 Cor. 1:26-31; Rom. 8:28-39). He reminds you of your **privileges and responsibilities** in this world (Eph. 4:17-5:2). He points out **the dangers** you face (Matt. 13:18-23). Finally, he ever reminds you of the blessed, soul-cheering **promises of God** in Christ (Isa. 43:1-5; 2 Cor. 1:20).

2. **Esteem him very highly** (1 Thess. 5:13)

(1 Thessalonians 5:13) “And to esteem them very highly in love for

their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.”

Every believer should esteem his pastor very highly. The word is “superabundantly”, over and above the esteem given to other brothers and sisters in Christ. This is not because he possesses any personal superiority; he does not. He, like you, is “only a sinner saved by grace”. But he is to be esteemed superabundantly **for his work's sake**. What does this mean?

You are to **entertain the highest possible opinions of your pastor** at all times. Hold him up in your own mind. Highly esteem his gifts and abilities as a preacher, and his grace and faithfulness as a believer. If you have a low opinion of a man, it is not likely that he will be of much use to your soul. His words will carry no weight with you.

Always **speak honorably of your pastor**. Believers should always speak well of one another, but this is especially true regarding their pastors. If you do not speak well of your pastor, it is not likely that anyone who knows you will have any respect for him. At home, among the members of your family, at work, in the midst of your co-workers and in the community, always give God's servant the highest possible esteem in your speech.

Speak respectfully to your pastor as God's messenger to you. The use of titles and names of distinction to separate and elevate God's servants above his people is to be deplored. Our Lord plainly forbids it (Matt. 23:7-9). We should address no man as “Reverend”, “Father”, or “Doctor!” But God's servants should be spoken to in respectful terms. Neither the pastor's office nor his work should be made the object of a joke or of ridicule. **Like a father in his household, the pastor is to be treated and spoken to with the respect that becomes his high and holy office in the church.**

This superabundant esteem must be **the esteem of sincere love** for the pastor's work's sake. It is **not a forced reverence for an office**. It is to be **a heartfelt esteem flowing from your realization of the burden, labor and value of the work of the gospel, to which God's servant faithfully gives himself**. That man deserves your highest, most loving esteem who spends his life in ardent labor for the gospel, who has been the instrument used of God for your salvation, who ministers to the comfort of your soul and is used of God for your spiritual growth and edification in the knowledge of Christ.

3. **Remember him** (Heb. 13:7)

(Hebrews 13:7) "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."

Ever keep your pastor close to your heart in fond remembrance. **Remember him at the throne of grace** when you pray, but particularly, the admonition here is to **remember his messages and the doctrine he preaches**. Listen carefully to what he preaches. **Take notes** to aid your memory. **Discuss his sermons** at home, among your brethren, and **store up his doctrine** in your mind, so that you may apply it to yourself as you seek to live in this world for the glory of God. As you read the Word of God in your private worship, if you remember what has been preached to you the Word will open before you and be blessed of God to your heart.

Here are **two reasons** for remembering your pastor, particularly, for remembering his messages. **First, he has the rule of the church**. His word is to be remembered, because God has made him your spiritual guide in this world, and, **second, he speaks to you the Word of God**. He does not come in his own name, teaching his own opinions, or the philosophies of men. **Your pastor comes to you with God's message, armed with God's authority, and what he says you are responsible to hear, remember and obey**. He preaches to you the Word of God.

4. **Follow him** (Heb. 13:7)

Believers and churches are to follow their pastors. Your pastor is your leader and guide in the kingdom of God. You are to follow **his example of faith and faithfulness**. Follow **the pure gospel doctrine that he preaches** to you. It leads to life everlasting. Follow his **example of devotion** to Christ. Your pastor is a man of resolute, heart devotion to Christ, his church, his gospel and his glory. He will guide you by his own example of consecration to Christ. Follow his example of faithfulness. The one thing God requires of his servants is faithfulness, and if you would be serviceable to the cause of Christ in your own sphere of responsibility, you will learn how by following your pastor's example.

This is not blind allegiance to a man. This is obedience to Christ. If you would follow Christ, you must follow the man he has made your guide,

considering the end of his conversation, — “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever*” (Heb. 13:8). Christ is the object of our faith, the pattern of our faith and the end of our faith. Follow your pastor in the life of faith, as he presses towards the mark, Christ Jesus.

5. **Obey him** (Heb. 13:17)

(Hebrews 13:17) “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.”

Obedience is not servitude, but it does mean submission. God’s people are expected and required to obey their pastors. **In spiritual, doctrinal matters, in all things regarding the affairs and work of the church, the pastor is to be obeyed.** If he is not worthy of obedience, he should not be the pastor. Elders are to serve the church in obedience to the pastor. Deacons are to serve the church in obedience to the pastor. Teachers are to serve the church in obedience to the pastor. Every member of the congregation is to serve the church in obedience to the pastor. **The pastor is the captain of the ship. All the crew must serve in obedience to him.**

Obey his message, the gospel of the grace of God. Hear it. Receive it. Love it, and order your life by it.

Obey his direction in the worship of Christ. Every aspect of the worship and work of the church should be carried out in accordance with the pastor’s instruction. The order of the services, the selection of music, the administration of the ordinances and the activities of the church are to be performed in the way required by the pastor, as he is guided by the Word of God. There is no need for committees and societies within the church body. The pastor’s voice, as he seeks the will and glory of God, is to be obeyed in all things.

Obey his admonitions and reproofs. No pastor is infallible. He will often err. But if he is a faithful man, his errors will be errors of judgment, not errors of principle. You can safely follow such a man and obey him. His admonitions and reproofs are not personal attacks, or fits of passion. They are thoughtful, needful, God-given warnings and directions for your soul’s eternal good.

6. **Submit to him** (Heb. 13:17)

The admonition here is to submit yourself to the Spirit-led, faithful care of your pastor. Do what he tells you to do, even if you do not really understand why. **That may seem a little too much to expect, but a little consideration will show that it is not.**

Thirty-two years ago, I was dying with cancer. The doctors wanted to treat my disease by injecting me with a series of drugs and cobalt treatments. The drugs and the treatments could prove deadly themselves, if they were not properly administered. I do not understand how they work, but, being confident of my physicians' abilities, I submitted myself to them and did what they told me to do, because I knew that they knew better than I did what was needed.

You are to submit to your pastor in just that way. **If he is a faithful man, God's servant, he probably knows better than you what is best for your soul, the cause of Christ, the welfare of the church and the furtherance of the gospel.** He will not wilfully mislead you, and he will not abuse you, or take advantage of you.

Your pastor's concern is for the welfare of your soul. He watches for your soul as one who must give account, both to his own conscience and at the judgment bar of God. Every faithful pastor exercises great care and diligence as he watches over God's people, for he desires to give account of his hearers with joy and not with grief. If on the Day of Judgment God's servant gives account of you with grief, as one who has heard but refused to obey the gospel, you will suffer the wrath of God for your disobedience (Deut. 17:11-12).

7. **Pray for him** (Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 3:1)

(Ephesians 6:19)"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel."

(Colossians 4:3)"Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."

(2 Thessalonians 3:1) "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you."

Let every child of God pray continually for all who faithfully preach the gospel of Christ, but every believer should especially pray for his own pastor. **C. H. Spurgeon was once asked**, "To what do you attribute the phenomenal success of your ministry?" Without a moment's hesitation, he replied, "My people pray for me." Let all who believe follow their example. Pray for your pastor. **As he seeks a message** for your soul in his private study and preparation for the pulpit, pray for him. **As he preaches** the gospel to you, pray for him. Pray, too, for your pastor **with regard to his life** and conduct in this world. He is a man like you, weak, frail, sinful and tempted of the devil. Pray for **his preservation** from the evil one. Pray that God will ever give him grace to seek neither to avoid the frowns of men, nor to crave the favour of men. **Call upon God to preserve him in grace, in usefulness and in health and strength, and pray for your pastor's constant and increasing usefulness in the cause of Christ.**

8. **Provide for him** (1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 9:7-14)

Carefully read these texts of Scripture. Then read them again and ask the Spirit of God to apply them to your own heart.

(1 Timothy 5:17-18) "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. (18) For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward."

(Galatians 6:6) "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."

(1 Corinthians 9:7-14) "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? (8) Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? (9) For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for

oxen? (10) Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. (11) If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? (12) If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are not we* rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. (13) Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? (14) Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”

It is a shame and reproach upon any congregation which is able to care for its pastor, if the pastor has to provide for any of his own, or his family’s earthly, material needs. And it is the congregation itself which suffers when the pastor has to support himself.

Every local church should generously supply every need of the pastor and his family, so that he may be able to give himself wholly to prayer, study and preaching. A faithful man will make whatever sacrifices and adjustments are necessary to live within his means, and he will not take advantage of the generosity of God’s people. But every church, and every member of the church, should do everything within its ability to see to it that God’s servant lacks nothing.

9. **Adhere to him** (2 Tim. 1:15-18)

(2 Timothy 1:15-18)”This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. (16) **The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:** (17) But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*. (18) The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and **in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.**”

In every state, condition and circumstance, adhere to your pastor. He needs you. — In difficulty, support him. — When he is discouraged, encourage him. — When he is engaged in trials, sympathize with him. — When he is

opposed, stand by him. — When men speak evil of him, defend him. — In all his labour for Christ, your soul and the gospel of the grace of God, do whatever you can to assist him, for the glory of God.

10. **Treat him as the minister of Christ** (1 Cor. 4:1-2)

(1 Corinthians 4:1-2) "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. (2) Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

Bro. Curtis has been made your minister for Christ's sake by the will of God. He is the steward of the mysteries of God. God has made him the servant in his house who is entrusted with the treasury of the house, the gospel of the grace of God. And, being God's servant, will be faithful to your soul in all things.

We have seen, from the Word of God, ten things which the believer should be doing for his pastor. Many will say, "No man deserves to be treated so royally," and, of course, they are right. No man deserves to have such treatment from his peers. But **if God's servants are to be effective in, and give themselves, to the work of the gospel, they must have the unwavering help, support and faithfulness of God's people behind them.** Remember also that your pastor is God's ambassador to your soul; and the Lord regards that which is done to his ambassadors, be it good or bad, as having been done to him (Luke 10:16).

Churches sometimes wonder why they cannot keep a pastor more than a few years. There may be many reasons. But this one thing I have observed, after a good many years of pastoral experience: — Very few pastors would even consider the possibility of leaving any church which did for them the things we have seen tonight in the Word of God. Personally, I have never known a pastor to leave such a congregation. If you would labor together for the glory of Christ, for the furtherance of the gospel, and be at peace among yourselves, heed what you have heard this night from the Book of God.

(1 Thessalonians 5:12-13) "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; (13) And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves."

(Isaiah 52:7) "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

(Isaiah 52:9) "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem."

Amen.