

News and Current Events :: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide?**Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide? - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/12/12 14:58**

In another church tragedy, Pastor Isaac Hunter—the son of the spiritual adviser to President Obama—has reportedly taken his own life. Hunter's death is making national headlines because of his megachurch father Pastor Joel Hunter's influence on the White House, his marriage troubles and an undated suicide note found last year, but his death is far from the only pastoral suicide in recent months.

Just days ago, a pastor who was grieving his dead wife reportedly shot himself in front of his mother and son, expressing that he was hearing his dead spouse's voice and footsteps. Pastor Ed Montgomery and his late wife, prophetess Jackie Montgomery, served at the Full Gospel Assemblies International church in Hazel Crest, Ill.

In November, a Georgia pastor killed himself in between Sunday services. Larrinecia Sims Parker, wife of the Rev. Teddy Parker Jr., found the pastor in the driveway of their home ...

read more: <http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/watchman-on-the-wall/42063-why-are-so-many-pastors-committing-suicide>

Re: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide? - posted by Solomon101, on: 2013/12/12 17:04

I read this article a couple days ago. It does put a light on a very real problem.

From the article -

Quote:
-----There is no lack of statistics about pastors and depression, burnout, health, low pay, spirituality, relationships and longevity—and none of them are good. According to the Schaeffer Institute, 70 percent of pastors constantly fight depression, and 71 percent are burned out. Meanwhile, 72 percent of pastors say they only study the Bible when they are preparing for sermons; 80 percent believe pastoral ministry has negatively affected their families; and 70 percent say they don't have a close friend.

The Schaeffer Institute also reports that 80 percent of seminary and Bible school graduates will leave the ministry within five years.

This all from folks that for the most part love God and only wanted to fulfill His plan in their lives to spread the Gospel and deliver those in bondage.

There are very practical and real reasons for those statistics.

Several of the Biblical heroes and leaders felt exactly the same way and contemplated the suicide route to stop the pain. Elijah is one such example many may be familiar with.

I counsel pastors and church leaders all the time. These stats are true. You will find however that it is rarely attacks from the outside that lead to these dark depressions. It is the attacks, back stabbings, and blood lettings committed by those who claim to be followers of Christ.

A man or woman pours their life out for a community, sacrifices deeply, and then the very people they have sacrificed for crucify them with their words and actions. It is inevitably because of some perceived slight or tiny matter that no one in their right mind would have taken offense to. I have seen it even on this very forum many times.

Get some good commentaries to work with and read them along with 2 Timothy. By the time 2 Timothy was written Timothy had called it quits, he was done, he had packed it in, and was no longer going to suffer for those who betrayed him as soon as a little heat got on the church.

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That is exactly why quality guys are throwing in the towel today ... it isn't lack of dedication to God ... it isn't a lack of passion or calling from God ... it is the devouring tongues and deeds of those who claim to be followers of Christ but in reality are just tools spreading pain to those actually sacrificing themselves for the Gospel.

Timothy knew this well ... as did Elijah ... and Moses... and many ministers that I have sat and counseled with.

May God have mercy on those who cause such destruction to His servants attempting to fulfill the call on their lives ... they will need it.

Re: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide?, on: 2013/12/12 17:08

Every incidence is probably unique and so a broad brush cannot be drawn as if they are all suffering from the same problem.

But I will mention a few things I have observed:

Pastors are not insulated from the trials that non-pastors also go through and in many cases have additional stress and pressures on them that are unnatural.

They are tempted just like anyone else, and many times in ways that non-pastors are not tempted. They have great influence over money and people and people look to them in unnatural ways (putting them on a pedestal) thinking that they have the answers to all their woes.

Many of them are in impossible positions that I would not wish on anyone. They have a lot of unnatural pressure on them that God does not put on them. Pressure from keeping up a certain reputation for their ministry, marriage, children, and how they perform as a Pastor. So many things that one man has to keep under his control and what happens when they all begin to unravel? It would be so much better for him and his wife and children if he was just a regular brother in a fellowship and did not think that he had to shoulder everything. It puts pressure on the wife and kids, too. Not just the Pastor. There is a good book (can't recall it right now) that is similar to your question about Pastors but it talks more about their children. "Why Pastor's Kids Leave the Faith" or something like that. I did not even mention how many Pastors always have in the back of their mind that they could be fired if they don't perform up to par.

Then you have the congregation and many who may not like the Pastor and his way of doing things and they sow hatred toward him. It is difficult for them not to take those things home where it will affect the whole family.

I find the modern Ecclesiastical system very problematic for individual relationships not the least of which is the Pastor and his family.

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2013/12/12 19:56

Just-in said, "They have a lot of unnatural pressure on them that God does not put on them."

It's very grievous to read of these tragedies. Why are they happening? I have a friend who, although not a pastor, once attended one of David Wilkerson's pastors conferences. They addressed all these issues-- pastor burnout, etc. It was a ll very good, my friend said, adding sadly that they didn't address the one issue that is the most serious problem of all. Which is that it was never God's intention in the first place that the whole weight and responsibility of a church be on the shoulders of a single pastor.

It's simply not the order of the church as revealed in the New Testament that a congregation be headed up by one man.

Re: , on: 2013/12/12 20:49

Brother AD writes.....

"It's simply not the order of the church as revealed in the New Testament that a congregation be headed up by one man."
"

This is exactly right and the root of the problem.....bro Frank

Re: , on: 2013/12/12 20:52

If any member of our physical body shouldered all the weight and responsibility of most of the bodily functions, it would be destroyed under the load. In fact, there is no member that can even function like that. But, this is what is happening to these men, today.

When a hand tries to be a head, it will become frustrated and lose hope. There is no member of the Body that can do the work of the Head except Christ.

Re: , on: 2013/12/12 21:15

But to go further, the entire religious world is one big, giant BURNOUT. Pastors that are "burning out", are also causing their staff members to burnout and the Pastor and Staff together are burning out their congregation. It is one constant, driven, get results, competitive religious system that has no mercy on people. It is a worldly system that has been created to be fed. It constantly cries out, "Feed me, Feed me".

And one of the roots of this madness, is money. That is correct. MAMMON. If you disagree with that, then just take away the money and see who shows up to fellowship with one another. Think about what would cease to exist without the money and then think about what enables the Church in persecuted countries to continue on.

When your motivations become how you can make money with the gifting and ministry that God has given you, you are beginning to feed the "monster" and the monster will end up devouring you.

Re: , on: 2013/12/12 23:49

Amen just-inbro Frank

Re: , on: 2013/12/12 23:58

Blessings to you, bro Frank. The Lord is good...very good.

Re: Pastors? - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/12/13 0:29

I have noticed that the people who post here never talk about the churches they are pastoring!

Anybody want to admit that they are a pastor?

And I certainly agree with the teaching of the New Testament that churches should be run by a group of (men) who are all able to teach, pray, support one another, discern spirits, administer the gifts present in the local body.

Back in the eighties, I had become involved with a flash start up church that had come together to hear an eloquent young pastor who had been dismissed by his Lutheran denomination when he professed a pentecostal experience. The church grew quickly, and we all were dazzled and amazed as the congregation outgrew rented venues every couple of weeks.

Through a wierd vote, about a dozen of us were asked to form an elder board to oversee the operation. We quickly all became good friends, and looked forward to our weekly meetings where we laughed and prayed and tried to figure out where we would meet the next week to handle the crowds.

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Meanwhile, beloved pastor went down in sexual flames shortly after our group came together. We were now responsible for the congregation and the entire service ourselves.

While none of us had the speaking skill of the original pastor, by sharing the load we kept it going quite well for some time. We all marvelled at how much fun church was, and for that short time we were truly a New Testament church!

Long story, but we ended up calling a pastor who was a name it and claim it guy, and the church eventually went sour over that. In the meantime, I had moved to California and was not there when it ended.

But I was left with a vision of what successful church can look like, where the primary currency is love among Godly brethren.

I would do that again...

And for the record, I am not a pastor!

Re: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide? - posted by Lysa (), on: 2013/12/13 6:25

I agree with all the answers but one other reason is the Word says to "pray for those in authority over" period and this has been forgotten. Pastors are over us in the spiritual realm which is the most dangerous realm.

And another reason (I believe, feel free to disagree!), is since it's the most dangerous realm, there are spirits of depression and other spirits that attach themselves and if you deny this then where is your help? We are going to have to begin to believe that the enemy hates us and cast out accordingly, in Jesus's name!

God bless,
Lisa

Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2013/12/13 7:41

Having gone through burnout and thankfully come out the other end I can say it boils down to two things.

Knowing the Love of the Saviour at a personal and intimate level and opening up your life to others whom God has placed around you.

In reading Paul's letters I am struck by his deep love that he had for the churches he pastored and their deep love for him.

Paul knew God loved him and he also knew that those around him loved him.

Isolation in ministry is the worst place to be, loving relationships with people who really love you and care for your well being is, outside of Christ's love us, the most important thing for any believer really.

Biblical Pastors, on: 2013/12/13 8:25

It is difficult to get a man to understand something if his livelihood depends upon his not understanding it.
— Upton Sinclair

The word "pastor" is not in the New Testament very often. The word pastor simply means "shepherd". What does the Bible mean when it uses the word pastor? Although the word pastor is in the Bible a few times

The modern role and function of a pastor is found nowhere in scripture.

Our plague is that when we read a passage or see something in the Bible, we so often interpret it based on our prior experience or based on what we've already been taught. Based on prior experience, when we see the word pastor in the

The Bible, it floods our mind with our idea of what a pastor is – which is based on what we’ve seen, what we’ve heard, and what we’ve been taught a pastor already is.

If you had lived during the first century and then read the word “pastor” in a letter written to the church, you would have a much different idea come to mind.

What’s the big deal and why is this an issue?

Our entire Christian culture has largely fit around this erroneous idea of this one man and his unscriptural role. Entire groups and churches are built around the pastor. People join churches based on who the pastor is. The entire direction, vision, and focus of a group is often based on the pastor. While the whole time, his role, function, and very existence are not even Biblical.

We’ve been taught:

If you don’t have a pastor you are not under authority.

If you don’t have a pastor you don’t have spiritual covering.

If you don’t have a pastor, you aren’t being fed.

These are very common beliefs that stem from a basic error.

1 Samuel 10:19 – “But you have today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said, ‘No, but set a king over us.’”

Just like the children of Israel cried out for a king, it is within the base, carnal nature of people to want a physical king. What does a king provide? A king provides security. A king provides a feeling that someone is taking care of things and that someone is making decisions that need to be made.

The Catholics have their “fathers,” the Protestants have their “pastors.” People will always want someone else to take the responsibility off their shoulders. And we will even pay someone to do it. We want a specialist to take care of the role of leadership.

Men are responsible for leading the church. Not a man.

Our western culture has forced the church into that of a typical American, corporate structure. The modern day pastor has become the CEO of an organization, with the deacons acting as the board of directors. We have reduced true shepherding to that of hiring a paid professional to stand up and make a speech once a week.

Biblically, what is the role and function of a real pastor?

Remember, the word pastor literally means “shepherd.” So, what should true shepherding be? What should true shepherding look like?

A shepherd feeds sheep. A shepherd cares for sheep. A shepherd watches sheep. To be a pastor is to be a shepherd. To do the work of shepherding is to love others up close. To do the work of a shepherd is to speak into the lives of others. To shepherd is to watch over the lives of others. To shepherd is to care for the well being of others, (Lk.2:8, Heb. 13:17).

The Greek word for shepherd is *poimaino* {poy-mah-ee-no} which means to feed, to keep, to tend, to care for, or to shepherd.

It does not mean that a shepherd is the final authority for a group of people. Or even the final authority for one person. Only scripture has the final authority. In fact, the bible says that “the head of every man is Christ.” It does not say that the “head of every man is his pastor.”

Shepherding is to be Plural

1 Peter 5:1-4 – “Therefore, I exhort the elders (plural) among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet a

s lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Notice that in the passage Peter writes it to elders (plural) that are among you. Peter told the older brothers to do the shepherding. From Peter's perspective, there are many among us who will be doing the work or feeding the flock! Peter is simply telling the elders to care for the younger members.

In a healthy group of Christians, we should see many people doing shepherding.

Jesus was a shepherd. He is the chief shepherd. Couldn't we look at His example and see how to properly pastor others? While on the earth, and as a man, Jesus Himself actively shepherded twelve men. He spoke into their lives. As a man, He lived close enough with them to see their lives and address them. If Jesus shepherded twelve, why do we think that one man among us can adequately shepherd five hundred people?

Maybe a man among us can shepherd one hundred people?

No.

Well then maybe fifty?

Nope. Impossible.

If Jesus had twelve, we would be doing very well to adequately shepherd just a few. Sure, a man can stand up and give a teaching week after week to 500 or 1000 people. But he can not adequately shepherd them. How should shepherding really occur?

Like this:

As you are meeting with the Church, living life together, and loving the Lord together, you may find the desire to:

- To be interested in the well being of another saint or even a few.
- To become genuinely interested and concerned for a few people's growth and life in God.
- To regularly pray for them, look at their lives, and consider areas of growth that may be needed.
- You will probably pull these few people aside that God has put on your heart to spend quality time with them, provide instruction, encouragement, and love them by speaking into their lives on a regular basis.

Someone who is doing shepherding does not necessarily have the gift of teaching, although he should be able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). You can carry someone in prayer, speak into their life, and care for their growth in an active participatory manner, without having the gift of teaching.

The church has often called "pastors", those who only have a gift for teaching. Yet often these men have little concern or time for others on a one on one basis.

A shepherd can often care for and be concerned with the growth of a larger group. He may even stand up and teach on occasion to the group as to what the Lord may be saying for growth or issues of correction or vision, but this is in no way a weekly thing that you would be paid for. It may be for three nights in a row. It may be once every month or two. It may be a one time thing. But to stand up and deliver a teaching or a message to a group would be on an "as needed basis". To be paid for doing a weekly teaching is ridiculous.

Keep in mind that in the body, someone doing shepherding is a sheep themselves. They are not to be considered in a different class or "above" anyone else. It is just a function they are performing, like teaching or prophesying.

Someone that is doing the work of a shepherd will probably be older, but not necessarily. Notice that Peter seems to make synonymous the function of shepherding with exercising oversight and being an elder in 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

We Have Severely Perverted the Gift and Role of a Pastor

In the church today, we have severely changed the role of a pastor and what shepherding is all about. We've made men hirelings. When you pay a man a salary for giving a speech once or twice a week, and call it shepherding, it does all sorts of terrible things.

First of all when you pay a man a salary, it tempts him. What if he doesn't perform? What if he is not inspired one week? What if he is dry in his heart and life and needs prayer and for someone else to take the ball? What if he needs to stay home Sunday morning because he hasn't had much family time? He can't. His livelihood is on the line. He

€™s getting paid for it! It becomes a job. He must perform.

The modern day pastor has become the planner of events, one who delegates, a counselor, a troubleshooter, and an organizer of committees. He is like the president of a business. He becomes spread so thin with his time and emotional energy that he gets burned out and often loses his inspiration. This man is obligated to fill his role or he will be fired and will lose his pay. Lord, forgive us.

He also has to maintain somewhat of an illusion of not having problems. He can confess some things to a certain level, and probably does to maintain some perception of humility, but if he were ever to be really gut-level honest with anyone, it would scare the congregation and cause mass panic. Therefore, he becomes cheated of true body life.

Usually, the pastor is the loneliest man in the fellowship.

The modern day pastor's family also suffers. His children are often rebellious, because they are the product of a failed system. The family is sacrificed because the pastor often doesn't have time for them. But even worse is the hypocrisy. Again, because he's the pastor, he and his family have to maintain an illusion, a veneer of righteousness, when they really are not. At home, all sorts of stuff goes on, just like in any family. But around the church members the act is turned on. This puts emotional pressure on the family and a feeling of being false. This is very damaging and often fosters rebellion in the children. Or, it produces a "celebrity complex" in the entire family. Basically, everyone feels pressure to be something they are not.

Pastors Hinder Our Growth

In 1 Cor. 14:26 we read, "What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification."

The modern day pastor contributes to stunting the growth of the church. His role on Sunday morning doesn't allow us to hear from the rest of the body in the general assembly. This limits our experience of what the Lord would want to say through the other members.

But worse than that, the pastor's role on Sunday causes others to sit passively in the pew as observers and not as participants. When we are participants, we grow. We study, we learn, we prepare. There is no need for this if you have a pastor running the show.

As a member of the modern day church, you are allowed to show up and hide if you want to. You can be needy and desperate in your heart on Sunday morning and nobody would even know it. You go to the church meeting, listen to the sermon, stand up, sit down, stand up, sit down, toss money in the plate, go home, and nobody really knows anybody.

Nor does the pastor really know anybody! How can the pastor really bring an effective message to address the needs of the people, when he is not actively involved with the daily lives of most people in the group?

Many people Sunday after Sunday are dying inside, hurting and alone, just sitting on the pew. They come with hope in their hearts that someone will notice and again they leave disappointed. This will happen this coming Sunday in countless gatherings all across the country. But, we all sure like "going to church". Or do we really?

On Sunday morning, you can be in a bad place in your heart and know one will know it. You can be full of the Spirit and no one will know it. Sometimes, the best time on Sunday is usually the 10 minutes before and after the sermon, when you get to visit and connect with others.

We should never go to a church meeting and leave unchanged. Every time we get together we should leave filled, listened to, prayed for, and even more connected with Jesus and others!

Since I've become a Christian, I've known about 4 real pastors.

Sure, I've known many men who have the title of "pastor". They give weekly teachings - but they don't do true shepherding whatsoever. Often these are quality men, but their real gifting is more in things like administration, teaching, or music. Some of them have a strong gift of "helps", but they have been misidentified as being "pastors".

Just because a man has started a fellowship or was an original founder, doesn't make him a pastor either. Just because a man is eager, knows the word of God, can teach, attends seminary, or has leadership abilities none of these things cause him to have the biblical gift of a true pastor. Please don't miss my heart. I do not intend to speak down to or degrade these men at all, but in most cases shepherding is just not their gift.

Most of the so called pastors I've known, know nothing of hospitality, which disqualifies them from being in leadership (refer to chapter on hospitality). In addition, most of the so-called pastors I've known will never ask anyone about the condition of their heart or how they are doing in their faith. A lot of these men are pretty self-focused (but they would never think they are). And most of them have no idea of what the scripture means when it says that "Jesus, seeing the multitudes felt compassion." It takes a pastoral gift from God to regularly and in daily life see others with compassion, and then seek them out to spend time with them.

Again, most so called "pastors" are usually good men, but most of the time, they are not pastors at all. Usually, if they do spend time with you, it is either to protect the organization they've built or grow it in order to add to its numbers.

Only the true gift of a shepherd will be genuinely interested in you and who you are, and on a continual basis.

Spiritual Authority

There is a tremendous difference in spiritual authority and authority that is given a man because everyone agrees on his authority. Spiritual authority comes from the Spirit and from the Word of God. You are just a pastor, because of your heart and the gift of God in you. It cannot be learned from seminary, and you don't receive it automatically because you started a church.

We have an extremely damaging system of authority in the church today. It hinders people who have gifts from God and true authority from the Spirit. The only gifts of leadership that are recognized are those on staff. In other words, if you are not on staff, then you don't have as much authority, if any, as the ones who are on staff. We should be able to publicly recognize spiritual gifted people among us, without it being a paid staff position.

The problem is that there are many people in traditional groups who are gifted, who have tremendous weight, spiritual authority, and leadership authority who go unrecognized and unnoticed because they are not staff members. This hinders the growth of the church, promotes frustration, and ultimately passivity in the group. Many times, the only outlet for these gifted people to express the gifts that are in them is to go start another church, therefore establishing themselves in a leadership position. If we would publicly recognize those with leadership gifts and authority among us, it would vastly cut down on the number of divisions in each city.

Pastors Can Have Severe Identity Problems

There is usually a consistent identity problem in most pastors or men in leadership. An identity problem affects how you view yourself. Usually from the ones who attend seminary, they think of themselves as pastors. This is a problem. They don't see themselves as just another brother, but inside of themselves, they are in a different class than the rest of the sheep. It's part of the clergy/laity separation which is false. It's how they've been trained to think of themselves.

Part of this identity problem is that the church is their baby. Subtly, they forget that the church belongs to Jesus, not to men and that He is the one who is building it. Anything that threatens the organization they have built will usually solicit extreme emotional reactions in these brothers. This identity problem is very hard to shake and they are usually very reluctant to become just brothers, yet still function in their gifts. All they've believed, all they were trained for, all they've built, their credentials, their place in society, their entire identity would come crashing down. Not to mention, their income.

Actually, the men I have seen let go of their pastor identity are very relieved once they do so, and they begin to thrive more than ever in body life. They also begin to function much more effectively in their gifts and functions.

So, What Should A Pastor Do?

Simple answer: Quit.

In their hearts before the Lord and with the group they are with, the "pastors" need to resign. They need to find work, and they need to become just brothers in the church. They should not break fellowship or stop meeting with the group they are with. But if they truly have a gift of shepherding they can still do it - but from freedom, without money being involved, without expectations, without all the trappings; and therefore do a much better job. Pastors need to let go of their reigns and truly encourage other brothers to start bringing weekly messages and teachings.

A "pastor" needs to spend more time with his family and "decrease" in the fellowship he is in. He needs to become more like a quiet observer for a very long period of time in the meetings. He should still continue to love people, but spend more one on one time with others and show more hospitality to individuals and to families.

Taken from <http://homechurchhelp.com/biblical-pastors>

Re: - posted by NanaB, on: 2013/12/13 10:00

Rev.2:6 But this you have, that you hate the work of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Nikao means means "conquer" or "above others." Laos means "common people," "secular people" or "laity." So Nicolait means to conquer the common people or to climb above the laity. In other words the clergy-laity system to which we have all grown up in. Nicolaitans refers to a group of people who esteem themselves higher than the common people. This is the system of priests who are above the laity and who attend to the spiritual affairs.

But IN THE CHURCH ALL THE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE PRIESTS. 1 Peter 2 and Revelation 5 tell us clearly that all who are bought with the blood are priests. ----quotes from The Orthodoxy of the Church by Watchman Nee

Re: , on: 2013/12/13 10:45

The Great Shepherd lives within each Believer and we are all part of the "priesthood of believers".

As implied in the article I posted, we should all be shepherding one another. This manifests as we watch after one another, pray for one another, are concerned for one another, serve and help one another and teach one another as we have been taught by the Lord.

All the members of our physical bodies are a team and minister (help, serve, tend to) one another. In the same manner, there is not one main member in the Lord's Body, but as the Head, He is instructing all of His many members to minister (shepherd) one another.

Today's Christian institutions are anomalies and badly deformed "bodies". Many are not healthy because sustenance is flowing down from a man and not the Lord and the man is being dried up and burned out. The man cannot sustain any member of the Body, let alone himself.

No one is over anyone, except the Lord. We come alongside one another as His example was to the twelve. And that is also His continuing ministry by the Paraclete (Holy Spirit). He still comes alongside us as a Shepherd comes alongside His sheep and does not Lord over us or whip us. In authority, of course he is over us as the Head is always over the Body. And there are elder men in fellowships that have organically grown into significant roles of shepherdship by the consistent manifestation of their conduct and life amongst the saints.

But, everyone who has the Great Shepherd living in them, is to some degree a shepherd to their fellow brother and sister. My right hand will tend to my left hand when my left hand is injured and my head will instruct my right hand to do so. My head will also instruct my mouth to cry out for help or my legs to run for help. They all work together as a team. If my legs have learned passivity and have learned that the head will take care of everything without the help of any members, then the head will shrivel up and die and that is what is happening to pastors, today. They have communicated passivity to their members and in turn, they are weakened by that. Simply because, it is not God's order for the way they are doing "church" or conducting the ministry that God gave them. They are to take their place in the body alongside other members and not over members. We already have a Head.

Re: - posted by noone (), on: 2013/12/13 10:49

Chip Brogden is a perfect example of this. He was a pastor then he started trying to help pastors with burnout and all the problems that go along with being a pastor, but he realized that the true problem was the system itself and he stepped down and left the organized "church" system. He has a wonderful testimony and lots of good writings.

We can't reform something that God never built in the first place. We have tried to compromise and make minor adjustments here and there within the "church" but in all reality the Glory of God will never be brought forth and poured into an old wineskin...just won't happen. Unless we repent, consider our ways and only build according to God's plan the "church" system will only worsen. And I don't mean build a building or a ministry or man's ideas...

Re: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide? - posted by jstrang (), on: 2013/12/13 12:05

Could it be because so many pastors are false converts? Not pointing fingers or judging, but asking the question. Below are statistics that might be interesting for some of you.

Blessings,
bro jeremy

Here is a report of a survey of 10,000 Protestant ministers conducted by Sociologist Jeffrey Hadden; 7,441 responded to the questions. Here are the horrifying statistics. Read them, then wonder why God is grieved with our spiritual life. (I am indebted to Christ for the Nations, May 1982, for this information.)

Bible inspired Word of God?

82% of Methodists said No

81% of Presbyterians said No

89% of Episcopalians said No

57% of American Lutherans said No

Jesus the Son of God?

82% of Methodists said No

81% of Presbyterians said No

89% of Episcopalians said No

75% of American Lutherans said No

Physical resurrection of Jesus?

51% of Methodists said No

35% of Presbyterians said No

30% of Episcopalians said No

33% of Baptists said No

13% of American Lutherans said No

The August 1982 issue of Pulpit Helps contains this statement: "In a recent survey of one of the large, well-known theological colleges of the United States, 93% of the students studying for the ministry stated: 'I have no devotional life.' What a crop of future preachers! How can a man speak for God if he does not walk with God?"

Revival God's Way, pg 145, Leonard Ravenhill, Bethany House Publishers, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 1983, used by permission

Leonard Ravenhill - Revival God's Way, pg. 148, Bethany House Publishers, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 1983, used by permission

Also quoted in, Realities of a True Christian - <http://jeremystrang.com/2013/12/12/free-ebook-realities/>

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2013/12/13 12:14

I was thinking along the same lines: how many were actually walking with the LORD, living holy lives - a life that reflected that walk?

I did some checking on the web about this latest suicide and I saw some disturbing news. The fellow had a sin issue that did not appear to be resolved. He admitted it but it did not seem to bring about any reconciliation. When a man purports to work for the LORD on Sundays but in the mind and behind closed doors sin is fed and nourished how can one think he can live successfully?

Makes one wonder how many times an abiding sin is what drives a person to suicide? Rather than looking out and judging those who did it, it should behoove us to take care of any sin in our lives lest we become despondent and do likewise.

Re: , on: 2013/12/13 12:37

I have met many that are sincere and above reproach. I think they get caught up in the predominant religious system.

We can't just say they are all unsaved when they're not.

Just like we can't say if someone falls into sin they were not really saved, or chosen or predestinated, whatever your theology is on that. Before you know it, a "great leader" falls who has the same theology as you have.

It is how they are trained from a child. The Lord has actually worked through many of them, anointed them, used them to deliver souls, etc.

The "system" swallows up, even true Believers. How many on here have given the testimony that the Lord rescued them from the religious system? Many. It's not just Pastors that the system entraps, but the sheep, too.

I do agree with Noone that you cannot fix something that doesn't have the proper foundation. You will always be in "repair" mode, rather than "flourishing" mode.

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2013/12/13 13:26

Brother AD writes.....

"It's simply not the order of the church as revealed in the New Testament that a congregation be headed up by one man."

This is exactly right and the root of the problem.....bro Frank

Amen guys...this is one of the big problem's in the church..

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2013/12/16 5:29

There is no reason for a Christian, irrespective of Pastor or a common Church goer to be depressed. In every job there is pressure, but if our goal is to please Lord and work for his glory then we will not be anxious. The example of Elijah that is given in this thread is an Old Covenant example. No one can prove that Timothy was depressed, no scriptural evidence of it.

The fundamental problem is the concept of Pastor and Church in most of the Churches are unbiblical. Let me list them,

1. Only a calling from God will determine whether a person is a pastor or not. No theological learning can make someone a pastor. Sadly in mega Churches today, a person is selected purely based on educational qualification. If there is no spirit given life then no education can replace it. The lack of life and presence of serious unrepented sins is the cause for most failures.

2. A pastor should never be elected by Church or appointed by Board that runs a Church. Such a practice is unbiblical. He should come from the Church and appointed by an Apostle (A man of God who planted the Church like Paul).
3. He should never get a salary from Church. This will make him a slave to Church than to Jesus. The pastor has to maintain a certain count in the Church to get a healthy salary which is clearly unbiblical. A Pastor can accept gifts but not paid based on a contract. I agree with the way George Muller had an offering box for his expenses alone which was independent of the Church offering.
4. Paul always appointed elders and not a single elder. So it is clearly unbiblical for a single person to lead a congregation. Jesus always sent his disciples in pairs for ministry. New Covenant is different from Old where there was only 1 prophet at a time. In New Covenant, it is fellowship say Paul and Barnabas, Peter and John etc.

Re: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide? - posted by Lysa (), on: 2013/12/16 8:31

The fact of the matter is just because we're here on sermonindex do not believe that a one pastor system is correct doesn't help those who are in a one pastor system and struggling.

Can you or I step out of our belief box to help another WITHOUT giving them a lecture on what is right or wrong with their system?

These pastors are still dying by their own hand while you guys debate the one shepherd system. It's not helping anyone. This is what's wrong with the church today, people are dying while others are debating.

What are you going to do about it? Debate, lecture or actually be help in the spiritual realm and pray?

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2013/12/16 10:30

Sree stated

Quote:

----- No one can prove that Timothy was depressed, no scriptural evidence of it.

With all due respect brother there most certainly is. In fact He was far more than just depressed. Timothy had quit, threw in the towel, and was leaving ministry all together.

That absolutely is contained within scripture. You are going to have to dig, pray, study, and diligently research to find it all. However, it is 100% absolutely there.

It is also very disheartening to read the responses in so many posts. So many express this idea that those pastors have brought it on themselves because they are the "lead" person at the churches and fellowships they serve.

What a total load of specious bunk!

Many seem to think that if ministry were spread around enough this wouldn't happen. Some posters are expressing thoughts that seem actually spawned by jealousy, imho. Ironically there is some truth to the idea that not having more folks involved in ministry is a key to these tragedies.

However, quit pointing your finger at the guy often sacrificing for the sheep.

It is often the fault of the people in that community. That's right ... quit blaming the pastor ... look in the mirror and realize THAT PERSON... yes YOU is often the problem. Timothy had the same experience! You know why there often aren't more elders and sharing of ministry? OFTEN IT IS BECAUSE THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH FOLKS QUALIFIED ACCORDING TO THE BIBLICAL STANDARDS LISTS IN SCRIPTURE TO BE ELDERS! I can not tell you how many times I have been consulting with a local church that were either electing or appointing elders/deacons, etc. at their annual meeting. The problem was their bylaws required a minimum of perhaps 12. However, they only had 3 qualified by Biblical standards.... put guys in place that were less than solid Christian examples or restrict that role of service to those that were qualified ... and then hear folks like the ones that have been belly aching on this thread continue to do so in the church an

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d sowing discord!

Furthermore.... I flatly believe that all this talk in the posts of not being given space to minister is total hogwash!

Please tell me when

- When did you ever ask to go visit the sick and were told no? When???
- When did you ever try to help marriages be healed and told no? When????
- When were you ever told not to pray for a move of God's Spirit? When???
- When were you ever told not to share your faith with coworkers, neighbors, family, etc? When???
- When were you ever told not to feed the hungry or help widows? When???
- When were you ever discouraged from praying for the persecuted church?
- When were you ever told to not support legitimate missions? When???
- When did you ever ask to serve in the ministry of helps and were told no? When were you ever told not to show God's love to the children in a church nursery? When???
- When were you ever told to not volunteer service to clean toilets, scrub floors, or do things that are unseen on earth but rewarded in heaven? When???
- When were you ever told not to get together with coworkers at lunch and pray for you fellow employees? When???

I'll tell you when. NEVER! The whole idea that you can not do ministry is absolute total bull. If you wanted to you would be doing it instead of whining like little girls on a message board. Quit whining and running your mouth and get out there with a good heart and serve. God help us!

If you can visit and pray for the sick, help marriages be healed, pray for revival, evangelize your family, coworkers, and neighbors, feed the hungry, help the widows, pray for the persecuted church, serve in helps, be a role model to the kids and youth, support missions, do unseen service ministries, gather coworkers, family, etc. and pray for your community then HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY DARE TO SAY YOU ARE NOT GIVEN SPACE TO MINISTER? The only answer I can see is that a person is simply full of pride and does not actually understand that ministry is just plain hard work and service to others ... and MANY pastors have to do that while being sniped at from the mouths of those who say they are followers of Christ. However, these "critics" actually just attack God's servants while they person ally whittle upon the stick of do nothing!

strang shared some stats from research a good number of years back that showed

Quote:
----- Here is a report of a survey of 10,000 Protestant ministers conducted by Sociologist Jeffrey Hadden; 7,441 responded to the questions. Here are the horrifying statistics. Read them, then wonder why God is grieved with our spiritual life. (I am indebted to Christ for the Nations, May 1982, for this information.)

Bible 'inspired Word of God?
 82% of Methodists said No
 81% of Presbyterians said No
 89% of Episcopalians said No
 57% of American Lutherans said No

Jesus the Son of God?
 82% of Methodists said No
 81% of Presbyterians said No
 89% of Episcopalians said No
 75% of American Lutherans said No

Physical resurrection of Jesus?
 51% of Methodists said No
 35% of Presbyterians said No
 30% of Episcopalians said No
 33% of Baptists said No
 13% of American Lutherans said No

The August 1982 issue of Pulpit Helps contains this statement: In a recent survey of one of the large, well-known theological colleges of the United States, 93% of the students studying for the ministry stated: I have no devotional life. What a crop of future preachers! How can a man speak for God if he does not walk with God?

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Although the survey is over 30 years old it is one I have oft quoted. I suspect it is even worse now. However, let me just make this observation. These stats are all from dying and dead denominations. There is no surprise here. They have been that way for decades... or longer. There may be a few lights left in them ... but very, very few.

Methodists, Episcopalian, Presbyterians, Lutherans (ELCA), Baptists (SBC is less so) ... yes in these places you often have leadership that is not born again. They are doing a "career" same as a guy running another business. I know this well. I serve in a community that in the entire ministerial alliance (pastors/priests/whatever, of all churches in the city) there are only 2 of us that are actually born again followers of Jesus Christ. The rest are just "religionists". However, there is an interesting note to this. The churches they are at love them! They are exactly what the people want there. It is the fulfillment of 2 Tim 4:3

Quote:
-----For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit THEIR OWN DESIRES, THEY WILL GATHER around them a great number of teachers to say what THEIR ITCHING EARS WANT TO HEAR

Do you get it yet? Do you see why there are false ministers? Read the verse again. They are there because that is EXACTLY WHAT THE PEOPLE WANTED!

No wonder these places are filled with wolves in sheeps clothing ... that is exactly what those people in those churches want!

On the other side of the coin let me say the folks I serve alongside, and the pastors I interact with, are for the most part absolute gems. Let me just give a small response to those same questions posed on the survey from my fellowships pastors, evangelists, helps, staffs, etc.

Bible is the inspired Word of God. 100% responded yes
Jesus is the Son of God. 100% responded yes
Physical Resurrection of Christ. 100% responded yes

Lest you think that is only a couple folks the current stats are that this represents the position of the leadership of 32,000 pastors, evangelists, specialty ministers, etc. They serve 13,000 US churches, over 3 million+ US church adherents, and over 66 million adherents world wide.

My point is that I know LOTS of pastors that are called, equipped, good hearted men of God. When you are attacking them, as has been done in this thread, you are in grave error seriously grave error.

If the place you are at and folks you are around are in those statistics from the 1982 survey then quit hanging around with those folks! However, also quit casting their results on folks it does not apply to!

Moses dealt with it, Timothy dealt with it, Paul dealt with it, I have dealt with it, many I counsel with have dealt with it Look in the mirror and make sure you are no longer the reason that someone serving God has to waste their energies on a pointless attack against them when they are right before God. Make sure you are never the reason they have less time and energy to fulfill God's call to evangelize and disciple. Make sure you are not a reason some guy might throw in the towel and commit suicide. In fact go in and ask how you can serve, or do any of the ministries I listed above ... do that instead of biting, devouring, and continuing to sin with your mouth.

If you have never been at the front of actual spiritual leadership you also have no idea of the vast demonic crushing that can be sent against you. Words cannot describe the assault often unleashed if a ministry begins to take ground for the kingdom. If some of the critics of ministers had to absorb the exact same pressure those ministers do they would have taken their own lives long ago. I have no doubt.

Re: , on: 2013/12/16 11:11

I would like to concur with a point Solomon made. Any believing saint who desires to minister has ample opportunity. And you do not need the permission of the local church.

A few years ago I was introduced to conference call praying. About that time God put within my heart to start Persecution Watch. It was a matter of calling a conference call center and getting a number and access. Then letting people know. Eventually God brought the intercessors to pray. For the last 3 or so years we have been lifting up the persecuted church 3 nights a week. Presently we are in nightly watch through the month of December where we are lifting up the persecuted church and global harvest on a nightly basis.

In the providence of God, Persecution Watch in partnership with other ministries has hosted 3 national conference calls on the International Day of Prayer. Thus providing a 12 hour venue for saints to come and lift up prayer for the persecuted church.

To the best of my knowledge we are the only prayer call in the US and maybe Canada dedicated to praying for the Persecuted Church.

I share this to not boast or brag. But to illustrate Solomon's point anyone can do ministry who has a vision from God. Persecution Watch was birthed by God. It is overseen by the Holy Spirit not a church. I was not discouraged by any church as I was not attending a local church at the time. Though the devil sure brought discouragement. But even in that Christ was victorious.

I hope this testimony will encourage others who have a desire for ministry to do so. Our call is small compared to other calls that have large gatherings of people. But God is using Persecution Watch to pray over strategic parts of the globe and lift up the persecuted. Also to pray for the harvest out of those nations.

I tell our team that we may not see the immediate answers to our prayers this side of glory. But God be praised for those glory stories in heaven that await us.

To God be the Glory. Great things He has done.

Blaine Scogin

Re: , on: 2013/12/16 20:08

I think Lysa, that people are helping and praying. The question from Greg, was "Why are they committing suicide?" and some of the posts are exploring that question and in their posts are answers but many don't want to hear of "stepping down", taking a sabbatical and reassessing their position.

Sree,

I find your statement incredulous and void of reality.

"There is no reason for a Christian, irrespective of Pastor or a common Church goer to be depressed."

Even Paul despaired of life. Jesus had much heaviness in the garden of Gethsemane.

2Co_1:8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

Re: , on: 2013/12/16 20:10

Solomon, many pastors have no idea what they are getting into. They don't bring on very much themselves. They truly want to minister to people but what happens is that they become the object of Satan's fiery darts from the "congregation". This wreaks havoc with them, their marriage and their children. There is not end to the nastiness and evil that is hurled at them. We are saying that the religious system is somewhat setup for that type of thing because it is setup like a worldly, hierarchical corporation and because money is involved then the Pastor's position becomes a results oriented, better than the church down the block type of thing. This is plain on all of our noses but not often on their noses.

The religious system sets men up for failure. There are over 20,000 church splits a year in America. I would say, that so

unds like failure to me.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2013/12/16 23:48

Quote:

I find your statement incredulous and void of reality.

"There is no reason for a Christian, irrespective of Pastor or a common Church goer to be depressed."

How do you say it lacks reality? The man who has most sermons on this site says that he has never been discouraged even once in the past 35 years of his life. How was he able to overcome discouragement? He is not without problems, he is still being rejected and persecuted in many parts of the world like how Apostle Paul was. Here in India, people who were with him for many years have started speaking evil of him. But in midst of all this he is anxious for nothing.

Paul says in Philippians 4-6: -Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

If it is impossible for a Christian not to be anxious then why is this command given? Is Paul expecting unreal things? These things are unreal to you and most Christians because the example you guys see in both in your life and others around you is shallow Christianity. Come to the rural villages in India where people lack basic needs for their life, still they have the joy and never go into depression. The problem with western Christianity is their provision is not from God (as they do not depend on him) and that is why they get depressed for even small things.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 1 is talking about the Persecution he is facing in Asia. Where there is a threat to his life. He does not mean there is no hope for him to live like how you understood. Read the verse fully to understand what he is saying.

2 Cor 1:9 & 10- indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us,

So clearly his hope was in God, he was not sitting hopeless and depressed like how you understood. If you had understood the context of what Paul is saying you will not have such shallow understanding of scripture. See how he is able to get comfort in verse 4 with which he comforts others even in the midst of such affliction.

Quote:

Jesus had much heaviness in the garden of Gethsemane.

Yes Jesus was burdened because he was going to be separated from Father for a short while. A fellowship that was never separated from eternity was going to be separated. You and I will never go through this nor will we understand the depth of the pain of Jesus. But even in that situation Jesus said, 'the Peace I have I give to you'. He was not depressed even in that extreme situation.

To say that Jesus was depressed you only mean that he was a sinner. Which makes Christianity void.

Re: Soloman and Lysa, on: 2013/12/17 1:41

Thank you Lysa and Solomon101 for your inspiring posts!!! There are many responses here to brother Greg's question, "why so many". But unfortunately questions like these give us the opportunity to display our "enlightened knowledge" of all that is wrong with the church rather than stir up the compassion of Christ for others. I too am tempted to get on my soapbox (of which I have many) but what good is that? How will this help these hurting brothers many of whom are serving the Lord diligently, the best way they know how? When I go off on my rants (and I do often) I am about as useful to these pastors as the guy who throws both ends of a rope to a drowning man:)

The bigger question is not what is the cause, (for those are endless) but what are we doing about this problem as the members of the body of Christ? Are we just sitting on the sidelines criticizing these guys for all the things that they are doing wrong or for being in the wrong vocation or wrong system or structure? Is that all we are good for? That's actually quite sad when you stop and think about it:(

Quote:
-----These pastors are still dying by their own hand while you guys debate the one shepherd system. It's not helping anyone. This is what's wrong with the church today, people are dying while others are debating.

This statement really highlights the wrong spirit that many of us may be carrying around with us. I believe that there is a lot of bitterness in those who have left the traditional church but few are willing to admit this. But if you get on your knees and bring this up with the Lord I guarantee it won't be long before you will be weeping and repenting and come into a greater place of breakthrough than you have ever known. When we allow the Lord to heal our brokenness then we will be better equipped to speak into these situations and able to pray and respond with Christ's love to those who are all messed up in their imperfect church structures.

Quote:
-----What are you going to do about it? Debate, lecture or actually be help in the spiritual realm and pray?

Lysa, you are truly a Deborah, it took a godly woman to show us all that rather than debate, they ought to be praying and fasting and encouraging these brothers in ministry and yes that will mean that we all might have to swallow a whole lot of humble pie!

I really don't think that there are too many of us here (who complain about the church) who are really, really praying for these pastors? Come on lets by honest brothers and sisters let's just be honest! There is so much disdain amongst us for the traditional church that I have a really hard time believing that prayer for church leaders is high on our list. If we were truly praying from our heart for them I am convinced that the Lord would have given us a deeper love for them and this would come through in the way we speak about and act towards pastors in the traditional church.

But we can fix that. We can change and we can start by doing something very simple like taking a day a week to pray and fast for a pastor in a local church near us and perhaps send a small thank you card and an encouraging note for his service in the Lord's work. Let's turn the tables on this thing and at the same time allow the Lord to heal us of any root of bitterness that might still be buried deep down, so deep that it cannot be seen.

Quote:
-----If you have never been at the front of actual spiritual leadership you also have no idea of the vast demonic crushing that can be sent against you. Words cannot describe the assault often unleashed if a ministry begins to take ground for the kingdom. If some of the critics of ministers had to absorb the exact same pressure those ministers do they would have taken their own lives long ago. I have no doubt.

I pastored a church a few years ago that was torn to pieces by a satanic attack. It left my wife and me in "spiritual intensive care" for years...so I know the reality of what you are saying Solomon. Satan is on the prowl seeking to destroy all believers but he saves his fiercest destruction for those who are on the front lines.

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Anyway, thanks again Solomon101 and Lysa your words have convicted me and I believe that the Lord has used you both to stir some deep thing in me and only good will come of this—the Lord bless you both!

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2013/12/17 2:30

Quote:

The fact of the matter is just because we are here on sermonindex do not believe that a one pastor system is correct doesn't help those who are a one pastor system and struggling.

Can you or I step out of our belief box to help another WITHOUT giving them a lecture on what is right or wrong with their system?

These pastors are still dying by their own hand while you guys debate the one shepherd system. It's not helping anyone. This is what's wrong with the church today, people are dying while others are debating.

What are you going to do about it? Debate, lecture or actually be help in the spiritual realm and pray?

It is not that no action is being taken. I am part of a Church where we used to hold meetings (conferences) for pastors of other local churches that are not even related to us. Zac Poonen speaks to them, they get free food for attending. I am aware of a brother who quit his ministry and started all over again as an ordinary brother in our Church. Now he is financially struggling but living by his own sweat rather than making money by deceived teaching. Such was his radical conversion. He quit a ministry that was paying huge money for him to preach. But when he truly understood new Covenant teaching, he repented and started fresh. How many Pastors you know who are still struggling emotionally but are willing to make such radical change? Are they willing to support their family by tent making like how Paul supported himself?

I remember once Zac Poonen was invited to a big Church to speak. The pastors sat behind the pulpit as it was the tradition there. He was asked to address the crowd. Zac turned the mic towards the pastors who sat behind him and addressed them. He said God wants me to speak to you guys first. After one session they asked him to leave and continued the conference with an American preacher.

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2013/12/17 23:25

Awakened said, "My point is that I know LOTS of pastors that are called, equipped, good hearted men of God. When you are attacking them, as has been done in this thread, you are in grave error seriously grave error."

Awakened, I can't speak for the others whose comments you have criticized, but I feel quite deeply misunderstood by you. I know a few pastors myself like those you describe above, and have a great respect for them, and love for them. They are doing the will of God the best way they know how.

But, Awakened, it is not "attacking them" to state that the problem of one-pastor leadership is a fundamental problem in "the Church." Speaking for myself, it is out of love for these men that I said what I said-- that the one-pastor system is simply not the order God established in the early churches. I made my comment in answer to the original question: why are so many pastors taking their own lives? Yes, these men need to be encouraged and strengthened. Yes, we must sympathize with them. But what about getting to the root of the problem so it can be STOPPED? Do we love these men that deeply? Yes, it would mean radical change. A spiritual revolution, in fact. But can't we see how deeply this is needed?

Perhaps you missed my earlier post. I mentioned a friend, who several years ago attended one of David Wilkerson's highly-esteemed pastors' conferences. They addressed many issues-- the burdens on pastors, the overwork, the stress that comes on their own families, pastor burnout, and many other problems. My friend said it was all very good, and many were helped. But, he added, they failed to even so much as touch on the problem that underlies all these others-- that it was not God's intention in the first place that His churches be led by one single ministry.

You are no doubt a Bible lover, brother. I challenge you to go to your Bible with an honest heart... and this question: Is the one-pastor system so prevalent in our churches God's order?

Re: ADisciple, on: 2013/12/18 0:34

Hi ADisciple,

I think you are referring to Solomons quote not mine. The only mention of an attack I made was in reference to an attack by satan when I was pastoring.

Re: - posted by andres (), on: 2013/12/18 0:34

"I have noticed that the people who post here never talk about the churches they are pastoring!

Anybody want to admit that they are a pastor?"

Hello My Name is Andy,

and I am a pastor of a Church Called Divine Providence in Brownsville Texas..

Our Church Believes in Plurality of elder, We have 3.. plus we working on getting 2 deacons..

Two of the elders , Myself included have full time jobs outside of eldering and not on payroll ,(I am a teacher in a public school) I really thank God that one of us is full time in the Ministry..

I must admit that I do at times suffer Discouragement

1. Weight of my own Personal Sin and Shortcomings..
 2. Weight of others Personal Sins and ShortComings..We Weep much for Backslidden and the lost..
 3. Division of Time Between , Being a Good Husband and Father and Employee and elder. (this is tough)
 4. Criticism from in our Local Church and then From other Churches..(even if they mean well , sometimes it still stings)
 5. Sermons ..
- But through all this " God gives more Grace"

Please pray for us..

blessings

andy

Re: ADisciple, on: 2013/12/18 0:51

Hi ADisciple,

Since I am not sure if you are responding to my post or Solomons I will respond anyway:) I do get your point and agree fully that the one man system is unbiblical and unhealthy. If you get to know me or read my Facebook page you will see that I am well aware and don't have a problem pointing out the glaring deficiencies in the modern church.

But this doesn't help those who are still in the system. They are "drowning" - as one person put it, and they certainly are not going to listen to critics like us. The analogy I used in my previous post was that if our only response is to point out that they have missed the boat, then our efforts are as useful throwing both ends of a rope to a drowning man!

Think about it. I really think we are almost that useless to the majority of these brothers who are so depressed and down trodden that they would take their own lives. Of course in many cases their problems are largely self inflicted or perhaps they were born and raised in this environment and thats all they know? So how will our critical analysis help them in their depression and struggle? It won't. What they need is a friend. What they need is a friend who will jump into the water with them and help them.

An old friend contacted me recently. This man was in ministry but has gone off the rails. His marriage is over and he is an alcoholic. He told me that he is going to call me soon but asked that I just be his friend, that I not preach to him...yet.

This brother is suicidal. Please pray that the Lord will give me the words that He needs this brother to hear and the Lord will bring new life to His hopelessness.

Re: Andy - posted by Sree (), on: 2013/12/18 1:16

Quote:

Hello My Name is Andy,
and I am a pastor of a Church Called Divine Providence in Brownsville Texas..
Our Church Believes in Plurality of elder, We have 3.. plus we working on getting 2 deacons..
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 5. Sermons ..
- But through all this " God gives more Grace"

Please pray for us..
blessings
andy

Sure Andy, I will pray for you. Good to see your Church working in Biblical Model. It is always a challenge to run a family , do a secular Job, and lead a Church. Good to see that you are resting on God's grace alone.

I have heard brother Zac Poonen say that our Christian life is a 3 tire building. The Ground floor is our Personal Walk with Christ, level 1 is Family Relationship, Level 2 is our Service to God (Ministry). We can have a strong Level 2 (Ministry) only when Level 0 (Personal walk) and Level 1 (Family Relationship) are strong.

Re: - posted by andres (), on: 2013/12/18 6:54

"I have heard brother Zac Poonen say that our Christian life is a 3 tire building. The Ground floor is our Personal Walk with Christ, level 1 is Family Relationship, Level 2 is our Service to God (Ministry). We can have a strong Level 2 (Ministry) only when Level 0 (Personal walk) and Level 1 (Family Relationship) are strong."

Very True, and at times the bottom floors are just disregarded for the Success of Level 2....

My advice for Church planters or Elder who are starting off is:

1. The Gospel must takes preeminence in your meetings (Christ is the focal point not you)
2. Before Embarking on this task talk to your family ,let them know the Sacrifice they will need to give.. (if your family is not up to it, wait.. dont destroy your family on behalf of God)
3. Keep things Simple in the meeting.. Prayer, Worship of God, Plain Preaching of God's Holy Word, Sweet fellowship of Believers (This keeps the pressure off you from trying to come up with new things to get the people in the Doors)
4. Let others handle the Money, or be Open with the Collection, so others can see where the Money is Going.
5. And Elder Know this.. Your accountable to God..
6. Don't rush off and put the Congregation in Debt by getting a Church building... start small, and stay small as long as you can.. (pressure of paying bills leads to appeasement of the Flock instead of Preaching to God's people..

there is probably a 100 more things

blessings
and thanks for the prayers

News and Current Events :: Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide?

andy

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2013/12/18 10:37

Awakened, yes, the quote I used was from Solomon's post. I read your post, and wanted to reply to it, and then by mistake backed up and quoted from Solomon's post. Sorry for that.

But you said things in your post that I think are unfair.

You said, "I believe that there is a lot of bitterness in those who have left the traditional church but few are willing to admit this."

And you said, "Come on let's be honest! There is so much disdain among us for the traditional church..."

And this: "The bigger question is not what is the cause, (for those are endless) but what are we doing about this problem as the members of the body of Christ? Are we just sitting on the sidelines criticizing these guys for all the things that they are doing wrong or for being in the wrong vocation or wrong system or structure? Is that all we are good for? That's actually quite sad when you stop and think about it:"

These are the words that left me, and very likely others as well, feeling very misunderstood by you.

I couldn't live with a "root of bitterness" in me, brother, my Lord wouldn't allow that. And it isn't "disdain" for the traditional church that motivates me. It is love for the people of God, and a great longing to see His glory in the church.

And so in fact I would say that "the bigger question" really is... what is the cause. That's what I would want my doctor to deal with if I came to him sick. Yes, certainly he would deal with the symptoms. But what would be the point of dealing with the symptoms if he never dealt with what caused them, and they kept recurring again and again and again?

Of course I realize that to deal with the symptoms of the problem we are discussing will require a very drastic treatment. Too drastic for most. So we just cripple along trying to cope with it all. I like the illustration I read once of someone leaving the tap running, and then frantically trying to mop up, and calling in some friends to help mop up, and then getting a mop-up program in place, and on and on...

So... all these problems in "the church." Who is going to turn off the tap?

Re: ADisciple, on: 2013/12/18 11:39

Quote:
-----These are the words that left me, and very likely others as well, feeling very misunderstood by you.

Hi brother,
I used the word 'we' in what I wrote so I am lumping myself into my description too:) I didn't think I needed to but let me clarify that obviously not EVERYONE who has left the traditional church is struggling with bitterness, but many are. Most people who have some degree of bitterness can not see it, because it is so deep and because they have developed great skill in justifying their take on what's wrong with the other party that they have walked away from.

To those people (not yourself) who still struggle with bitterness, I pray my words will have a good impact on them.

Going forward, if none of what I write is applicable to you brother, then please don't feel misunderstood, it is for me and others that can relate to what I am saying.

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2013/12/18 22:47

Wow...just reading this post and a few others is the reason I hardly post anymore...although there has been some good posts, sad to say -there are just too many that is negative or judgmental.

Many who post seem to be self-made prophets who always know what's wrong with everybody else...they mostly post to tell others what is wrong with them and why there method of worship is more correct...they seem to always know the most correct biblical way to do everything.

If you notice the two main things in this thread is...Pastors are not suppose to get any money from the ministry...the other is incorrect leadership of the church. Most on here, who are not a Pastor of a congregation are so glad that they are not and are highly qualified in correcting all those who are.

The question I would like to ask is do you receive any money to buy food and pay responsible bills to live any kind of life style on the earth? Where do you get your money from...just wondering? Maybe you have a government job, state, county, disability, or other government field that you receive income...now who do you think is paying your salary...why people paying taxes of course?

Now if you live on this earth you have to have food, water, housing, and basic essentials that you either worked for or someone else worked for or someone is giving you these things that you don't deserve. Now Jesus said a laborer is worthy of his hire. Paul said that God has ordained that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Now if you stand and judge one who preaches the gospel if he receives money to pay for necessities in life then who are you to judge another...when you receive money to pay for your necessities.

Now on Leadership...are you spiritual enough to lead others by example...what type of spiritual leader are you?

Wow I just had a thought of how crazy I was to even post this...I mean I just wasted all that time when I have been trying to use my time more wisely...well I'm not going to change you and you're not going to change me...oh well this may be my last post in a while.

Blessings to all....from brother rbanks