

Focusing on What Really Matters as a Pastor

- I. What really matters to me as a pastor?
 1. Believing and teaching the truth (**Psa 119:97; Psa 119:127-128; 2Ti 4:2**).
 2. Keeping God's commandments (**Joh 14:15; Joh 14:21**).
 3. Seeing that the brethren are walking in truth (**2Jo 1:4; 3Jo 1:3-4**).
 4. Worshipping Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth (**Joh 4:23-24**).
 5. Seeking God after the due order (**1Ch 15:13**).
 6. Ensuring the church is in good faith and order (**Col 2:5**).
 7. Ensuring the church is unified in belief and purpose (**1Co 1:10**).
 8. That the brethren are growing in the faith (**Eph 4:11-16; 2Pe 3:18**).
 9. Protecting the church from heresy (**Tit 1:9-14; Tit 3:10-11**).
 10. Ensuring that the church is pure and free from commonly known sinners (**1Co 5:11-13**).
 11. Being an example to the church (**1Ti 4:12**).

- II. "Is there not a cause" (**1Sa 17:29**) for what I do? What motivates me to take a stand on Biblical principles, preach on unpopular topics, and 'uproot' the normalcy of 'church polity'?
 1. I love God more than anything or anyone else (**Mat 22:37-38**).
 2. I love His church (**Psa 27:4; Psa 84:1-2; Psa 84:10**).
 3. The zeal of His house hath eaten me up (**Joh 2:17**).

- III. How do I stay focused on doing what God has called me to do?
 1. I keep my eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith (**Heb 12:1-2**).
 2. I keep my eyes fixed on the prize (**Php 3:13-14**).
 3. I keep my conversation focused on heavenly things, not earthly things (**Php 3:20**).

- IV. How do I weed out those things that are dragging me down?
 1. I try to root out pride and feelings of self-importance from my heart (**Pro 26:12; Pro 6:16-17; Pro 8:13; Jam 4:10**).
 - A. I remind myself that "it's not about me," but rather about God and His people.
 - B. I'd rather feel like giving up than be puffed up.
 2. I try to stave off disappointment by focusing on the work that I am bidden to do, not the results or the feedback.
 - A. Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth (**Pro 27:2**).
 - B. The size of the church or the number of converts is not the measure of the success of a pastor (**Luk 12:32**).
 3. I spend my time feeding those who want to be fed, not trying to force feed those who don't.
 - A. As the old saying goes, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink."
 - B. My focus is feeding those who, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word (**1Pe 2:2**).
 - C. I also endeavor to feed those who are mature in their faith with the meat that they need (**Heb 5:11-14**).
 4. I have learned to spend a minimal amount of time answering critics who are not church members.
 - A. This is a waste of time (**Pro 26:4**).

- B. I simply give them a link to a sermon or video I have done, and if they won't listen to it, then I don't respond to them (**Mat 15:14**).
5. I have learned to expect little from people.
- A. If you expect much from people, most of them will disappoint you.
 - B. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick (**Pro 13:12**).
 - C. If a pastor tries to bring all of his church members to full maturity, he will burn himself out.
 - i. He must remember that there are 30, 60, and 100 fold Christians (**Mat 13:23**).
 - ii. To expect a 30-folder to be a 100-folder is a sure path to despondency.
 - iii. I have learned to adjust my expectations of people.
 - a. For those who have good attendance at church, I expect them to be there with rare exception; for those who don't, I try not to be surprised or disappointed when they tell me they won't be there on Sunday (though I often am, despite my effort).
 - b. For those who come to Bible studies, I expect them to come; for those who don't, I don't.
 - c. For those who are dependable, I depend on what they say they will do; for those who are not dependable, I pay no attention to what they say they will do.
 - d. For those who give what they should to the Lord, I expect them to do so; for those who don't, I don't.
 - D. I have learned to give people over to God who will not do what I preach from the word of God (**1Th 4:8; 1Sa 8:7; Act 20:26-27; Eze 3:16-21**).
6. I don't go looking for problems to solve in people's lives.
- A. I let them come to me, and if they don't, it's on them.
 - B. Those that are wise will seek counsel, and I am happy to give it to them (**Pro 1:5**).
 - C. People that don't come to me for help don't want my help, and to offer my unsolicited advice will be a waste of my time, or worse (**Pro 9:8; Pro 15:12; Pro 23:9; Mat 7:6**).
 - D. "You can't fix people that don't want to be fixed; you can't change people that don't want to change." (Pastor Phil Jonker)
7. I don't waste my time getting involved in meetings with other "pastors" in the area or trying to fit in as one of them (**2Co 6:14-18**).
8. I try not to care about what others think of me.
- A. It is a small thing to be judged of others (**1Co 4:1-3**).
 - B. God's judgment is the only thing we should be concerned with (**1Co 4:4; 2Co 10:18**).