



Understanding Sabbaticals

How You Can Support Your
Pastor

Pastors Need Support

- Ex. 17:12 “But Moses’ hands were heavy. then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set.”

Today's Pastors

- 80% of pastors and 84% of their spouses are discouraged or dealing with depression
 - Focus on the Family
- 75% of pastors consider quitting the ministry
- 70% of pastors report they do NOT have someone they consider a close friend

Today's Pastors

80% of pastors believe the ministry has negatively affected their family

49% their family has suffered significantly

6000 Southern Baptist pastors leave the ministry each year

All of this...

- Studies have shown the most effective ministry occurs under the leadership of long term pastors
- Implications for the church:
to be effective in our ministries we must help our pastors be leaders that last!

Why is it so tough?

- On call 24 x 7
- Deal with life and death
- Weight of eternal issues
- Major life crisis situation, divorce, jail, suicide, etc.
- High stress
- CEO of small corporation
- Teacher, public speaker

How can we hold up our pastors arms?

- Pray regularly for your pastor & family
- “have his back” – look out for him; don’t allow others to speak negatively
- Protect his day(s) off
- Pay him as well as possible
- Let him know you appreciate him
- Be kind and thoughtful to his family
- Offer a Sabbatical

What is a 'Sabbatical' ?

- Biblical foundations in Genesis & Leviticus
- Genesis and Leviticus speak of "Sabbath time" in terms of days, years, and land usage.
- a gift of rest for both renewal and hope
- Scripture infers that regular, periodic rejuvenation is vital in all areas of life

Purpose of Sabbaticals

- A sabbatical feeds the body, mind, and soul resulting in renewed, refreshed, and revitalized energy to function as a shepherd and servant leader.

It creates an opportunity for the minister to: :

- recapture a sense of vision,
- be nurtured in faith and skills,
- become introspective,
- rekindle spiritual passion,
- refocus priorities,
- review the ministerial journey, and
- reflect on the call of God for life and ministry

What a 'Sabbatical' is:

- An opportunity to allow the minister to be away from the congregation for an extended time period.
- Not a vacation, but
- a time for intentional exploration and reflection
- drinking anew from God's life-giving waters
- personal study & renewal
- regaining the enthusiasm and creativity for ministry.

Some Guidelines...

- A minister should design a sabbatical that is unique to his/her personal requirements. When Jesus retreated, he went to a mountain or out on a boat. He designed his time away based on the inner needs in his life.

Some Guidelines...

- Sabbaticals should be planned with the church's leadership.
- agreed-upon understanding of the purpose and goals for the time away
- planned to give balanced time for personal relaxation and other components such as education, travel, etc

A Sabbatical Proposal Include:

- What the minister desires to accomplish during the sabbatical.
- A description of the sabbatical plan, with timelines, and activities.
- Detailed congregational leadership assignments during the minister's absence.
- A specific declaration of expected budget expenses.
- The preparation of an evaluation form to assess church life during the sabbatical.

The Anticipated Results:

- Following a sabbatical, a minister often resumes congregational leadership with a fresh spirit and a renewed passion
- A healthier leader resulting in a healthier church

How you can help...

- Pray for your pastor & family while away
- Remain faithful in attendance, giving and serving
- Be prepared to support new vision and passion for ministry!