



## **I AM A CHURCH MEMBER**

### **MOUNT CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH**

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*Church Theme: “Let’s “BE” The Church” (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:16; Matthew 5:14 – 16)*

## **I AM A CHURCH MEMBER**

*Discovering the Attitude that Makes the Difference*

### **Chapter 4 Review – I Will Pray For My Church Leaders**

In this session, we will see that Scripture calls church members to be vigilant to pray for the pastor and other church leaders on a consistent basis. Pastors and church leaders have a difficult job, and yet shepherding souls is a huge responsibility. Satan knows that if he takes out the pastor, the sheep will scatter. Your pastor and church leaders need your prayers more than you could ever know.

#### **1. Pray For The Pastor And Church Leaders**

The biblical commands to pray for pastors and church leaders are subtle. Paul is the greatest champion of this idea, and it appears several times in his letters to churches. Consider these verses:

#### **Romans 15:30-32**

<sup>30</sup> I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, <sup>31</sup> that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, <sup>32</sup> so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company.

#### **Colossians 4:2-4**

<sup>2</sup> Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. <sup>3</sup> At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— <sup>4</sup> that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

#### **2 Thessalonians 3:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, <sup>2</sup> and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith.

#### **Hebrews 13:18**

<sup>18</sup> Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.

As we consider the responsibility church members have to pray for their pastor, it is helpful to consider the three practical areas of a pastor's life, which Rainer noted in the book, that should be lifted up in prayer:

## **2. Pray For The Pastor And His Family**

It has often been said that pastors and their families are a lot like fish living in a glass fish bowl. Everyone pays attention to see if the pastor and his wife ever have an argument and whether or not their kids are well behaved. This is understandable when we consider the biblical responsibility pastors have to manage their household well (1 Timothy 3:5). But this is immense pressure, and pastors and their families feel the weight of this pressure constantly. Rainer wrote:

“I have heard countless pastors worry about and struggle over their families. They worry that they neglect their families because of the demands of the church. They worry about their families living in a glass house. They anguish when critics direct barbs at family members. You get the picture. We are church members. We must be the prayer intercessors for pastors and their families. Few families face the kinds of pressures and expectations as the families of pastors.”

## **3. Pray For The Pastor's Protection**

To say that pastors have a target on their back is an understatement. We have all heard of stories of pastors who have failed morally. This is usually followed by great distress in the church and discord in the community. Consider this passage from 1 Timothy 3:2-4 regarding a pastor's qualifications:

<sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive...

Pastors are called to be “above reproach” in their life and ministry. When we consider what is meant by these words, we recognize just how important it is to lift our pastors up in prayer. Rainer wrote:

“Just to get past ‘the above reproach’ part is an accomplishment! The word reproach means ‘to find fault.’ So to be ‘above reproach’ means to be above finding fault. While the pastor is certainly not expected to be perfect, he is to have a reputation above most everyone else. When people in the community speak or think about the pastor, the thoughts and words should be positive and encouraging.”

It is important for us to recognize that Paul continues, concerning the qualifications of pastors, by stating in 1 Timothy 3:7:

<sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

In the same way that we might set a mousetrap out to catch a mouse in our house, we must recognize that this is the same kind of language used by Paul concerning the activity of the devil. He is skillfully setting out traps to try and catch pastors. Rainer wrote:

“If we understand the full implications of that word (trap), we wouldn’t hesitate to pray for our pastor’s protection. A trap is something that is set intentionally. It means that the devil has devised a plan to bring the pastor down. He has set a trap. It means that the devil sees the pastor as a threat, and one of his highest priorities is to take him down and take him out. And the text is clear. The nature of this trap will be temptation where the pastor’s reputation will be harmed.”

Even though the devil is working overtime to try and pick off pastors and shipwreck their ministries, we can be certain that our prayers are powerful. God is much more powerful than the devil and he works in amazing ways through the prayers of His people. Pray for your pastor’s protection!

#### **4. Pray For Your Pastor’s Physical And Mental Health**

If you have ever had responsibility to care for someone else, maybe a child or elderly parent, you know how much of a burden that can be. Pastors experience this same burden in the care for the souls of those under his ministry. In fact, James warns that not many should become pastors/teachers because they are held to greater accountability for those under their care and teaching (James 3:1).

Rainer wrote:

“Serving and leading a church well expends all of a pastor’s energy. He is on call every day and every hour. Because the demands are so great on him, the pastor often neglects his own health and well-being. While no one is invulnerable to sickness and accidents, we can pray for the protection of our pastor’s health. We should also pray for our pastor’s mental health. In this regard I’m not referring to the opposite of mental sickness as I am to wisdom. The pastor has to make dozens of decisions each week that require discernment and wisdom. He needs wisdom to know what to preach and teach and how to present God’s Word. He needs wisdom dealing with us church members each week so he can best discern how to respond to the plethora of demands upon him.”

Pastoral ministry is a burden, and it is also a great joy. Pray for your pastor’s physical and mental health as he seeks to care for your soul and the souls of other church members!

## Chapter 4 Review – I Will Pray for My Church Leaders

\_\_\_\_\_ church leaders need prayer. Scripture calls church members to be vigilant to pray for the pastor and other church leaders on a consistent basis.

The Pastor's role in the church is enormous. We should pray that God would give him the \_\_\_\_\_, insight, and \_\_\_\_\_ to preach.

We should consistently make intercessory prayer for our Pastor, his \_\_\_\_\_, his \_\_\_\_\_, and his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ health.

Satan sees the \_\_\_\_\_ as a threat, and one of his highest priorities is to take him down and take him out.

### Homework

Read Acts 12:1 – 12.

Answer the following questions after reading Acts 12:

1. Who was the king in this chapter?
2. What happened to James?
3. What was the people's reaction as a result of James' demise?
4. What happened to Peter in verses 3b – 4?
5. How did the church respond to their "leadership" being in trouble?
6. How did God intervene or answer the church's request?
7. At whose house was the church assembled?
8. Name the person that opened the door.
9. What happened to the king at the end of chapter 12?
10. Did the actions of this king stop the advancement of God's word?