

Suggestions for Building Up Your Pastor

Hold your pastor accountable for stress management disciplines like rest, exercise and meaningful recreation. (Ask his wife.)

Protect your pastor from spiritual leeches. Mature church members can take these needy and troublesome souls into their hearts and disciple them, thus lessening their need to depend on the pastor.

Get your pastor to go with his strengths. Find out what your pastor does naturally well, what he likes to do, and encourage him in that area.

Encourage him to fellowship with other pastors.

Recognize the uniqueness of your pastor's job. It is unlike any other. Communicate the pastor's job to the congregation. Every congregation has a multifaceted list of pastoral expectations, and this list needs to be reshaped. Stop comparing your job to his. The responsibilities, hours, accountability, corporate dynamics, and even the salary structure are vastly different.

Affirm the value of your pastor's work. Communicate that you are on his team and are planning to help him succeed.

Pray for your pastor. Your pastor is in a spiritually important and often dangerous place.

The enemy has marked him for destruction. Your prayers can shield him from more than you know.

Encourage or require your pastor to be involved in ongoing education. The process of mental stimulation can be as important as the material learned.

Consider starting an internship program for theological students and/or prospective ministers in your church.

Be patient with a young pastor as he acquires knowledge and experience that can only be learned through hard experience. Good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgment.

Ask your pastor to define himself and his responsibilities.

Ask your pastor to communicate himself. It is the role of the pastor to cast vision for the whole church and it is up to him to communicate his own role in fulfilling that vision.

Ask your pastor to commit himself to doing a few things well. If we focus on strengths, your pastor will find the path to excellence.

Ask him to delegate.

Protect him from the pastor abusers.

Ask your pastor to work with people rather than alone whenever possible. This will enable your pastor to become a more effective disciple-maker. This style will encourage others to use their gifts in ministry resulting in a healthier church.

Offer your pastor regular performance reviews. Use a questionnaire to help you cover objective standards.

Enter into a two-way accountability relationship with your pastor based on a mutually acceptable list of criteria. In this way you can hold each other accountable for specific areas of responsibilities without threat. Honesty and transparency are essential ingredients.

Include your pastor in an accountability group with a group of trustworthy people who are capable of keeping a confidence and who do not hold an unrealistic view of pastors as sinners-emeritus.

Help your pastor find support. Aaron and Hur held up Moses' arms during the battle against the Amalekites (Exod. 17:8-13).

Help your pastor find intellectual and spiritual stimulation. Pastors need to plug into a battery charger somewhere.



“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Eph. 4:29)

Get involved in the change issues within the parish. Change involves more than one voice.

Pay your pastor on the basis of worth, not need.

Find ways to eliminate “apples and oranges” comparisons in the area of salary.

Allow God to bless you for your generosity. Generosity could return to you ten-fold through the efforts of a more effective and long-lasting pastor.

Offer relational support. Let your pastor know that you are not surprised or disappointed by his/her humanity.

Honor your pastor’s need for privacy. This means keeping church business inside office hours as much as possible, guarding his days off, and making sure he gets away from time to time.

Don’t begrudge your pastor outside friendships. Outside social life with others is reasonable and healthy.

Encourage your pastor to be involved in extracurricular activities such as sports and hobbies.

Pray for your pastor and for your church.

Commit yourself to spiritual maturity and freedom in Christ.

Avoid any involvement in the devil’s classic strategems: gossip, disunity, grumbling, apathy, hypocrisy, and the like.

Consider as a church whether or not you need to deal with corporate sins. Unresolved sins can cause problems for churches as much as for individuals. Such sins can create an ongoing pattern of spiritual defeat in your church.

Affirm your pastor. Offer your pastor specific input on the ways in which he uses his personal gifts well in leading the church. Offer your pastor examples of ways in which he is effective.

Create a written job description and use it to define your pastor’s success. Be as specific as possible.

Hold your pastor accountable, not only for fulfilling the job description, but also for doing it efficiently enough to go home when he is done.

Find ways to guard your pastor against unnecessary intrusion into his private life by inconsiderate church members.

Make sure your pastor takes days off and also vacations.

Help your pastor cope with crises. Churches can and should develop a team effort in this area so that crisis intervention is not the task of the pastor alone. Identify people with the appropriate gifts and train them.

Develop a small group ministry. One of the greatest contribution of small groups to the life of the modern church is that they provide a context in which people can give and receive pastoral care without involving the pastor.

Express support to the pastor’s spouse and children.

