

“The Transition Of A Leader”

Good morning (**Guests & Explorers**)! Transitions are hard, aren't they? 1st, 7th, 9th, College – Josh leaving, Jenna – license. Marriage breakup, jobs, friends, leaders, PASTOR. I moved every 4 years as a PK. Never knew what it was like to be on this side. Change is hard – years of stability. Now things are uncertain. 400 years of silence (Malachi/Matthew) ...

“There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.” John 1:6–8 (NIV)

There Was A Man

Not an angel or superman/woman. Human being – flawed, mistakes, faults, weaknesses, imperfections and limitations. So are all pastors! No perfect pastor has ever been found.

Preaching, counseling, coaching, mentoring, casting vision, wrestling with the spiritual darkness, leading, visitations, praying, protecting, meetings, administration, phone calls, texts, emails, correspondence, events, staffing, etc.

Physical weariness, nervous exhaustion, strained relationships, differences of opinion, preferences about everything from the style and volume of the worship to the length and content of the message to the color of the carpet to the version of the Bible to the style of dress. Inability to please everyone is like the plague!

Enemy – steal, kill & destroy – temptations (pride, arrogance, jealousy, greed, lust, envy, anger, fear, doubt, etc.) – personally: physically, emotionally, mentally, morally, ethically, financially ... spouse, kids, reputation, calling, identity, self-worth, value, etc.

Are you ever surprised at God's choices? Ever wonder why He would select you – a faltering, stumbling and unworthy vessel to bear His good news?! God chooses broken and sinful people every day to serve Him with their lives. You're surely in for a few surprises!

Pray for your future pastor & family (current leaders)! Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry! Be encouragers, offer help, take ownership of your church, be loyal & cooperate! (**Ephesians 1:16-19, Ephesians 3:16-19, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:3-4, 9-12**)

Sent From God

Although he was a man with human limitations, John was distinguished and set apart from others in that he was a specially chosen one. God gave him **Divine Authorization**. Treat your new pastor with honor and respect and as God's servant. If you get this right it'll give you two things:

1. **Focus** – bearing witness to the light. Christ-Centered Focus!
2. **Filter** – to sort out expectations for your new pastor ... “He himself was not the light.” No pastor can single-handedly please everybody. No church can do everything. Set Priorities!

Guard against pastor “maintaining the machinery” so he/she can be Spirit-Led & Spirit-Empowered!

The fact that God will send you your pastor has implications for how you treat him/her and his/her family ... criticize ... gossip ... attitude ... actions ... words.

We don't treat pastors as superior – they're not any better than anyone else – be we'd do well to consider their heavenly calling. We don't worship our pastors or put them on a pedestal. But we do honor their God-given calling.

“Pastors who do their work well should be paid well and should be highly appreciated, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching.” 1 Timothy 5:17 (TLB)

“But how shall they ask him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them unless someone sends him? That is what the Scriptures are talking about when they say, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of peace with God and bring glad tidings of good things.’ In other words, how welcome are those who come preaching God's Good News!” Romans 10:14–15 (TLB)

Parents: how you talk about the church, pastors & leaders will rub off on your kids as they head into adulthood & will have a significant impact on how they lead Jesus' movement in their generation!

Whose Name Was John

Names were very significant then ...

“On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, ‘No! He is to be called John.’ They said to her, ‘There is no one among your relatives who has that name.’ Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, ‘His name is John.’” Luke 1:59–63 (NIV)

Unique and not like everyone else. John had certain gifts, strengths and a certain ministry to which he had been called – forerunner of the Messiah. **Your new pastor will not be _____!**

Every pastor is unique, gifted for ministry and has areas where he/she can grow. Each one is gifted for ministry but no two are the same in how they express those gifts/passions. Don't fall prey to the idea that every pastor should have all the gifts and that he/she should be able to everything well.

He came to preach Christ, that was John's mission (Heavenly Commission). Verse 8 says, “He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.”

“So Christ himself gave ... the pastors ... to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”
Ephesians 4:11–13 (NIV)

Who are you looking for? Who do you want your new pastor to find you to be?

Dating: focus more on being the right kind of individuals, families and church body than on trying to find the ideal pastor. What condition do you want him/her to find _____ in?

Preferences will be your primary struggle ...

Chaplain vs. CEO	Insider vs. Outsider Focused
Evangelism vs. Discipleship	Introvert vs. Extrovert
Preaching vs. Worship	Topical vs. Expository
Clock-Aware vs. Spirit-Led	Preacher vs. Administrator

Someone who (common language & framework) (1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1) ...

1. Has been found by Jesus. (Repentance, Faith, Forgiveness, Grace & Mercy)
2. Faithfully and wholeheartedly follows Jesus. (Direction, not perfection. Obedience & Submission)
3. Loves his/her family like Jesus. (Lays down life, sacrificial)
 - Spouse “called”, healthy marriage, kids aligned with the will of God. Say NO to you! 😊
4. Passionately upholds and creatively communicates the words of Jesus. (Authority & Reliability)
5. Is authentic & transparent about their ongoing need for & dependency upon the Spirit of Jesus.
 - Fruit & Gifts
6. Models service (serving-towel, humility) like Jesus. “*He must increase, I must decrease.*” (Jn. 3:30)
7. Embodies a C-7 approach to leading on behalf of Jesus.
 - Character – integrity, ethical, moral, holiness, generous (spontaneous, strategic, sacrificial)
 - Competency – preaching, teaching, leading, caring (*the “what” of the role*)
 - Chemistry – connects relationally with staff, board & church family, likeability
 - Culture – “gets” western PA, vision for reaching our area
 - Calling – not a job, a lifestyle, “all in”, owner vs. manager
 - Capacity – ability to grow, adapt, develop, teachable, curious, life-long learner
 - Circumstances – transitioning from their previous role with honor & a good reputation

What value will you add to this transition of your leader? Jesus hasn't abandoned you!

Let's Pray!

- Staff, Elders & Search Team

Heavenly Father, thank you for _____ ... for this season ... please send a unique person ... straight from You ... to shepherd this church family. Please grant growth, wisdom, revelation, strength, power, perseverance, faith, unity, courage, love, grace, humility, deference, knowledge, fruit of the Spirit and discernment. In Jesus' Name, Amen.