

# HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PASTOR

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An adapted summary of  
“The Book your Pastor wishes you would read  
(but is too embarrassed to ask)”  
by C Ash

Summarised and adapted by  
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## Introduction

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Heb. 13:17, ESV)*

Pastors have the task of watching out for the souls of those under their spiritual care. But who takes care of them? This verse indicates that there are things that members in the church can do that will enable their pastors to have joy in their work. This, in turn, will be beneficial for the members.

There are seven virtues of church members that can benefit their pastors. In this summary reference is made to pastors, but the same principles apply to all the elders in a local church.

## Virtue One: Daily repentance and eager faith

Pastors rejoice when they see their members walking in truth (2 Jn. v4 and 3 Jn. v3-4). To walk in the truth means to:

- repent of sin as soon as it becomes known;
- eagerly listen to the preached word;
- eagerly read and apply the Bible to daily lives.

## Virtue Two: Committed belonging to the local church

Members need to show a commitment to the life of the local church. This will include attending the various meetings of the church (especially Sunday worship and prayer meetings), and intentionally building deep relationships with fellow believers. Attending meetings and serving in the church should never be a matter of convenience for members.

## Virtue Three: Open honesty

Church members should be authentic with each other and their pastor. There should be a frankness without deceit or pretence. The Lord Jesus reserved His strongest rebukes for the hypocrites, who pretended to be one thing, but were actually another. To speak against the pastor, elders or another church member behind their backs is destructive to the spiritual health of the church.

## Virtue Four: Thoughtful watchfulness

Pastors also need to grow spiritually. Church members need to be thoughtful and watchful over their pastor. Pastors need to be encouraged in their routine of reading. The church can provide sabbaticals or study leave. At times, days off can be allowed due to the peculiar work pressures a pastor faces. The financial support for pastors also needs to be adequate. Even supporting and encouraging pastors to enjoy regular exercise can refresh them.

## Virtue Five: Loving kindness

Church members need to consider practical ways they can express love and kindness to the pastor and his whole family. These can include simple things such as babysitting, gifts, weeding a garden or flowers for the home.

## Virtue Six: High expectations

Members should truly care about the holiness and spirituality of their pastor. If there are sins that need to be confronted, this should be done gently and lovingly. But it should be done. Deep down pastors who see that members hold them accountable to God's standards know that they are being cared for. At the same time pastors should be well paid, and also protected from gossip and rumours.

## Virtue Seven: Zealous submission

Members should let the pastor lead, and be zealous to submit to his leadership. This applies particularly to long-standing members who often exert a lot of influence and power in the congregation. This submission is never absolute though and is always within the bounds of biblical principles.

The pastor should never be seen as an employee who needs to be subservient to the members as if they are the employer. Pastors should rather be seen as shepherds who have the function of leading.

The pastor and members form a gospel partnership, and they should strive together to serve God. This includes having a common vision for the church. Members should never seek to undermine the leadership and vision of the pastor, unless it is clearly unbiblical.

God bless you as you seek  
to be a committed, godly member in  
Hillcrest Baptist Church.



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