



*Finding
a balance*

**Handling Stress within our
Ministry**

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Staggering Statistics

- **Here are some statistics you might find alarming.**
 - 70% of Pastors say they have lower self esteem than they did when they started.
 - 80% feel that ministry affects their family negatively
 - 75% report severe stress causing anguish, worry, anger, depression, and fear
 - 50% say they are unable to meet the needs of their job.
 - 13% of active Pastors are divorced
 - Doctors, Lawyers, and Clergy have the most problems with drug abuse, alcoholism, and suicide

You Might be Suffering

- According to the New York Times 8/1/2010
 - *Members of the clergy now suffer from obesity, hypertension and depression at rates higher than most Americans. In the last decade, their use of antidepressants has risen, while their life expectancy has fallen. Many would change jobs if they could."*
- Scary but True!!!! Most congregations don't know or understand pastoral stress.
- Heb 13:17.... Is not just the obey them that counts here!!!!

Who is caring for the Pastor

- As pastors were perceive our #1 priority is to care for GOD' s sheep, but often time people forget that we also need to be cared for.
- Expectations of others deliver the greatest amount of stress on a Pastor and often time we forget.....!!!!
- We are rough on ourselves.
- Pastor often have found themselves skilled in taking care of the flock, but lacking taking care of their families or themselves.

The need to Create Balance

- What is Balance? A distribution of time enabling someone to stay steady and upright. (righteous if I may say)
- Without that balance then we are unsteady and lop-sided and that can create burnout.
- In ministry burnout can cause one to become less focused and even uncaring to congregants and/or Church issues.

The need to Create Balance

- To continue to minister effectively, clergy must learn to take care of themselves. If they don't replenish themselves, they may be tempted to give out and give up.
- Gal 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest **if** we do not give. (NIV)
- The problem is that burnout causes us to think we are not beneficial!!!!

Three Areas of Stress

- Many different areas in a persons life can cause stress. For a pastor to continue to be effective they must take care of themselves and their families.
- We are going to focus on 3 areas
- Family vs. the Ministry
- Financial Stability (which can cause family issue)
- The Call itself (or burnout)

Finding a Balance

- No one can give, give and give and not take a moment for themselves. Mt. 14:23
- If we do not replenish our resources we will run dry and be ill-equipped for the remainder of the journey.
- Remember GOD took a moment to rest on the 7th day!
- I am going to get a bit radical so bare with me!!!!

Family vs Ministry

- I was taught from very young. It is GOD, **Family**, Church!!!! (1st Tim. 3:4-5)
- Your Ministry is as successful as your family is! Lack of attention to your family means over attention to the ministry.
- The 2nd greatest source of replenishing your resources is with spending time with Family!!! (gain strength through love)

Family vs. Ministry

- We have to remember our First ministry from our relationship with GOD is to our Family.
- We can be dedicated to The church so much that we put our spouses and our children behind.
- Our greatest achievement would be to have our family share in our Ministry, so they should be the first to see Christ in us. Christ was there for his family even on the cross. Jn. 19:27

Family vs. Ministry

- Ministers need to be with family during important times. Don't miss your children growing up.
- Set Dates with your spouse, have vacations, have your staff handle things you don't have to be at every staff meeting. (they aren't)
- Remember you have two journey's the one with the church and the one with GOD, appreciate both!!!!

Financial stability

- Personal finances are a challenge to most Pastors household. Especially when they go from a double salary to a single.
- Most congregations feel that Pastors are well taken care of and that is not always the case
- Many Pastors struggle financially to the point where it effects home and often-time ministry.

Financial stability

- Many Pastors take the low road so the church can run more efficiently, but that often back fires.
- In Black Churches “keeping up with the Jones” mentality also put a toll on the pastor...
- In economic hard times the Pastor salary that satisfied gets challenge due to the heart of a Pastor!!!!

Financial stability

- There are solutions to help Pastors alleviate the stress. **Work 2 JOBS!!!!!!**
Okay but seriously!!
- Salaries vs Tithes
- The Church should take out an insurance policy on the Pastor! Can you say legacy?
- Healthcare benefits should be paid by any church paying a salary to the pastor.
- Don't get caught up with the Jones's

Financial stability

- Retirement programs can better deal with session issues.
- Learn how money works and explore other avenues of raising Church funds outside tithes and offering.
- Remember have faith in GOD he is a keeper and provider. Mediate and stay focused on providing a good example.

The Call

- Members admire you this week and admonish you the next. You can never satisfy everyone all the time. And they let you know it.
- The struggle to have a relevant message
- The downside of being in the public eye, even when it isn't you directly. Failing ministers hurt Ministry across the board.
- Stretching ourselves out to the limit meeting obligations and congregational needs.

The Call

- To create balance in the call is simple but complicated. It requires time!!!!
- Take time to exercise and release tension.
- Like the bible says in 1st Sam. 30:6 and Ps 16:10...
- Martin Luther said “Prayer is the most important thing in my life. If I should neglect to miss for a single day, I shall lose a great deal of the fire of faith.

The Call

- Learn the art of saying **NO!**
- Pastors should have a support network that they can speak with others to unwind!
- To create balance in the call, sometimes sit in the congregation and be part of the worship!!!!
- Lastly, we are not perfect don't let society box you in. God's mercy is extended for us as well as the congregation!