

HOW TO TREAT MY PREACHER
By Dr. Hal Webb, Evangelist

“Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? For I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth,” Gal. 4:15- 16.

The call to full time service for the Lord is the very highest a man can receive. Our Godly pastor holds a sacred position of great leadership and responsibility. He is a proven treasure of great value to each of us. As the new year begins, I wonder how each of you has treated ours. He is human and I wonder if God is pleased with the way we have treated him. Have we balked, refused his leadership, hurt his feelings, ignored his preaching and criticized his family? Have we personally expressed our love and appreciation to our dear man of God? Refusal to be led seems to be the tragic attack of Satan in these days. Could it be happening here? I pray you will read this carefully and apply it to your heart and share it with family members. I sincerely urge you, each and every one, to wrap our preacher and his family anew in our love. Let's see what the Bible says about “How To Treat My Pastor.”

First, we are instructed to Love him. *“We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you; to esteem them very highly in love, for their works sake,”* I Thess. 5:12& 13. . It takes a very special kind of a man to be a good pastor and most deserve better treatment than we have given. He has his own family problems and worries, plus those of the entire congregation. You need to demonstrate your love to your pastor.

Show it every way you can and teach your children to do the same. I'm not talking about a traditional one a year gift and card but make him your family hero, honored with your love and appreciation. You can't love him too much. Make him your families most special friend and express your love and appreciation often. As a human he will be encouraged and challenged to greater levels of service in the ministry.

The Bible next commands you to Obey him. Every group must have a leader to direct its activities and lead in the path of Godly obedience. He. 13:17 commands, *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”* The pastor is your leader, your boss in the spiritual realm and your advisor in life. Your family needs the leadership of a well-chosen man of God. He is “over” you as leader of your life and director of the things of the church. The Bible lists every other church officer under the pastor. God holds him accountable to lead the church, not ignoring the wisdom and help of others but to bring it all together in the will of God. He must stand on the proven commands the Word and not budge from that which is clearly Biblical. Like the father of your family he is accountable to lead and for you to follow.

Next, the Bible commands the members of the church to Respect him. Notice again the phrase in I Thess. 5:12 which says, *“esteem him very highly in love.”* Teach your children to respect him and you must do the same. Men of God should be held in high esteem. Speaking against them to others is not pleasing to God. The telephone is sometimes the leading assassination weapon of choice and many a church has been

severely hurt by unwise communications. Many a pastor has been shouted down in a business meeting by disagreeing adults who utter words of rebellion and often mislead others and traumatize their own families. Discussion must reflect respect, always. Your pastor is your commander and chief. God has placed him in this position and others have no right to tear down and destroy his labors. You must not slander him, drag your feet and demand your own way. Think of the effect on your children when they hear you talk in critical, angry tones with little respect for the man God gave you. All through the Old Testament you read the phrase, "they murmured", over and over again. Your respect for your pastor will be reflected in the community's attitude toward him. Lift your pastor in your words and manner and the church will grow in effectiveness and reputation.

Let me also point out you are to Trust Him. The word "*submit*" in Heb. 13:17 is very clear to understand. Every Christian needs accountability to someone and we are commanded to "be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Again God says, *that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* Not only the pulpit but in the realm of counseling, your pastor is a valuable and necessary tool of God. Often a member seeks advice from their pastor and he Biblically shows them the answer and they go out and do what they were going to do anyway. Their kids are in trouble but they won't seek his help nor take his suggestions. Don't doubt his sincerity, leadership nor practical advice. Do not reject and criticize his sermons. Rebellion breeds mistrust and doubt and a bad spirit toward the pastor. If you allow this to happen the devil will gain ground in your

church and family. Most often pastor knows best. Trust him and rely on his counsel and wisdom to help you walk with God.

This leads me to urge you to Listen to him. Prov. 13:10 urges, "*Only by pride cometh contention, but with the well advised is wisdom.*" The more you understand of the Word of God, the better. Be sure to attend every service of your church. Bring your Bibles and a notebook and record Biblical thoughts from the sermon. Require your children to pay attention, don't bring toys for amusement but teach the importance of listening and learning from the message. Avoid distractions, adopt the truth and accept the rebuke. An army that refuses to listen to its leader will be defeated easily. The advice of the doctor, dentist or mechanic is sought and followed. Give your pastor that same courtesy and learn all you can in spiritual things. Soak up every sermon and apply the truths to build your personal relationship to God. Listen as if the Lord was talking and remember He is, through his man.

How about Use Him. The pastor's command is to lead and yours is to follow. Be sure to share personal and family problems with him. Jer. 3:15 states, "*I will give you pastors, according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.*" With hours of prayer and study, through experience your pastor can give you much help and blessing. God gave him to you as your leader and instructor in spiritual things. Many professional men meet your needs in different ways. Where would you be without a mechanic to keep your car in running order? Your dentist can keep your whole family in happy smiles. Be true to your teeth and they will never be false to you. The lawyer knows about law and the teacher knows how to teach your kids. Your

pastor is your spiritual professional. His office is never closed and he waits to be of service to you. Ask him!

Lastly be very sure to Support him. The Bible lists 5 ways you can do so. First, attendance in all services. I Cor. 15:58 urges, *"Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."* No service in your church is less important and your family's attendance in all of them is crucial to the church and to your family. Rearrange your schedule for revival meetings and missionary conference. Don't allow sports or other busy pursuits to cause you to be absent. Please understand, "Any absence from a service of my church is a vote to close it." Then a pastor needs support by generous finances. A hard working pastor is, *"Worthy of double honor,"* I Tim. 5:17. This is quite easy to understand as double pay. Add up the average pay of the congregation and double it for the man of God that heads your church. Housing, family needs, insurance, gas to do visitation are all ways to show support to the man of God. I almost lost my cool with one deacon who said, "We keep our pastor poor to keep him humble." Such an attitude is a shame for anyone to entertain. Be sure your pastor's burden does not include his finances. Support of the pastor should also demonstrate loyalty. *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching, Heb. 10:25.* Be present in your seat for every service. I want to also urge you to brag on him to his face and others. *"A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth, and a work spoken in due season, how good is it,"* Prov. 15:23. Line up with your pastor like a flying wedge of geese and "Honk" encouragement to him. Share messages and blessings with your friends. They may have a dull,

ecumenical pastor who is a bore while yours is exciting. They will get curious and come to hear the one you are so thrilled with and perhaps join you in your church. A good man of God needs to be praised as God's true servant. Lastly be sure to pray for your pastor. The Bible urges, *"Brethren, pray for us,"* I Thess 5:25. Help hold him up and remember his family as well. Satan knows the best way to wreck a church is to shoot down it's pastor. Be sure you bathe him in prayer and your church will grow stronger as you call down God's blessing on it's leader.

In closing I want to say that after serving hundreds of pastors, our's is the very best. I pray you will stop and think what your reactions have been toward him. Have you dissected him before others with words you will face at the judgment seat? Have you excused your kids actions and limited his right to help guide them? How many invitations have you proudly stood glued to the floor, refusing to deal with your sin or accept a new challenge? How many invitations have you "ho hummed" through making no decision as the pastor stood hoping through one more verse of the invitation? I ask you to seek out our pastor, confess your shortcomings and correct your relationships toward him and his precious wife. We seem to be in a rut, our church is not growing, visitors are scarce, the youth group has lost its enthusiasm while services are neglected with little concern for the lost. Where are the new members, when was the last baptism, and how can we be so worldly minded, caught up in our own will and way? We are nearing the end of the church age. Please, lets each of us rededicate our lives, dump our pride and selfish desires, truly stand with our pastor and pray and work for the genuine revival we so need. I'll do my part and hope you will do yours.