

VOCATIO  CENTER



Your Guide to Ministerial Résumés

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Résumé Instructions

Résumés look a little different in every field, and especially so in the ministerial field. The primary difference one will notice with these types of résumés is that they are much more personal than business résumés. They state a person's stance on ministry and doctrinal belief and they even discuss how a person was called to salvation and into ministry. This type of résumé still shares many similarities with a business résumé, though, and for this reason, there are a few guidelines provided in this packet that are consistent to both. The Résumé Checklist will be found helpful when creating a résumé for the first time. Also the "Power" Words for Résumés can help make an okay résumé into one that clearly communicates you, your accomplishments and your abilities in just a few choice word changes. Both of these tools will be invaluable in creating or updating your résumé.

Note: A résumé is the first impression that a search committee receives about the candidate. So it is important to make the best possible first impression.

Contact information should be listed first at the very top of the résumé. Besides your *name*, it is important in this electronic age to list a *professional e-mail address* as well as *home address, home phone number, and cell phone number*. You may also include social media profile links and/or links to blogs or other personal websites or portfolios.

The **first section** of a ministerial résumé should include personal information. Search Committees want to know about you in a personal way. Some items you might consider putting into the personal section are birth date, family, interests, date and place where you were licensed and/or ordained, and social media profiles or blogs you maintain.

The **second section** of your ministerial résumé should include your education. Although this is not a determining factor, search committees will still appreciate your willingness to list your education on the résumé.

The **third section** of your ministerial résumé should include your ministerial experience. You will want to list the job title, the church/organization, the amount of time you spent there, and some of your duties while there. You might want to divide your ministerial experience into different parts for example pastoral, youth ministry, and missions

The **fourth section** of your ministerial résumé should include your secular work experience. You may wonder why this is relevant. It is relevant because any experience you have gained indicates something about your work ethic, commitment, and maturity.

The **final sections** of your ministerial résumé should be a section on personal statement of salvation and call in to the ministry, ministry statement, and doctrinal belief.

Creating a Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry

If you are considering any type of pastoral ministry position, then creating a philosophy of the aim and purpose of it and how it is to be carried out is significantly helpful for both you and a church's search committee. Creating this document allows you to critically reflect on the Bible by working through what it has to say about pastoral ministry, which in turn allows for in-depth personal reflection on your call to ministry and how you intend to carry it out. This document will also allow you, in a concise but powerful way, to communicate to a search committee how you will lead their church, pastor their people, and preach the Word of God. A philosophy of pastoral ministry is, of course, optional, but it is still highly recommended for all of the above reasons.

Please feel free to contact Ben Burleson, Programming Coordinator of the Vocatio Center, or Dr. Ray Van Neste, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, with any questions you may have about creating a philosophy of pastoral ministry. Both individuals would be happy to help you in creating this document.

Below you will find some instructions on how to create your philosophy of pastoral ministry.

The Bible must be consulted first and foremost in order for any individual to accurately discuss pastoral ministry. You will want to study the follow texts:

- 1 Tim. 3 & Tit. 1 (study together)
- Heb. 13:17
- Acts 6, Ezra 7:9-10 & 1 Tim. 5:17 (study together)
- Col. 1:25-29
- Acts 20
- Mal. 2:1-9
- 1 Pet. 5:1-4 & 1 Thess. 5:12-13 (study together)
- 1 Tim. 4:6-16
- 2 Tim. 2:14-26
- 1 Thess. 2
- 2 Tim. 4
- Jer. 23, 2 Chron. 18:13, 1 Pet. 4:11 (study together)

As you study these texts, look for the purpose of pastoral ministry, the essence or definition of it, the biblical character qualifications for a pastor and the work involved in pastoral ministry. Take notes on each section, allowing yourself to process and put in words what you think each text says about these particular topics. Feel free if you find other topics not mentioned here to think through them and take notes on them.

Compile your philosophy of pastoral ministry based on your study. You will want your philosophy to be ordered similar to this fashion: Introduction, The Essence of Pastoral Ministry, Its Purpose, The Qualifications for a Pastor, The Work Involved in Pastoral Ministry, and a Conclusion.

Your philosophy should be between **5-8 pages**. The closer it is to the minimum page limit the better; you **do not** want a lengthy paper. You must remember that the typical member of a pastoral search committee does not have a degree in biblical studies, and they **expect you to be able to articulate what the Bible says about pastoral ministry in a concise manner**. A lengthy philosophy will tell the committee that you are wordy, giving them a bad impression.

Résumé Checklist

- Always tailor your Résumé to the job you are seeking!
- Never use a template. If you have, select the text. Go the table menu → Convert → Table to text.
- No more than 2 pages.
- Balance pages (1 full or 2 full) and be consistent with formatting throughout.

Name:

- Bold, 24 pt
- No blank white space at top
- Use same font as headings
- At least 10 pts larger than headings

Headings:

- 2-4 pts larger than body text (14-16 pt)
- Same font as Name

Body Text:

- Use a font with feet. (Garamond, Palatino, Times New Roman)
- 10-12 point

Personal Information

- Family
- Licensing and/or ordination
- Social media profiles/Blog

Education:

- Expected graduation date (Month and year)
- List GPA if 3.0 or above

Ministerial Experience/Employment:

- For dated items, list the most recent first.
Check for consistency in formatting work experience.
 - Possible format: Job title (*italics*), Company name (**bold**), City, State, Dates of Employment
- List experience as year – year (Ex. 2004 – 2006) leave off months.
- Indent bullet points with job duties 5 spaces.

Secular Experience/Employment:

- Formatted exactly the same as Ministerial Experience/Employment

Personal Statement of Salvation and Call to Ministry

- Briefly, concisely state your testimony on your salvation and call to ministry

Ministry Statement

- Power adjectives to describe what you want to do in ministry
- Example:
 - To tell everyone the wonderful news of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, encouraging souls to believe in him as the Lord and Savior of humanity, to guard and teach every soul entrusted to me by God with all the wisdom of the Gospel in order to present every one of these persons perfect and complete in Christ Jesus, to equip these persons to spread the Gospel in their surrounding communities and in the world abroad.

Doctrinal Belief

- Briefly, concisely state your doctrinal beliefs on the Trinity, salvation, and the Word of God. State the statements of faith with which you are in agreement

Reference Page

- 4-6 references (List 4 for part-time and 6 for full-time positions.)
- Copy header from Résumé. Create a heading called “References.” Should match other Résumé headings in font and size. (See page 14)
- List name, job title, organization, phone, email for each reference
- Notify your references and ask permission to use them. Include a good selection of faculty members, co-workers, former supervisors, and character references on your list.

Power Words for Résumés

Accelerated	Delegated	Harmonized	Operated	Reviewed
Achieved	Demonstrated	Headed	Originated	Scheduled
Acted as liaison	Designed	Improved	Organized	Set up
Adapted	Detailed	Implemented	Participated	Selected
Administered	Developed	Increased	Perfected	Shaped
Advised	Directed	Initiated	Performed	Simplified
Analyzed	Discovered	Innovated	Pinpointed	Sparked
Arranged	Distributed	Installed	Pioneered	Sold
Assembled	Doubled	Integrated	Planned	Solved
Assessed	Employed	Interpreted	Prepared	Standardized
Assisted	Equipped	Interviewed	Produced	Structured
Budgeted	Established	Invented	Profited	Succeeded
Built	Evaluated	Invested	Programmed	Supervised
Chaired	Executed	Investigated	Promoted	Supported
Clarified	Expanded	Justified	Proposed	Synthesized
Communicated	Expedited	Keynoted	Proved	Systematized
Completed	Experienced	Launched	Provided	Taught
Conceived	Experimented	Lectured	Recommended	Tailored
Conducted	Explored	Led	Recorded	Trained
Conferred	Facilitated	Maintained	Reduced	Transformed
Constructed	Formed	Managed	Reinforced	Unified
Consulted	Formulated	Mastered	Related	Verified
Controlled	Founded	Mediated	Reorganized	Widened
Converted	Generated	Motivated	Researched	Won
Coordinated	Guided	Negotiated	Revamped	Worked
Created	Halved	Observed	Revised	Wrote

Common Résumé Mistakes

Make sure you are careful not to:

- ❖ misspell any words.
- ❖ have any typographical errors.
- ❖ use sloppy grammar or diction.
- ❖ confuse your chronology. Always list most recent accomplishments first
- ❖ list your current or previous salaries.
- ❖ note political affiliations.
- ❖ make it difficult to get a quick summary.
- ❖ list names of references on the résumé; instead use a separate sheet.
- ❖ be too wordy or lengthy in your description. *One paragraph about each job should be ample.*
- ❖ bury your most significant accomplishments in a less than prominent position.
- ❖ put company names, dates, and title in the body of the descriptive paragraphs. *Set them off visually so the reader can almost instantly grasp your whole history*

Jane Doe

Permanent Address: 2525 Long Road • Princeton, KY 42445 • 270.555.3333

E-mail: j.doe@domainname.com

Highly committed servant leader who enjoys building and maintaining meaningful, Christ-centered relationships. Compassionate and dedicated to helping others succeed. Practical and logical thinker with thorough attention to detail. Self-starter, dependable, organized, and efficient.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies, May 2021, Union University, Jackson, TN

Overall G.P.A.: 3.96

G.P.A. in Major: 4.0

Minor: Human Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Administrative Assistant, Union University Vocatio Center, Jackson, TN, 2015-Present

Supervise student workers, compile budget information, plan and coordinate special events, critique résumés, interview students, assist with Career Fairs, put together monthly statistics report, perform general office duties, coordinate marketing initiatives, manage database, establish and maintain resource library check-out system, contact students and employers for recruiting opportunities, set up interview schedules, set up e-mail address books for advertising events, send e-mail, and write/edit correspondence (reports, letters, memos, etc.)

Teacher's Aide, Pope Elementary School, Jackson, TN, 2013-Present

Work with individual students (ages 5-6 years old) testing concepts and abilities, develop games and art projects to enhance classroom instruction, teach reading via phonic techniques, and file and sort assignment papers and artwork exercises.

Summer Missionary, "Hell is Real" Ministries, Princeton, KY, Summers of 2012-2013

Coordinate and plan events, tutor students, lead Bible Studies, assist in worship services, build and maintain relationships with students, perform general office duties, create Powerpoint presentations, establish relationships with local business people for future reference, plan and coordinate Shadow Day for up to 60 participants and 40 employers.

HONORS/ACTIVITIES/COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Alpha Chi National Honor Fraternity
 - Barnabas Servant Leadership Award
 - Union University President's List
 - Union University Dean's List
 - National Dean's List
 - Who's Who Among American College Students
 - Disciple Now/Revival Team Coordinator
 - Global Opportunities Trip-Irving, TX
 - Tutor/Mentor Greater Hope Ministries
 - Day of Remembrance Community Service
 - Nursery Worker, Jackson First Baptist Church
 - Youth Assistant, Chapel Hill Baptist Church
-

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint)
Digital Scanning and Photography
Internet & E-mail

Janet J. Generic

6556 Union Drive • Jackson, TN 55555
901.731.5555 • jgeneric@domainname.com • www.janetg.linkedin.com

Profile and Objective

A compassionate, responsible, and detail-oriented individual seeking a full-time position at a non-profit organization. Organized, punctual, and a quick learner. Trustworthy, hard working, and dedicated.

Education

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies, May 2021

Bachelor of Arts in Spanish, May 2016

Union University, Jackson, TN **GPA: 4.0**

Related Work Experience

Service Over Self, Memphis, TN, 2014-Present

SOS exists to glorify God by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed through urban home repair camps.

Academy Intern, 2014-present: Organized and scheduled home visits in preparation for the spring and summer camps. Helped plan and advertise for the camps. Assisted in office related tasks such as mass mailings, answering phones, and various forms of paperwork.

Office Assistant, 2013-2014: Collected and organized camp registration information. Performed office related tasks such as answering phones, obtaining necessary office supplies, and various forms of paperwork.

Team Leader, 2012: Led groups of high school students in construction work on homes in an urban neighborhood. Facilitated Bible studies and sang with Praise and Worship team.

Activities

International Justice Mission, Jackson, TN, 2015-present

Participated in monthly meetings; helped raise awareness for social issues such as sex trafficking, child soldiers, genocide, and slavery; and participated in and helped organize service projects including letter writing campaigns, raising money to free modern day slaves, and raising money for the victims of the Darfur genocide.

It Took a Miracle Ministry, Maracaibo Venezuela, 2015

Assisted with day camps and carnivals for needy children ages 1 to 16. Served meals through the local church. Worked cooperatively with a team of 20 dedicated individuals to achieve the mission of the organization.

Women's Co-Op Ministry, Jackson, TN, 2014-2015

Participated in weekly Bible studies and monthly large group meetings.

The 411 Church, New York, NY, 2015

Distributed flyers and love offerings in order to advertise for this new church. Administered needs assessment surveys in a community and analyzed the results to determine needs. Prayer-walked in the target community as a means of addressing its spiritual needs.

Honors & Memberships

- Who's Who Among Students in American Univ.
- President's List
- Alpha Chi Academic Fraternity
- Union University Scholarship Symposium
- Christian Studies Academic Medal of Excellence

Patrick Preacher

Address: 7 East Road · Jackson, TN 55555 · **Phone Number:** (731) 555-5555 · **E-mail Address:** ppreacher@gmail.com
Blog: www.preachpatrickpreach.wordpress.com · **Twitter:** @ppreacher

Personal

Born: September 15, 1985, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Family:

- Wife – Penny Preacher: Stay-at-home mother (Married on August 9, 2008)
- Daughter – Penelope Preacher (born September 27, 2009)

Interests: Preaching, Education and Teaching, Reading, Writing, Watching Movies, Hiking

Education

Union University, Jackson, TN

Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies/Languages, May 2018

Minor: History

GPA: 3.713 **Major GPA:** 3.781

Ministerial Experience

Sunday School Director, Pleasant Plains Baptist Church, Jackson, TN (2009-Present)

Overseeing the Sunday School program to ensure that Sunday School teachers have the materials necessary to teach their respective classes; Planning a comprehensive Sunday School curriculum for the whole church by selecting college and seminary-level courses, working with Pastor and teachers to develop lesson plans, and developing a schedule of when classes will be held; Organizing church library by creating list of books/resources to purchase, discarding unused, outdated materials, and creating a catalogue of books to keep an up-to-date inventory; Tabulating Sunday School attendance for quarterly church business meeting.

Sunday School Teacher, Pleasant Plains Baptist Church, Jackson, TN (2007-Present)

Teaching an adult Sunday School class; Teaching Bible Studies on Genesis, Exodus, Colossians and 1 John and classes on “The Church and Its Elements of Worship,” Biblical Theology of the Trinity, and General Biblical Theology; Prepared curriculum and handouts for class; Organizing group study times for co-teachers; Delegating sections of lesson plans to co-teachers based on their abilities and expertise.

Committee Head: Nominating Committee, Pleasant Plains Baptist Church, Jackson, TN (2007-Present)

Ensuring that all open positions of service amongst the church body are filled; Calling meetings for committee members to nominate church members for service; Attending quarterly Church Council meetings to assist in determining Pleasant Plains’ church calendar.

Church and Convention Ministry Scholarship Student Director, Union University, Jackson, TN (2006-2008)

Worked under direction of the Assistant Director of Church Relations, the Senior Vice President of University Relations and the Senior Vice President for Church Relations to help Students called to ministry assess and pursue that calling in a local church context; plan ministry-related events; Developed several different databases on Microsoft Excel; Planned Student Preaching Nights with West Tennessee Baptist Associations; Preached several times; Provided students to fill the pulpit of Holladay Baptist Church while they were searching for a pastor; Prepared a financial biannual report of attendance for the Tennessee Baptist Convention; Co-developed a Ministry Mentorship Track for students to develop mentoring relationships with Southern Baptist Ministers; Served at several different West Tennessee Pastors and Wives Banquets.

Intern to the Minister of Education, Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville, TN (2006)

Planned Wednesday Night Club VBS: Space Quest Children’s Program; Developed an Emergent Church Response Survey to assess the theological maturity of the surrounding community; Developed a proposal for visitor parking spaces; Provided leadership for Minister of Education when he was unavailable; Served as an adult chaperone at Student Life Youth Camp; Preached; Planned summer calendar of events; Provided assistance to the youth minister and his interns with their summer projects as needed.

Ministerial Experience, Cont'd

Youth Intern, *Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville, TN (2005)*

Chaperoned and led Bible Studies in three youth camps; Served as large group Sunday School teacher for youth and as the Journey Sunday Night Discipleship teacher; Preached numerous times; Planned a Youth-led worship service for the whole church; Made numerous hospital visits with the youth pastor; Helped coordinate a mission trip to Gatlinburg, TN; Assisted in grievance counseling; Set-up the Encounter and Paradigm Youth worship services; Provided support for general office/secretarial duties; Assisted youth pastor in preparing the calendar for the Fall 2005 semester

Secular Employment

Union University, Undergraduate Admissions, Enrollment Counselor *Jackson, TN (2008-2012)*

Maggie Moo's Ice Cream and Treatery, Shift Manager, *Jackson, TN (2007-2008)*

School of Christian Studies, Union University, Student Assistant, *Jackson, TN (2006)*

Marble Slab Creamery, Key-holder, *Opry Mills Mall, Nashville TN (2003- 2006)*

Save-A-Lot Food Store, Stockman/Cashier, *Pikeville, TN (2002- 2003)*

Honors/Activities

- Who's Who Among College Students (2008)
- Zondervan Greek Award (2007)
- Student Government Association Chaplain (2006)
- Theology and Apologetics Group, *Vice-President and Co-founder* (2004)
- Sophomore Council (2005-2006)
 - Helped in planning class events
- Freshman Council (2005)
 - Helped in Homecoming set-up, oversaw bands/band set-up for Battle of the Bands

Personal Statement of Salvation and Call to Ministry

I was raised in a Christian home, and my father diligently taught me the gospel at a young age. I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ because He graciously called me to repentance and belief through my father's and our church's faithfulness in preaching and teaching the Gospel; I was baptized at age 8. Soon thereafter, my family experienced a rough time, but God graciously grew me in the wisdom of His Word through godly family members and the preaching of His Word; I have been seeking to grow and be more obedient to his Gospel ever since. I received my call to ministry during my senior year of high school while considering what university I would attend and what I wanted to do with my life. My youth minister helped me to realize that I loved the Church and that I wanted to teach and preach the Gospel. After struggling with this call and the seriousness of it, I surrendered to it on November 9, 2003. I can sincerely say that I desire to do nothing else but preach and teach the Gospel and oversee the souls of the Church.

Ministry Statement

To tell everyone the wonderful news of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, encouraging souls to believe in him as the Lord and Savior of humanity, to guard and teach every soul entrusted to me by God with all the wisdom of the Gospel in order to present every one of these persons perfect and complete in Christ Jesus, to equip these persons to passionately pursue their sanctification Christ Jesus and to spread the Gospel in their surrounding communities and in the world abroad.

Doctrinal Belief

I believe in God the Father, who sovereignly created and rules over all things, Jesus the Son, who came to offer eternal life to those who would repent, believe, and faithfully obey him, and the Holy Spirit, who is actively working in the lives of believers. I believe the Bible to be the infallible and inspired Word of God, sufficient for all the Church's needs, including primarily its growth in holiness to the Lord. I also am in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000, 1963, and 1925, and the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.

Ima Translator

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Home: 12 East End Drive • Pawling, NY 55555 • 845-555-5678 • i.translator@domainname.com

Professional Summary

Excellence and detail-driven student with a strong history of fulfilling and exceeding established goals in areas related to study, research, and communicating information. Strong skills in research methodology including locating and obtaining materials, evaluating and qualifying sources, analyzing information and making logical and innovative deductions, summarizing, outlining, and organizing materials, and communicating conclusions in written and presentation form. Well acquainted with library resources and electronic databases. Highly proficient in Biblical Greek with advanced translation and exegetical skills. Works very well under authority, in one-on-one relationships, and in groups. Also well practiced in leading groups in various activities. Highly dependable, adaptable, and self-motivated with excellent work ethics and eagerness to develop and practice new skills.

Education

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL LANGUAGES, MAY 2018

Union University, Jackson, TN GPA: 4.0

Professional Experience

Faculty Assistantship • Dr. George Guthrie, Benjamin W. Perry Professor of Bible, Union University, Jackson, TN 2015-present

Zondervan Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament: 2 Corinthians

Aids in the development of a pre-published exegetical commentary on 2 Corinthians.

- Research pertinent material found in books, electronic sources, and other resources to be used in application segments.
- Find and obtain relevant journal articles through electronic databases.
- Verify the accuracy of quotes and other secondary sources.
- Proofread text for errors and readability.
- Highlight and outlines main theological themes to be reiterated in chapter conclusions.

Biblical Literacy Initiative project through LifeWay: Chronological Reading Plan

Involved in developing a chronological reading plan of the Bible which will be published and distributed by LifeWay to be used by church congregations, small groups, and individual studies.

- Developed and organized the parallel accounts of the four Gospels into equal segments within a constricted reading schedule.
- Developed the outline which would be utilized in the reading plan's final arrangement.
- Proofread plan for errors including repetitions, omissions, and elements out of appropriate chronological order.
- Organized material into balanced daily reading schedules.
- Contributed to the structure and layout of the final project.

Biblical Greek Lab Instructor • Christian Studies Department, Union University • Jackson, TN 2015-present

- Tutored and assisted more than fifteen Christian Studies students in a structured Greek lab
- Lead in reviewing and discussing weekly lecture material while simultaneously evaluating proscribed assignments.
- Developed and distributed constructive study material that reinforced skills in parsing, grammar rules, translation, and vocabulary memorization.

Exegetical Papers/Projects

Discerning Salvation in Matthew 7:13-27

A twenty-two page exegetical paper which evaluated the verifiability of Salvation as demonstrated in Matthew 7:13-27. A thorough look at Jesus' pervading imagery of two diverging lifestyles in which one demonstrates the fruit of saving faith while the other leads to final judgment. A strong focus on historical backgrounds, on Greek syntax and word usage, contributions of other commentaries, and application. Earned a grade of A for body of work.

An Exegesis of Revelation 20:1-6

A twenty-eight page paper consisting of an in-depth exegesis of Revelation 20:1-6 arguing for the amillennial position on the "thousand years" mentioned in the pericope. Provided proofs for a symbolic rather than literal interpretation of Satan's imprisonment and Christ's thousand year reign. Analyzed contrasting arguments found in various commentaries, Greek grammatical and diction highlights, and relevant extra-biblical contributions to the text. Earned a grade of A+ for body of work.

Honors

- A. T. Robertson Advanced Greek Award, 2015
- President's List, 2012-2015
- Academic Scholarship, 2012-present
- Alumni Leadership Scholarship, 2012-present

Affiliations & Activities

- Alpha Chi - National College Honor Scholarship Society
- Phi Alpha Theta - National History Honor Society
- The Rutledge Honorary History Club
- Senator, 2012-2013
- Christian Studies Student Advisory Council

Church Activities

- Sunday School Teacher, Summer 2015
- Vacation Bible School Leader, Summers 2009-2015
- Awana Group Leader, 2008-2013
- Junior Church Teacher, 2015

Volunteer Experience

- Green Frog Historical Village, 2015
- Pinson Mounds Archeological Site, 2014

Technology Skills

- Windows Vista & 7
- Microsoft Word and PowerPoint
- Functional knowledge in Microsoft Access, Excel, & Publisher
- Logos Bible Software
- Research: Internet & ATLA Religious Database
- Type an average of 55 words a minute

JOE MINISTER

1050 Union University Drive, Jackson, TN 38305 • 731.555.1234 • pastor@domainname.com

PROFILE

Determined and hard working individual who competently multi-tasks to achieve deadlines on a tight schedule. A proactive goal-setter striving for success in all things. A hands on learner with excellent analytical and critical thinking skills. A visionary that is able to picture the end result and work to achieve the desired final product.

EDUCATION

Union University

Jackson, TN

- B.A. in Christian Ethics, Political Science minor, Expected Graduation May 2018
- GPA 3.2

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Intern, 2015—Present **Office of Senator Lamar Alexander** Jackson, TN

- Answer incoming calls and meet needs and concerns of constituents
- Receive, sort, respond to, and forward mail to Washington office
- Assist constituents in filing Social Security Disability claims, and passport applications
- Work in collaboration with the Field Representative for West Tennessee

Sales Associate, 2014—Present **Outdoors, Inc.** Jackson, TN

- Provide excellent customer service
- Responsible for receiving and shipping merchandise valued up to \$10,000 weekly
- Prepare bank deposits up to \$30,000

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Chaplain Assistant, 2009—Present **United States Army Reserve** Jackson, TN

- Deployed to Southwest Asia in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom Dec. 2012—Nov. 2013
- Rank E-5, Sergeant
- Certified Combat Lifesaver

LEADERSHIP AND AWARDS

- President, Friends of Ethics Service Organization, Union University
- Academic Honor Graduate in Advanced Individual Training, United States Army
- Army Commendation Medal Recipient for service in Operation Iraqi Freedom

RESEARCH AND PRESENTATIONS

- Presenter, Undergraduate Research Symposium, May 2015
- Compiled research for February 2015 *Christianity Today* magazine cover story and for a forthcoming book

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

- Experienced in both Windows and Macintosh operating systems
- Skilled in Microsoft Office suite
- Proficient in Database design and management concept

David Israel

5555 Northwick Drive
Cordova, TN 55555
Home: (901) 555.4567
Cell: (901) 555.1234
Email: pastor@hotmail.com

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

BIRTH DATE: March 29, 1986
HOME TOWN: Owensboro, KY
LICENSED TO THE MINISTRY: January 2016
MARITAL STATUS: Married on August 8, 2007
SPOUSE: Bathsheba Israel
CHILDREN: Solomon Israel (born May 27, 2014)

MINISTRY OBJECTIVE:

To lead the people of God to a greater knowledge of and deeper relationship with the Lord by feeding them the Word of God and shepherding their hearts, to better equip the saints to accomplish His work and purposes, and to share with the unsaved how to find real life and true freedom in Christ.

EDUCATION:

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary – <i>Cordova, TN</i> <i>Master of Divinity</i>	May 2018
Union University – <i>Jackson, TN</i> <i>Bachelor of Arts, Biblical Studies—Languages</i> Minor: Business Administration	May 2008

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE:

Lay Ministry Department Intern – <i>Memphis, TN</i> <i>Bellevue Baptist Church</i> Assisted in the administrative planning and physical preparation for several different ministries within the dept. including New Members Discovery Class, CARE Groups, Men’s Ministry, Crown Financial Ministries, and the Shepherd’s Care Ministry.	2013-2014
Mission Outreach – <i>Memphis, TN</i> <i>Leawood Baptist Church Mission Center</i> As part of my Practical Missions at MABTS, on a bi-monthly basis I spend time counseling and sharing the gospel with those individuals and families who come to the mission house in need of food and clothing.	2013-Present

- Retirement Home Ministry – Jackson, TN** 2010-Present
The Jackson Oaks & St. Mary's Manor
 About once per quarter, I lead the Sunday afternoon mini-church/devotional time for the residents. This includes assisting with a short time of worship, teaching a short message, and encouraging and ministering to the residents.
- Supply Preacher – Tennessee & Arkansas** 2006-Present
Various Churches
 I have supplied at about twenty different churches including Highland Park BC, Jackson, TN; Cornerstone Comm. Church, Jackson, TN; Emmanuel BC, Forrest City, AR; and Leawood East BC, Memphis, TN.
- College Discipleship Leader – Jackson, TN** 2010-2011
Cornerstone Community Church
 On a weekly basis, invested time in two college guys by training them in the Word of God, encouraging them in their walk with Christ, and holding them accountable for their actions and attitudes.
- Financial Ministry Team Member – Jackson, TN** 2009-2011
Cornerstone Community Church
 Helped oversee church finances using the Quickbooks software system, which included establishing new employees into the payroll system and managing quarterly and yearly employee taxes. Additionally, assisted in areas of financial decision-making for the church such as the benevolence ministry.

SECULAR WORK EXPERIENCE:

- MEDClean/CleanSuite Inc., LLC – Memphis, TN** 2014-2015
Manager of Operations
 In this young company, administrated/managed the cleaning services for 12 different medical sites and 29 employees. This included actively holding the cleaning crews to set standards of cleanliness, handling various personnel issues, establishing set job responsibilities/positions per location, and building service friendly relationships with our clients. Additionally, managed all scheduling & gave direct oversight to the Floor Maintenance Crew that serviced 24 locations.
- The Sherwin-Williams Company – Jackson, TN & Memphis, TN** 2008-2013
Assistant/Operations Manager
 Trained and managed store staff in order to provide great customer service and perform daily store tasks. Managed a \$100,000+ monthly inventory, initiated both commercial and retail credit accounts for the store, and managed those accounts on a daily basis, which included things like collection and customer pricing issues. Also directly involved with handling customer complaints and seeking to find satisfactory resolutions to those situations.

David Israel

5555 Northwick Drive
Cordova, TN 55555
Home: (901) 555.4567
Cell: (901) 555.1234
Email: pastor@hotmail.com

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

I was saved at the age of ten during a summer revival service at Buena Vista Baptist Church in Owensboro, KY. I followed with believer's baptism in the same church shortly thereafter. At age fourteen my family and I became very involved at Owensboro Christian Church. It was there that a couple serving as youth sponsors for our youth group took me under their wing and began to truly disciple me in the things of the Lord. By my senior year of high school, I knew that the Lord was calling me into full-time vocational ministry. I followed the Lord's leading and pursued my undergraduate education at Union University in Jackson, TN. While in Jackson, I served in various volunteer positions, including youth minister, supply preacher, and college discipleship leader, at a small Southern Baptist church called Cornerstone Community Church. My wife and I are currently members of Leawood East Baptist Church in Memphis, TN where we serve in a variety of ministry areas. I believe that a pastor, or any staff minister for that matter, has been entrusted by the Lord to feed, nurture, and lead His people while at the same time reaching out to the lost world around them with the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ. My doctrinal stance adheres to the traditional Baptist doctrine as outlined in the Baptist Faith & Message. In addition, I know that just as much as I have been called to the pastorate, my wife has been called to support me in the ministry and she eagerly desires to serve the Lord by serving His people.

Timothy Pastor

555 Big Tree St. Apt 55 • Southaven, MS 55555
(555)222-5555 • t.pastor@mail.com
@pastortimothy



PASTORAL LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING

Personable, self-motivated, visionary, and goal-oriented professional with hands-on experience as well as scholastic training in Pastoral ministry, organizational leadership and development, interpersonal communications, and event coordination. Pleasant, teachable worker with a love for people. Effective team player who is devoted to collective and personal goals of ministry. Seeking a challenging full-time career opportunity in Pastoral Ministry, organizational planning, and leadership development.

PERSONAL

Birth date: November 24, 1990

Reared: Memphis, TN

Family: Wife—Angelica Pastor of Memphis, TN

- Married January 3, 2014
- Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, Union University, Jackson, TN
- Master of Education, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, December 2013
- Middle School Mathematics Teacher, Corry Middle School, Memphis, TN, July 2011-present

Licensed: October 3, 2007, Brown Missionary Baptist Church, Southaven, MS

Ordained: December 17, 2009, Brown Missionary Baptist Church, Southaven, MS

Interests: Bicycling, Tag Football, Music, Reading, Sony PlayStation 3, Computers & Technology

EDUCATION

B.S., Bachelor of Science

UNION UNIVERSITY, Jackson, TN

Major: Organizational Leadership **GPA:** 3.0

MINISTERIAL EXPERIENCE/EMPLOYMENT

Preacher/Teacher/Conference & Workshop Speaker, Personal Ministry, November 2003-Present

Preach the entire counsel of the Bible (Luke 4:18; Mark 16:15). Teach God's principles in faithfulness and sound doctrine (Matthew 28:19; Titus 1:6-9). Instruct in methods of implementation and practical application of the teachings of scripture (Phil. 4:8; 1 Peter 2:19-25).

Director of Events, Facility Mgr., & Assoc. Pastor, Brown M.B. Church, Southaven, MS, March 2006-Present

Serve in the area of Pastoral Care. Facilitate successful planning and execution of all events at a 5000+ member congregation. Assist Youth & Young Adult Pastor in success of various youth and young adult initiatives. Manage volunteer workers and assist in assigning duties to paid workers. Coordinate and moderate planning meetings with Ministry Leaders, Media Team, and Family Enrichment Center workers. Coordinate purchase and installation of products and services. Oversee mass printing and document publication projects. Assist in coordination of intake ministry and orientation/support program for new leaders/members. Oversee success of Church involvement with various national organizations such as American Diabetes Association, Red Cross Shelter Coordination, LifeBlood, and many others.

Health Advocate, Right Choices of West TN, Newbern, TN, 2010-2011

Teach and exemplify curriculum that promotes abstinence until marriage in Lauderdale and Haywood County, TN schools. Conduct analysis of abstinence surveys and commitments of young people, grades 6-12. Reinforce benefits of a commitment and pledge to abstinence until marriage.

Assistant Director of Urban Ministry, Evangelical Community Church, Jackson, TN, 2007-2009

Organize and develop two different youth programs for high school youth who are at risk. Assist in budget allocation for program. Ensure proper dispensation of correspondence between approximately ninety families and the prospective programs. Mentor the youth in social, religious, and financial development.

SECULAR EXPERIENCE/EMPLOYMENT***Credit Manager, Wells Fargo Financial, Memphis, TN, 2010-2011***

Utilize referrals and sales leads to sell customers a variety of financial services and products such as unsecured personal loans, credit cards, real estate loans, auto loans, etc. Evaluate credit worthiness and provide quality service to all clients.

LEADERSHIP/TRAINING EXPERIENCE***Evangelism Explosion, Brown Missionary Baptist Church, Southaven, MS, 2011***

Received refresher course in evangelism methods.

Common Ground, Union University, Jackson, TN, 2004-2006

Preside as president/leader of the organization that nurtures bridging divides in communication between cultures.

Student Government Association, Union University, Jackson, TN, 2008-2009

Serve as Senator on various planning committees. Make decisions on various issues of campus business.

Minority Task Team, Union University, Jackson, TN, 2008-2009

Formulated plans to implement holistic intercultural awareness in student programming.

HONORS/COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Aspire Award (Scholarship)
- Alumni Leadership Scholarship
- African American Scholarship–Received Top Award
- Servant Leadership Award, Served as President Common Ground/Member of Student Programming Subcommittee for Union 2010 Minority Task Team

TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCIES

**Windows • Familiar w/ MAC OS • Internet/Email • Network Installation/System Administration
Microsoft Office Suite (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Publisher, & Outlook, Access, etc.)**

PERSONAL STATEMENT OF SALVATION AND CALL TO MINISTRY

I was raised in a single-parent household. My mother ensured that I was acquainted with the teachings of Christ and the church during my childhood. Subsequently, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior at an early age. I was highly active in church from that point forward. At the age of 15, I diligently began to seek the knowledge of Christ through personal relationship and His word. On my 16th birthday, I accepted what I consider a divine call to the Pastoral, Preaching, and Teaching Gospel ministry. This is where I started on a proactive path toward Christian leadership training, Pastoral care training, Doctrinal education, and the preaching of the Gospel message. I have been steadfast in the faith ever since this start. Under the supervision and charge of wonderful elders and Pastors, I have grown tremendously in faith and practice. Subsequently, my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus Christ and His righteousness.

MINISTRY STATEMENT

As believers, we are all called to always be ready to give a reason as to the hope that we have. (1 Peter 3:15) Thus, as one called to specific office in the body, the charge to equip the saints is of utmost importance. (Eph. 4:12-13) The overarching goal of ministry is found in Matthew 28:19-20, which indicates that God desires that people live lives indicative of his presence, leadership, and an unequivocal faith in Him. Effective ministry develops mature Christians able to withstand, endure, triumph, and ultimately represent the embodiment of God's will for humanity. Apart from the Word of God, this is not possible. Therefore, study and practice of the sacred scripture is necessary for proper nourishment and growth. (John 1:1-4; 2 Tim. 2:15) It is after such steadfastness that we are able to truly appreciate the byproduct of God's grace toward us. (3 John 1:2)

DOCTRINAL BELIEF

I believe in God the Father, who, in His sovereignty, created and rules over all. I believe in Jesus the Son (dead, buried, resurrected, and ascended), who came to offer eternal life to those who repent, believe, and faithfully obey him. I believe in the active presence of the Holy Spirit, who effectively works in the lives of believers. I believe the Bible to be the infallible and inspired Word of God, sufficient for the needs of the believer and the universal church, including growth in holiness and righteousness unto the Lord.

Sample Ministerial Cover Letter

C.J. Piper
206 Fern Rd.
Bluff, TN 34713
731.888.8888
youthminister@yahoo.com

June 7, 2018

Mr. Willie Willerson, Search Committee Chairman
First Baptist Church Pleasantville
467 Baptist Lane
Pleasantville, MO 55555

Dear Mr. Willerson:

I graduated from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary this past May. I am writing concerning the Senior Pastor position at First Baptist Church Pleasantville that has just opened. I heard about this job opening through the ministry department at Golden Gate Seminary. My résumé are enclosed for your review and consideration.

I understand that First Baptist Church Pleasantville is not just looking for any person to fill vacancies, but instead First Baptist is looking for people who are driven by excellence, who put Christ in the center of everything they do, who have a focus and desire to help people, and who are directed by what the future will bring. As a graduate of Golden Gate, I know that I have these qualities. I am a joyful, personable, committed, and trustworthy individual. It would be a privilege to shepherd the flock at First Baptist Church Pleasantville.

May I have an in-person interview at your earliest convenience? You may contact me at the above phone number. If you should need anything else, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from First Baptist Church Pleasantville.

Sincerely,

C.J. Piper

Enclosures: (1)

Sample Ministerial Reference Sheet

Patrick Preacher

Address: 7 East Road · Jackson, TN 55555 · **Phone Number:** (731) 555-5555 · **E-mail Address:** ppreacher@gmail.com **Twitter:** @ppreacher

References

Dr. Kevin L. Shrum

Senior Pastor
Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville, TN
(615) 555-1234

Rev. Jonathan Baine

Pastor
Pleasant Plains Baptist Church, Jackson, TN
(731) 555-3456

Dr. Ray Van Neste

Director, R.C. Ryan Center for Biblical Studies
Associate Professor of Christian Studies
Union University, Jackson, TN
(731) 661-5532

Christy Young

Administrative Assistant to the Dean of the School of Christian Studies
Union University, Jackson, TN
(731) 661-5117

Dr. Jerry Tidwell

Senior Vice President of Church Relations
Union University, Jackson, TN
(731) 661-6595

Larry Vaughan

Administrative Assistant to the Senior Vice President of Church Relations
Union University, Jackson, TN
(731) 661-6570

Dr. Greg Thornbury

Dean, School of Christian Studies
Union University, Jackson, TN
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John and Jane Doe

Owners
Marble Slab Creamery, Nashville, TN
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Sample Search Committee Interview Questions

“Questions for a Prospective Pastor”

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www.CCWtoday.org

Authors: Jim Elliff and Don Whitney

**While this section is drawn from a source written for those seeking a Senior Pastor position, it is useful for anyone seeking a full time, ministry position in a local church*

It is not uncommon for a pastor to be opposed by the very people who at first enthusiastically promoted him. Why? Often it is because only surface communication took place between the potential pastor and the congregation before he assumed his position in the church. In our day it is possible for a ministry position to be chosen for a church with almost no serious questions being asked, much less any doctrinal questions. This should never be the case. We suggest that churches seek the most complete dialogue possible about matters of doctrine, practice, and lifestyle. If the church fails to do so, the prospective minister should call for it. This procedure protects both pastor and church.

Two other matters are of extreme importance. First, the potential pastor should supply a list of references. The church must carefully follow up these references and even ask those individuals to suggest others. Consideration should be given to the fact that sometimes a person is disliked for no fault of his own. (Even Christ was hated.) The breadth of inquiry through references assures you that the pastor has “a good reputation with those both inside and outside the church.” (1 Timothy 3:7) Your questioning of references should focus on the list of qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. These lists of qualifications were written primarily as a means of observing the lives of prospective leaders in the church, not as a list of questions to ask the candidate. Such observation is extremely important. Of course the ideal would be for your church to live with the man and observe his life over months and even years of time. Because this unfortunately is not the pattern of most churches, you will have to depend heavily on the observations of the references supplied. Superficial or overly subjective answers by the candidate himself could distort the true picture. The survey below will refer to the above mentioned passages, but their use will be more general; your use of them with the names references should be extensive. This does not infer that the passages mentioned are not of extreme importance for the candidate to use in questioning himself.

Related to the above is a second consideration: Much effort should be made to expose the prospective pastor to the church for as long a time as possible before a decision is reached. Exposure to a prospect is not a problem when choosing pastors from within the congregation, but it does pose a considerable difficulty for those bringing a new pastor in from outside. A quick weekend of meetings is often not enough for the people to be properly informed. Remember, this man will be there a long time, influencing your family and the community for Christ. We know that you are ready now to have your new pastor. But there is one thing worse than no pastor—the wrong pastor.

This final suggestion: After initial interviews, consider getting taped or written answers to these questions from the one who is the most serious prospect at the time. Ask him if he is interested enough to go to this further stage of inquiry and tell him that it will take a good deal of his valuable time. This in-depth questioning is for those men who show a high level of interest. Clarifying questions can then follow by phone and personal interview. A select group of these questions may be asked later in the larger church meetings to allow the pastor to speak about his beliefs and to receive further questions.

Sample Search Committee Interview Questions, Cont'd

The following questions are not necessarily listed in order of their significance. Some of them may not be important to you. You may want to add others. There is no such thing as the perfect pastor; but attention to these matters along with lengthy times of prayer and even fasting should assure you of finding God's man for your church.

1. There are many who profess to know Christ who are mistaken. What evidences do you have that you have been given life by God?
2. What does it mean for a person to love God? In what ways do you see true biblical love toward God demonstrated in your life? Do you see true biblical love toward God in the lives of your wife and each of your children?
3. How does your wife feel about your commitment to pastoring?
4. Why do you believe God wants you in the pastorate?
5. Closely examine each of the Bible's qualifications for pastors and deacons (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). Which are your strongest qualities? With which requirements do you have the most trouble? Why do you believe these areas of difficulty do not presently disqualify you from ministering? (Note the phrase "must be" in 1 Tim. 3:2.)
6. A pastor is charged by God to preach to the church and to shepherd the people in a more individual way. Which aspect of the ministry appeals to you the most? What are some specific ways you could be helped to develop your skills in either of these areas?
7. What are your methods for involving yourself in the lives of your people as their shepherd and overseer of their souls?
8. What activities characterize your evangelistic interest? What is your approach to personal evangelism? Corporate evangelism?
9. What is your approach to counseling? How do you handle your counseling load?
10. What are your specific and regular practices regarding the spiritual disciplines (e.g., personal prayer, Bible study, meditation, stewardship, learning, etc.)?
11. How would you describe a successful pastor? How would you describe a successful church?
12. How is the pastor held accountable? What relationships in your life currently provide accountability for responsible attitudes and behavior, both personally and as pastor?
13. Who are your favorite Christian writers, commentators, theologians, etc.? Why? What books have you read in the past year?
14. Describe an instance when you made attempts to reform the church in some significant area. What were the results? What did it cost you personally?
15. Describe your leadership style. What have been some weaknesses? Strengths?
16. When you have met with opposition, has it been mostly related to your style of leadership, your personality, your beliefs, or something else?
17. According to your observations, what doctrines need special emphasis in our day?
18. What is true biblical repentance?
19. What is true biblical faith?
20. Explain justification by faith. What is the difference between the Catholic view of justification and the biblical view?
21. Please explain your view of sanctification. What are the various means God uses to sanctify the believer?
22. Can a person have Christ as his Savior without submitting to Him as Lord? Explain.

Sample Search Committee Interview Questions, Cont'd

23. What is your position on the inerrancy of Scripture?
24. Explain the biblical term “baptism of the Spirit.” When does this baptism occur?
25. What are your views on baptism by water?
26. How does the Bible relate the sovereignty of God to salvation?
27. What does the Bible teach about the extent of man’s depravity?
28. What does Christ’s atonement accomplish?
29. What does the Bible teach about the perseverance and preservation of believers?
30. What is the proper use of the Old Testament law?
31. How do you articulate your present view of end-time or eschatological issues?
32. Do you believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin? What is the significance of your belief?
33. What is your interpretation of the biblical teaching on Hell?
34. Do you believe that the events described in Genesis 1-11 are factual or symbolic?
35. What does the Bible teach concerning spiritual gifts? Please delineate your views about prophecy and speaking in tongues.
36. What is your view of divorce and remarriage? How strictly will you follow this view in practice?
37. What is your view of the phrase, “The bishop [pastor] then must be...the husband of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:2)?
38. What are your requirements for performing a marriage ceremony?
39. Please explain your views on church discipline. Relate any personal experience.
40. How would you handle a case of scandal or immorality by a church member?
41. What is your view on abortion?
42. Many children who appear to be converted at an early age show no evidence of knowing Christ later. How do you handle children when they come to you for counsel concerning conversion? What is your advice to parents?
43. What is a useful plan for receiving new members into the church? What are prerequisites?
44. What are your views on styles of church music?
45. Who should direct the worship of the church? Why? Which methods of leading corporate worship are appropriate? Which are inappropriate?
46. What does the Bible teach is the purpose of the church’s weekly gathering?
47. What are your views regarding raising money for various projects within the church? Should the church solicit those outside the church?
48. What are your convictions about the local church and debt?
49. What does the bible teach about women in pastoral ministry?
50. What does the Bible teach about how churches should make decisions?
51. How should a pastor and his church relate to other churches locally and (if denominational) to the larger body? Do you feel comfortable cooperating with other denominations? Do you draw any lines?
52. What are the biblical responsibilities of elders? Are there any distinctions between elders, pastors, and overseers? If applicable, what distinctions exist between staff and non-staff pastors?
53. What are the biblical responsibilities of deacons? How are deacons and elders to relate?
54. What emphasis do you give to the leadership of fathers with their families, especially in terms of family worship? Do you personally engage in family worship with your wife and children?
55. What is your missionary vision for the church? How are you currently demonstrating missionary interest and involvement?

Sample Search Committee Interview Questions, **Cont'd**

A man does not have to have full and immediate answers to every question to be a good and faithful minister. With some of these questions it may be acceptable for him to say, “I don’t know,” or, “I don’t have my position completely developed on that yet.”

However, beware of a pastor who seems to avoid giving clear answers. Certainly with some questions he may find it necessary to define terms and qualify his response. Proceed carefully if he avoids making his position as plain as possible.

Other questions, if applicable, might deal with such issues as social media and other new technology, the church growth movement, home schooling, the Masons, the New Age movement, racial views, political activity of the church, relationships with other ministries or movements, etc. Questions regarding other important doctrinal issues should be asked as needed (e.g., regarding the deity of Christ, the acceptance of the Trinity, etc.) Both a search committee and the church should satisfy themselves concerning any issues they wish to discuss.

Sample Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry

A PHILOSOPHY OF PASTORAL MINISTRY

BY

ZACHARY L. PENDERGRASS

Introduction

The means by which God calls a person to salvation and develops him into a child of God for the praise and glory of his name is the faithful fulfillment of pastoral ministry. In its near two thousand years of existence, the church has been developing continually into the body that it is called to be because of pastors that faithfully propagate the Gospel and oversee the souls of their apportioned flocks. It is essential that every man undertaking this work understand the essence and the ultimate aim of it, for he who grasps the weightiness of pastoral ministry is bound to serve well and lead faithfully to the glory of God. It is for this reason that I wish to present what I believe is the aim and goal of this work, its essence, its qualifications, and the means by which it is accomplished. In doing this, I hope to lay out the biblical definition and standards of ministry that I will follow as I oversee the flock that God graciously gives to me.

The Essence of Pastoral Ministry

In providing a definition of pastoral ministry, one will find texts like 1 Peter 5:1-5 and Acts 20:28 to be of help. These state that the title given to the man that leads the church is “elder” or “pastor,” and the image used to describe and define his work as a whole is the shepherding of God’s flock by the provision of oversight to their souls. This work, regardless of the age and time in which it is being accomplished or the duties placed upon it, is grounded on that basic goal, and one must do nothing that will add or detract from it. As quoted by Charles Bridges, Archbishop Alexander Leighton says this concerning pastoral ministry:

Every step in the way of our salvation hath on it the print of infinite majesty, wisdom, and goodness; and this among the rest, that men, sinful, weak men, are made subservient in that great work, of bringing Christ and souls to meet; that by “the foolishness of preaching” (or what appears so to carnal wisdom) the chosen of God are called, and come unto Jesus, and are made wise unto salvation; and that the life, which is conveyed to them by the word of life in the hands of poor men, is by the same means preserved and advanced.¹

As Leighton sees it, pastors are those sinful, poor men who have been called by God to preach the gospel to other sinful, poor men by methods deemed foolish in the eyes of the world in order to bring them to salvation and lead them in their sanctification. Therefore, one can define pastoral ministry as such: the pastor is the man who has willingly entered into pastoral ministry by the will of God to propagate the Gospel and oversee the souls of his apportioned flock with the purpose of leading them through their sanctification to bring them to their glorious eternal home. This definition will be the driving force in describing the work involved in ministry and its ultimate aim.

Work Involved in Pastoral Ministry

The primary work of pastoral ministry can be found in Acts 6, in which the apostles appointed deacons to serve the tables in order to enable them to devote adequate time to the ministry of the Word and prayer. These two acts, as seen in this text, are a priority in providing oversight, but it is important from the outset that one understands the reason studying is of importance in relation to these acts. According to John Piper, the pastor who loses sight of studying the Word loses the ability to accomplish these priorities, thus doing himself and his church a great disservice. He says:

¹ Charles Bridges, *The Christian Ministry, With an Inquiry into the Causes of its Inefficiency* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2001), p. 24.

Sample Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry, Cont'd

For your own soul and for the life of your church, fight for time to feed your soul with rich reading. Almost all the forces in our culture are trivializing. If you want to stay alive to what is great and glorious and beautiful and eternal, you will have to fight for time to look through the eyes of others who were in touch with God . . . If we are going to feed our people, we must ever advance in our grasp of Biblical truth. We must be like Jonathan Edwards who resolved in his college days, and kept the resolution all his life, “Resolved: to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive, myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.”²

As Piper notes, the culture in which we live demands much of a pastor’s time, preventing him from studying deep, biblical truths, which results in the starvation of his soul and the loss of a earnest heart that is gripped by “what is great and glorious and beautiful and eternal.” This starvation of his soul will also result in the starvation of souls of his church, because he will have nothing to offer them but his sinful depraved self. He will not be able to adequately pray for his people nor will he be able to offer them any sort of substantive truth, because he is not equipping himself with the knowledge to fulfill these works. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that a pastor be immersed in conducting in-depth biblical studies and in reading the works of scholars from ages past if he is to truly feed his people and pray for them.

Understanding the importance of studying the Word will now allow one to see how these acts are accomplished in light of in-depth study. As noted earlier, the two main aspects of work in pastoral ministry are prayer and the ministry of the Word. I will discuss them by their stated order.

- 1. Prayer** – Prayer is the act by which pastors intercede for their people, find power to do their work, and seek vision for the overall progress and mission of the church. It is here that a pastor will lift up those among his people that are not wise in the ways of salvation. It is here that he gives supplication for the overall health of the church, its unity, and its work in spreading the gospel to a dying, hostile world. It is here that he can lift up individuals of the body and pray for the health of their souls. Beyond these things, prayer is an act of praise to God when done properly. As Piper notes:

A cry for help from the heart of a childlike pastor is sweet praise in the ears of God. Nothing exalts Him more than the collapse of self-reliance which issues in passionate prayer for help. “*Call upon me* in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall *glorify me*” (Ps. 50:15). Prayer is the translation into a thousand different words of a single sentence: “Apart from me [Christ] you can do nothing” (John 15:5).³

This one act, when a pastor casts “all [his] anxiety on [God] (1 Pet. 5:7), demonstrates to God the humility of his heart, because he makes himself utterly dependent on God to take care of the difficult situations which he himself could not. This act says is a declaration of one’s helplessness to produce spiritual fruit in himself or God’s people without God’s divine intervention. This is the work of prayer in pastoral ministry.

- 2. Ministry of the Word** – Paul characterizes the ministry of the Word in 2 Timothy 4:2, when he exhorts his protégé Timothy “to preach the Word, be ready in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, [and] exhort, with great patience and instruction.” These exhortations summarize the work involved in this aspect of pastoral ministry. Without the preaching and teaching of the Gospel and the admonition of the

² John Piper, *Brothers, We are not Professionals*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 66, 74.

³ *Ibid.*, 55.

Sample Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry, Cont'd

church, the body will not grow properly, if at all. One will also notice with Paul in Acts 20 that the entirety of the Word is to be preached, regardless of whether it makes the pastor or the church uncomfortable to be challenged by the truth. Paul also says here that he taught the church “publicly and from house to house.” This puts forth two aspects by which the ministry of the Word is accomplished: the public and private teaching and preaching of the Word.

- a. **Public:** Concerning the public teaching and preaching of the word, Paul is referring here to pulpit ministry. In this act, a pastor methodically lays out the truth of the Gospel to the entire congregation by preaching the whole counsel of God to strengthen their wounded souls and awaken those who either do not know God or are living without earnestness for his glory. This is no easy task, as Baxter clearly states:

It is a work that requires great skill and especially greater life and zeal than any of us can ever bring to it. For it is no small matter to stand up before a congregation and deliver a message of salvation or judgment as from the living God, doing so in the name of the Redeemer. It is no easy matter to speak so plainly that the ignorant may understand us. Or to preach so seriously that the deadest hearts may feel us. Or to reason so convincingly that those who are argumentative may be silenced.⁴

It is for this reason that Paul states, “The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.” This work is not easy, so the man who pursues pulpit ministry with unrelenting fervor is worthy of great honor, because he seeks to do it well. Here is a metaphor to understand this work: a pastor is like a soldier whose mission is to make the clarion call to prisoners to follow him out of enemy territory to their freedom and then train those who listen to him into soldiers equipped to save other prisoners.

- b. **Private:** The private teaching of the Word is the work of individually teaching and admonishing the people apart from the pulpit. While the former is key, it is important for pastors to actively seek opportunities to speak into the lives of their people outside of the pulpit so that they can improve, rebuke, and correct the people as they are called to do in 2 Timothy 4:2. I call on Baxter’s wisdom again to stress why this private work is so important:

Make it your great and serious business to teach the fundamentals of the faith to all members of your congregation by these private tutorials. For I perceive that the life of work under God lies in the prudent, effectual ministry of searching men’s hearts, and setting there the saving truths of faith. I fear most those ministers who preach well, and who are unsuited to the private nurture of their members.

Though Baxter’s method of doing private ministry was through catechism, a work that may seem out of touch in today’s high-paced, professional culture, he does make a point that it is of utmost importance that a pastor seek out these private opportunities to teach and admonish the flock if he is to fully reach their souls and edify them. One can accomplish this through small group settings or one-on-one relationships where the Word is taught in a myriad of ways and where individual conversations take place allowing the pastor and the church member to know each other better. This

⁴ Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor, A Pattern for Personal Growth and Ministry*, ed. James M. Houston (Vancouver, Regent College, 1985), 78.

Sample Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry, Cont'd

environment will also allow a pastor to know how best to minister to and pray for his people individually.

This is the primary work of involved in ministry, and its importance cannot be understated. The reason for this is twofold, as can be found in both Paul and Peter's writings. Paul says, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths" (2 Tim. 4:3-4). The "they" here is the church, and Paul says this because he knows that as man hears the Word and is confronted by it, he is naturally going to oppose what he hears and go elsewhere to hear something that will make him feel good about himself and his sin. Furthermore, suffering is going to be an inherent part of the Christian life. One finds in 1 Peter 4:13 that believers are not only told they must persevere in suffering, but they must also rejoice in it "to the degree that [they] share the sufferings of Christ . . . so that also at the revelation of His glory [they] may rejoice with exultation." If believers are going to be kept from following their natural sinful inclinations and be encouraged in their suffering, then they need pastors who will fulfill these priorities in the work of pastoral ministry. This is why it is so crucial that a pastor understand his call to shepherd the flock of God by providing oversight willingly according to God, by eagerly serving the church in their needs, and by using his God-given authority to give an example to people on how to live (1 Peter 5:2-3). Without this humble service, the flock will do exactly what Paul said it would do in 2 Timothy 4.

Qualifications of a Pastor

Charles Bridges notes well concerning the work of pastoral ministry: "We cannot suppose the Lord to send unqualified laborers, *however willing*, into his vineyard: and none but he can qualify them."⁵ This work cannot be accomplished by anyone, and one cannot think that God would arbitrarily send unqualified workers to fulfill this weighty role. Rather, he calls certain men into this work and qualifies them for it, or in other words, gives them the needed abilities and traits to accomplish it. One can find these traits in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 where Paul sets out for his two protégés Timothy and Titus what is basically yet urgently needed. He does this through two separate lists to discern, and the one trait that seems to be required the most in both lists is that a minister must be above reproach in the presence of his church and the world as well. It seems that Paul wants both men to understand that an elder must be above reproach if he is going to lead his flock and spread the gospel. Other important traits to notice are humility and respectability, which tie into this idea of irreproachability in that a pastor who is humble and respectable will not allow his pride to draw undue attention to himself so that he brings reproach upon himself and the church. Concerning pastoral ministry, the underlying point of these texts is that the pastor who has these traits will be equipped to take a firm stand against heresy and thus protect his church and his family. As a catch-all statement that gets at the heart of what this work desires, Bridges states:

To fill the ministerial office with a degree of satisfaction and benefit commensurate with its capabilities, or with the desire of a heart awake to its importance, we must be all that it demands – men of God, perfect, completely furnished to every good work. This is an elevated standard. He that aims highest will most approximate to it.⁶

The Aim of Pastoral Ministry

At this point, I believe it will be most sufficient to discuss the aim and goal of pastoral ministry. To begin with, Paul summarizes the goal of ministry in Colossians 1:25-29. He says:

Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been

⁵ Bridges, *The Christian Ministry*, 99.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

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hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, *admonishing every man* and *teaching every man* with all wisdom, so that we may *present every man* complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.⁷

The ultimate goal of ministry is this: as pastors labor to admonish and teach every person under their care with all of the wisdom of the Gospel, they do this work in order that they may present every one of those individuals complete in Christ. Their ultimate aim is to lead every individual by the ways of the Word to the throne of God where they may stand perfect and complete before his throne on the Day of Judgment due to their obedience to the Gospel.

Baxter gives one of the best explanations of this goal when he says:

The ultimate end of our pastoral oversight must be linked with the ultimate purpose of our lives. This is to please and to glorify God. It is also to see the sanctification and holy obedience of the people under our charge. To nurture our people's unity, order, beauty, strength, preservation, and increase must be our task. It is the right worshipping of God.⁸

This is a lofty goal, but the beauty of Colossians 1:29 is that it reminds the pastor that he is not doing this work on his own. Paul says, "For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me." It is Christ who gives a pastor the power to preach, reprove, correct, admonish, and encourage, and it is Christ who helps the pastor meet individuals in their most basic needs in order that the flock may be perfect and complete. This should be of great encouragement to the pastor for it reminds him that though he is a poor, sinful man, Christ can use him to accomplish purposes which he could not begin to do by his own efforts. With this high aim of ministry in view, may pastors never cease to pursue this end.

Conclusion

I have presented my general philosophy of pastoral ministry according to my understanding of the wisdom provided by the Scriptures and pastors throughout history. Again, I believe that the means by which God calls a people unto salvation and develops them into a nation for the praise and glory of his name is through the faithful fulfillment of this work. By providing oversight through prayer and the ministry of the Word with a humble attitude, I believe a pastor can accomplish the goal of presenting every individual in his care to God as perfect and complete in the Gospel. In giving this philosophy, I have not sought to give an exhaustive description of the pastorate nor deal with the minutiae of the work. Rather, I have sought to lay forth the chief aim and essence of this work and the means by which one may achieve that end. In other words, these are the guidelines by which pastoral ministry should be conducted. The manner of accomplishing this work may vary depending on the context of the pastor, but one may not change or overlook these principals under any circumstance. In the end, I pray that pastors in this day may be reminded of the true definition of ministry that they may lead by it instead of tempting worldly methods.

⁷ Emphasis added.

⁸ Baxter, *Reformed Pastor*, 68.