

ATHENS *Prayer Network* USA

Praying for Your Pastor

Your pastor is either preyed on or prayed for! Over the past 25 years, I have had the privilege of journeying with senior pastors. From working alongside, to coaching, consulting, mentoring and praying for (and with) them, I have found they carry a load that unless you have been there, wearing that hat, you cannot possibly understand. They bear a tremendous spiritual burden for their congregation. They are primary targets of the enemy. If the devil can get one to fall or give up, which does happen, he impacts many people. They have a lot of unfair and unrealistic expectations placed on them, some even comes from themselves! Many pastors don't have anyone they feel they can share this burden with. For many, the joy that they started this journey with is gone and now ministry is simply a huge chore. They may appear fine on Sundays, but underneath the surface they can be hurting, dry or weary. Your pastor needs you to stand around him and create a prayer shield. Here are three vital ways to pray for pastors. When these areas are healthy, your pastor stands tall, bold and faith-filled. When any of these are lacking your pastor is not fully present.

Pray for his soul

The health of your pastor's soul determines how he lives, leads and loves. If he is dry, that's the well he dips into for his sermons. If there is passion and joy in His soul, it is seen and felt in everything he does. Pray first and foremost that his love for Jesus would remain fresh and real. Pray that he would find refreshment and oasis with the Lord, that his focus would not simply be on preparing his next sermon. Pray that he would be captivated by God's glory, and stand in awe of His beauty. Pray that his ears would be open to hear God's voice, his eyes open to see the Lord's face, and his heart open to respond to whatever the Lord puts there. Pray that God would reveal blind spots, hidden or secret sins and places that need to come into the light. Ask God to bring healing where he is wounded. Pray for grace to step out of any places of isolation, to address any areas of false security, or fear, or pride. Ask God to renew his first love for Jesus! Pray for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation that he might know Jesus better (Eph. 1:17).

Pray for his marriage

Many pastor's wives are terribly hurt from years of ministry. They start strong, side-by-side, key partners in ministry. But over the years they can get burned out, disappointed, disillusioned and begin to pull out. They can often feel the weight and burden of emotional pain and brokenness that their husbands carry. This can be overwhelming for them. Marriage is meant to be a place of unity, of oneness, of divine partnership. But the enemy gets in and looks for ways to kill, steal and destroy. Pray for your pastor's marriage. Pray for clear boundaries between home and ministry. Pray for romance and intimacy, for communication, for healing, for forgiveness, for grace! Pray that he would love his wife like Christ loves His church and that she would truly be his help-mate and partner.

Pray for his family

Pastors' kids have tremendous expectations placed on them as well. They are expected to live at a higher level. And everyone is watching. Pray for grace and freedom in the pastor's home. Pray that their children would be hungry for their own authentic relationship with God. Pray for protection over the family. Pray for provision, as most pastors struggle financially just like everyone else. Pray that God's presence would tangibly fill their home.

Your pastor needs your prayer. Unless you pray, they will be preyed upon. You will build a wall of protection around them as you pray for the health of their soul, for their marriage and their children. The effects will be felt in everything they do. This is a battle we **MUST** engage in! As you pray, the Lord will show you more specifically how to love, care and stand with them! As you begin each day, ask the Holy Spirit to help you be alert and pray for your pastor during the day.

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