

TILL THE CHURCH DO US PART

Sth Queensland Pastor's Meetings February, 2015

The Pastor

1. The seductive nature of work-success



"... in broad terms men tend to be more readily attracted to their work while women find greater fulfilment in their home-life. Men find it easier to "do" rather than "relate." They like to be able to observe their achievements and see their successes, possibly more easily achieved in the definitive nature of the workplace than in the somewhat undefined, relational world of marriage and family-life.

While men desire and cherish their personal relationships, they generally tend to find a greater sense of value and personal worth in their work."

The Pastor

2. Absent Fathers



"Fathers were considered to be of secondary importance to mothers and perhaps even unnecessary."

David Blankenhorn, Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), 2.

"Men in general, and fathers in particular, are increasingly viewed as superfluous to family life."

David Blankenhorn, Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), 2. "Whether caused by divorce and broken families, or by deliberate single parenting, uninvolved or uncommitted fathering, more and more children grow up without fathers."

Steve Biddulph suggests that father-hunger is now widely seen "as the most important concept in male psychology."

Bill Muehlenberg, "The Facts of Fatherlessness," Fathers In Families, Fatherhood Foundation http://www.fatherhood.org.au/resources/FathersinFamiliesLR.pdf (accessed October 25, 2013).

"Almost everyone who came to the conference agreed that the restoration of fatherhood in Australia was one of Australia's most pressing social problems."

Warwick Marsh, "Senate Select Committee on Men's Health 2009," Dads4Kids Fatherhood Foundation <u>http://www.fatherhood.org.au/resources/Senate%20Inquiry%20Men's</u> <u>%20Health%/</u> 2013Mar09.pdf (accessed October 25, 2010). In describing the benefits of having a father in the home, Biddulph suggest the research is "stunningly clear:"

- * both boys and girls have higher self-esteem
- * they do better in school, and stay on in school longer;
- * they become better qualified and are more likely to be employed;
- * they are less likely to have trouble with the law;
- * they are less likely to be victims of assault;
- * girls are less likely to experience early pregnancy;
- * boys are less likely to be violent or belong to a gang;
- * boys and girls are less likely to have problems with drugs or alcohol.

Steve Biddulph, *The New Manhood: The Handbook for a New Kind of Man.* (Sydney: Finch Publishing, 2010), 147.

This is because women devote more hours per week than men to non-work activities such as childcare, elder care and are more likely to have primary responsibility for unpaid labour such as domestic work. Furthermore, other studies show that women also experience less spousal support for their careers than their male counterparts. Although women report higher levels of work-family conflict than do men, the numbers of worklife conflict reported by men is increasing.

Melissa Abercromby, "A Report on the Importance of Work-Life Balance," <u>http://</u> <u>www.bia</u>. ca/articles/ AReportontheImportanceofWork-LifeBalance.htm (accessed October 18, 2013).



The Pastor

3. High sense of calling, and dedication

"You may choose a profession, but the ministry cannot be invaded that way, for the ministry is more than a profession: it is a calling. . . . A call to the gospel ministry is a call not to be a sociologist or a public performer, but an ambassador for Christ. A call to anything less is not a call to the ministry. This call demands a full-time, life-consuming devotion."

Ministerial Association, Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Manual (Silver Spring, MD: The Ministerial Association, 1992), 17. "Regardless of the means by which the Lord initiates it, His call becomes an all-absorbing passion, a relentless drive that leads its possessor to proclaim: 'Necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!' (1 Cor 9:16). The conviction becomes a 'fire in the bones' that will not be denied expression (Jer 20:9)."

SDA Minister's Manual, 1992, 76

"The ministry is more than a vocation, it is more than a profession, it is more than a career, it is more than a position; it is a calling, it is a commitment, it is a life."

W. J. Blacker, "The Charge and Welcome to Newly Ordained Ministers," *Ministry* XLV, no. 5 (May 1972): 15.

The minister who is a co-worker with Christ will have a deep sense of the sacredness of his work, and of the toil and sacrifice required to perform it successfully. He does not study his own ease or convenience. He is forgetful of self. In his search for the lost sheep, he does not realise that he himself is weary, cold and hungry. He has but one object in view - the saving of souls.

Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 16.

"Your entire energy, time, talents, are to be directed to your work. There is no turning back. No side lines are to divert your attention or dilute your influence. Your conduct must be an example and your integrity beyond question."

(Portion of the charge presented to pastors at their ordination)

"Every fiber of the minister's body, every pulsation of his energy, every moment of his time must be God's, if His agenda is to be followed."

Miroslav Kis, "Sexual Misconduct in Ministry: A Biblical Sketch of Pastoral Identity (Part 1)," *Ministry* 76, no. 1 (January 2004): 9.

The Pastor

4. Set Apart



The spiritual rite of ordination constitutes the official recognition by the Seventh-day Adventist Church of his divine call to the ministry as a life-commitment, and is his endorsement to serve as a minister of the gospel in any part of the world.

SDA Minister's Manual, 75.

"The setting apart of men for the sacred work of the ministry should be regarded as one of the most vital concerns of the church. . . . The proofs of a man's divine call must be clearly evident before the church sets him apart by ordination."

Ministerial Association of Seventh-day Adventists, "Qualifications for the Ordination of Ministers", General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1955/01/qualifications-for-theordination-of-ministers (accessed June 4, 2013). "While all Christians render spiritual service, the New Testament portrays an organised church, administered and nurtured by persons who are specially called by God, set apart by the laying on of hands to a particular service. . . . Ordination, an act of commission, acknowledges God's call, sets the individual apart, and appoints that person to serve the church in a special capacity."

"The setting apart of men for the sacred work of the ministry should be regarded as one of the most vital concerns of the church... The proofs of a man's divine call must be clearly evident before the church sets him apart by ordination."

Ministerial Association of Seventh-day Adventists, "Qualifications for the Ordination of Ministers," General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/ 1955/01/qualifications-for-the-ordination-of-ministers (accessed June 4, 2013). "We are proposing a way of being church where leaders are no longer set apart but are more integrated as interdependent parts of the congregation under the Headship of Christ. This will mean a paradigm shift in the way we think church for all of us."

Paul and Libby Whetham, *Hard to Be Holy* (Adelaide: Lifeboatstories.com, 2000), 56.

The Pastor

5. Lack of defined work hours and a broad job description





"Never before have pastors struggled more with too much work, too many unsolvable problems, far too much stress, and too little job satisfaction."

Ivan Charles Blake, "Pastor for Life," *Ministry* 82, no. 7/8 (July/August 2010): 6.



A fifty-two year-old priest noted:

"People really don't know much about the life of a priest, except that they expect them to be always available and to attend immediately."

Whetham and Whetham, Hard to be Holy, 6.

The range of jobs provided in the pastoral responses included: educator (training, and instructing and leading study groups); evangelist (converting others to faith);

organiser (organising and supervising the work of the parish and the congregation);

pastor (visiting and counselling);

preacher (delivering sermons and expounding the Word of God);
priest (conducting worship and administering the sacraments);
scholar (reading, studying and writing);
and social reformer (involved directly in attacking social
injustices).

Whetham and Whetham, Hard to be Holy, 6.

The National Church Life Survey (NCLS), a survey of 4,500 clergy in Australia across all denominations:

"It is evident from the results that leaders carry out a wide range of roles. Further, it is clear that leaders have different perceptions of what their roles should be, compared to what they actually are."

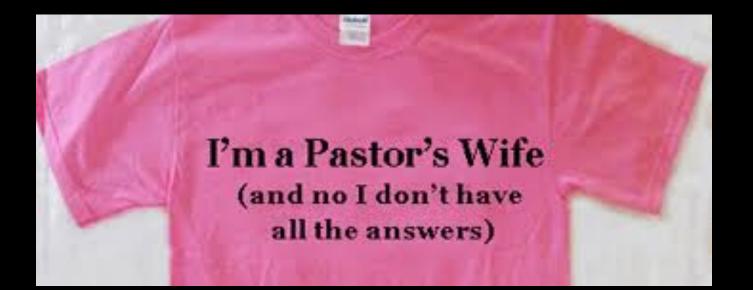
Whetham and Whetham Hard to be Holy, 6.

The NCLS indicated that 43 percent of senior ministers/pastors/ priests feel they waste time on tasks not central to their role. Further, higher levels of burnout were discovered where congregations and leaders disagreed over the pastoral role, or where there was disagreement between leaders' actual role and desired role. "The question of role is clearly a vexed one."

Whetham and Whetham, 6

The Pastor's Spouse

1. High role-expectations



"One of the greatest areas of stress for many pastoral families are the high level of expectations placed on the pastoral family, particularly the wife and children."

James A. Cress, "Selective Disobedience," *Ministry* 71, no. 6 (June 1998): 28-29.

"As resident 'holy woman' she's a walking target for everyone's unconscious expectations of what such a saint should be. There's no one providing pastoral care for most clergy wives. Clergy families are often on the move, and such relocations are stressful. Parsonage living for many isn't easy. On controversial issues she must stay silent."

Rowland Croucher, "What Pastor's Wives Wish Their Husbands and Churches Knew About Them," John Mark Ministries http://www.jmm.org.au/articles/ 8202.htm (accessed June 4, 2013). "Research has found a significant negative linear relationship between perceived church expectations and clergy wife marital satisfaction."

Polly Sheffield Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention," Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University www.scholar.lib.vt.edu/ theses/available/etd-04272004-134248/unrestricted/ RobertsDissertation2.pdf (accessed June 4, 2013). "Though others may expect her to derive her sense of self from the role-prescription her husband, the congregation, and society at large have for her, she may become dissatisfied, frustrated, anxious and even angry as she becomes more of what everyone wants her to be and less of what she really is."

Sarah Jane Wessels, "Care for the Pastor's Wife, Too!" <u>http://</u> <u>www.ministryhealth.net/</u> mh_articles/ 219_sv_care_pastors_wife.html (accessed June 8, 2013). Marilyn Oden reports on her qualitative research among a group of 200 clergy spouses who were invited to write anonymous letters expressing the things they would like to say to their congregations if there were no fear of reprisal. The concern most frequently expressed in the responses was "the issue of unrealistic expectations."

Marilyn Brown Oden, "Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today" http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=311 (accessed June 4, 2013).

The Pastor's Spouse

2. Relationship to the Pastoral call



Rachel Lovingood and Jennifer Landrith outline four common response types that describe the reactions of pastoral spouses to their partner's call to ministry:

- 1. a spouse who believes they have had a clear call of their own
- 2. a more general response to the calling
- 3. surprised by the call
- 4. the impersonal response to the call



"The wife of the minister of the Gospel can be either a most successful helper and a great blessing to her husband or a hindrance to him in his work. It depends very much on the wife whether a minister will rise from day to day in his sphere of usefulness, or whether he will sink to the ordinary."

Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1952), 355.

Lovett Weems Jr. and Joseph Arnold refer to a study that found a spouse's feelings factored into a pastor's decision to leave the ministry, and in a further study, one-third of one hundred and thirtyone clergy who left the ministry noted that the wife or family was unhappy.

Lovett H. Weems Jr. and Joseph E. Arnold, "Clergy Health: A Review of Literature," Lewis Centre of Church Leadership <u>http://www.gbophb.org/</u> <u>userfiles/file/health/CFH/FTL_Clergy_Health</u> _lit_Review.pdf (accessed June 4, 2013). "Traditional roles and values related to gender, marriage, parenting, home, employment, and church routine continue to resonate amidst an environment of change, with accompanying confusion and uncertainty."

Polly Sheffield Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention," Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University www.scholar.lib.vt.edu/ theses/available/etd-04272004-134248/unrestricted/ RobertsDissertation2.pdf (accessed June 4, 2013). "The basic job description for pastor's wives hasn't changed in a century. But pastor's wives have. The rise of megachurches, dual-career couples and women's independence have complicated the role and in some cases intensified the frustrations."

Lisa Cullen, "Think Your Job Is Tough? Try Being a Pastor's Wife" http://www.business. time.com/2007/03/29/think_your_job_is_tough_try_be/#ixzz2VDdNMsia (accessed June 4, 2013).

"Definitions of pastor, preacher, preacher's wife, parsonage family, husband, wife, mother and father are no longer fixed or one-dimensional. Ministers, spouses and churches need guidance and support as they grapple with new styles of family life and unfamiliar patterns of relationships."

Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention."

The Pastor's Spouse

3. On public view and scrutiny



A multi-denominational study revealed that 30 percent of clergy wife participants named a goldfish bowl existence as the most difficult component of their family situation.

A lack of privacy affects marital satisfaction in clergy wives as well as clergy wife role satisfaction, and that intrusiveness negatively affects clergy wives competence in family functioning.

Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention." 39

The Pastor's Spouse

4. Single-parent lifestyle



"When she was at church, her pastor husband was no longer 'hers.' She couldn't expect him to be at her side, and sometimes she didn't see him the entire morning. . . . He couldn't sit with her in church or stand around and drink coffee with her, talking to her friends. He was 'at work' and this was his 'job.'"

• Susie Hawkins, *From One Ministry Wife to Another* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), 194.

"Evenings are frequently co-opted by church events, committee meetings, and unexpected crises. All this leaves the family feeling like they have to compete with the congregation for the pastor's time - a battle they frequently lose."

Cameron Lee and Kurt Fredrickson, *That Their Work Will Be a Joy* (Eugene OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 174.

Divorced clergy wives listed the minister's lack of time commitment to her and the family as a stress factor that contributed to the divorce.

Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention."

The Pastor's Marriage

1. Placed on a pedestal



The pastor's wife will try to be "the perfect example - never wanting anyone to see them in a negative light."

Debra D. Benoit, "The Changing Role of the Pastor's Wife in todays Evangelical Church," DMin diss., Lynchburg, VA: Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010, 20.

"Pastor's wives are perceived to be a special 'holy' race - and some even act that way."

Rowland Croucher, "What Pastor's Wives Wish Their Husbands and Churches Knew About Them," John Mark Ministries http://www.jmm.org.au/articles/ 8202.htm (accessed June 4, 2013). Roberts refers to research that identified social desirability, defined as "the perceived need of the spouse to always be seen positively by the congregation and community" as a variable affecting marital satisfaction.

In a multi-denominational study of 321 clergy and spouses, "59 percent of the clergy wives cited unreasonable expectations of the congregation and the community as a disadvantage of being married to a pastor.

Other researchers also identified negative impacts on clergy wives related to perceived pressure to be an exemplary role model."

Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention."

The Pastor's Marriage

2. Shared and public



Understandably, church people want their pastors to be available in their time of need or crisis. From their perspective, their requests seem small. For pastors, however, each request stands in a long line with many others, and the demand can feel overwhelming at times.

Lee and Fredrickson, That Their Work Will Be a Joy, 174.

Ministers are often placed on a pedestal by a well-meaning congregation that leaves them "isolated, watched, analysed, critiqued. This sense of isolation and scrutiny can carry over to the pastor's spouse".

Joel N. Musvosvi, "Being Mirrors in the Parsonage," *Ministry* 74, no. 12 (December 2001): 5.

"Despite significant shifts in the way members of the clergy are viewed, there is still a strong feeling that the minister and his family members should be held to a higher standard of conduct

than so-called 'ordinary' people."

The Centre for Ministerial Care, "Marriage and Family" http://www.cogcmc.org/pdf/marriage-and-family.pdf (accessed June 9, 2013).

"Clergy wives 'share their man' with other women, and as pastors are the last 'helping professionals' to regularly visit women alone in their homes, there are unique temptations to cope with."

Rowland Croucher, "What Pastor's Wives Wish Their Husbands and Churches Knew About Them," John Mark Ministries http://www.jmm.org.au/articles/ 8202.htm (accessed June 4, 2013).

"While the husband may find little time for his family, he pays a lot of attention to other women (by the nature of his job) and maintains an adoring public."

Madeline S. Johnston, "Burnout in Clergy Families," *Ministry* 59, no. 6 (June 1986): 26.

The Pastor's Marriage

3. Time challenged



"While meaningful relationships may clearly be a key, the problem is that many church leaders are too busy to have them."

Whetham and Whetham, Hard to be Holy, 14.

- * To stop and come together for a real study of some Bible topics without the interruptions of phones, etc.
- * more time together
- * quality time together (not necessarily quantity as I understand all the demands placed upon my husband)
- * Intimate time together personal time together to be able to pray and study for our family and church. Time alone!
- * More communication
- * More time with my husband

- * To understand each other better
- * TIME!! (For just the two of us)
- * Day-by-day togetherness in worship/petition/ intercession/real worship with God - pray together about everything
- * Free time with family
- * Time with my husband that is not work-related
- * To feel close even while camp is going on, with all the responsibilities -- and to reconnect afterwards.

- * Spend time together
- * Communication
- * Balance Intimacy, time, affirmation, partner-pride
- * A marriage-enrichment seminar; communication workshop; time-management seminar; balance in the home; get away
- * Time and holidays
- * Can stay as it is (Hooray!!)
- * Time; balance; Raising kids in a blended family
- * Time and life-balance

* Quality time

- * Strengthening the bond; knowing the mind of the other
- * More time together
- * More time with one another
- * More time with each other and less time spent with people from the congregation
- * Time to spend together to grow our relationship
- * Having quality time together
- * Time with husband!

- * Time to do things together
- * Time to do things together amongst the demands from the work and raising children
- * To spend more time together and have patience and understanding for us and our kids



The Pastor's Marriage

4. Friendship challenged



"Without relationships humans wither and die, both emotionally and physically. The quality of our life diminishes when there is no one to share it with - family, friends, or spouse.... We certainly were not designed to go through life emotionally disconnected."

Archibald D. Hart and Sharon Hart Morris, Safe Haven Marriage (Nashville, TN: W. Publishing Group, 2003), 50.



"Loneliness and isolation can literally 'break your heart."

James J. Lynch, *The Broken Heart* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1977), 14, 8.

"Although pastors and their wives are just as human as everyone else, often I've heard counsel that we should not have close friends in our local churches. As if the pastoral couple is supposed to constantly give—give love, give time, give help, in various situations. When are we able to receive?"

Hannele Ottschofski, "Friends - We All Need Them," *Ministry* 65, no. 12 (December, 1992): 14. Research on clergy wives regularly identified a lack of social support as a negative impact, not only on their life satisfaction but also their marital satisfaction. In fact clergy wives "exhibited higher levels of loneliness than expected for their level of satisfaction in marriage." Loneliness has also been shown to predict depressive symptomatology in clergy wives.

Roberts, "Alleviating Stress in Clergy Wives: The Development and Formative Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention," 34.

"We are so busy in our own district that it is sometimes impossible to enjoy fellowship with neighboring pastoral couples. And when a friendship finally forms . . . it's time to pack our cases and move on again. Sometimes we realized who our real friends were only when we moved away! . . . Could it be that the church forces us into a mold to which we are expected to conform, and thus the only place we can be normal people is outside the church?"

Ottschofski, 15.

"If people can't be themselves around pastors, the reverse is also true: pastors can't be themselves around others. They're expected to be different: more spiritual, more patient, more loving, exemplary spouses and parents."

Lee and Fredrickson, That Their Work Will Be A Joy, 35-36.



The Pastor's Church

1. Expectations for strong pastoral marriages



"The obligation of ministers and their family members to serve as models in marriage and family life cannot be set aside or washed away."

Centre for Pastoral Care.

The families of pastors are similar to other families, plus have the added pressure of being on display and under constant scrutiny. Because communities of faith are about accepting, developing, and maintaining trust in God demonstrated through the way believers live their lives, church members instinctively tend to look at the pastor's family as a model of how to behave as a Christian. Since no one is perfect, the deficiencies within the parsonage are often magnified for no other reason than their position in church life as the "first family."

Willie E. Hucks II, "The Life of the Pastoral Family: An Interview with Willie and Elaine Oliver," *Ministry* 85, no. 3 (March 2013): 6.

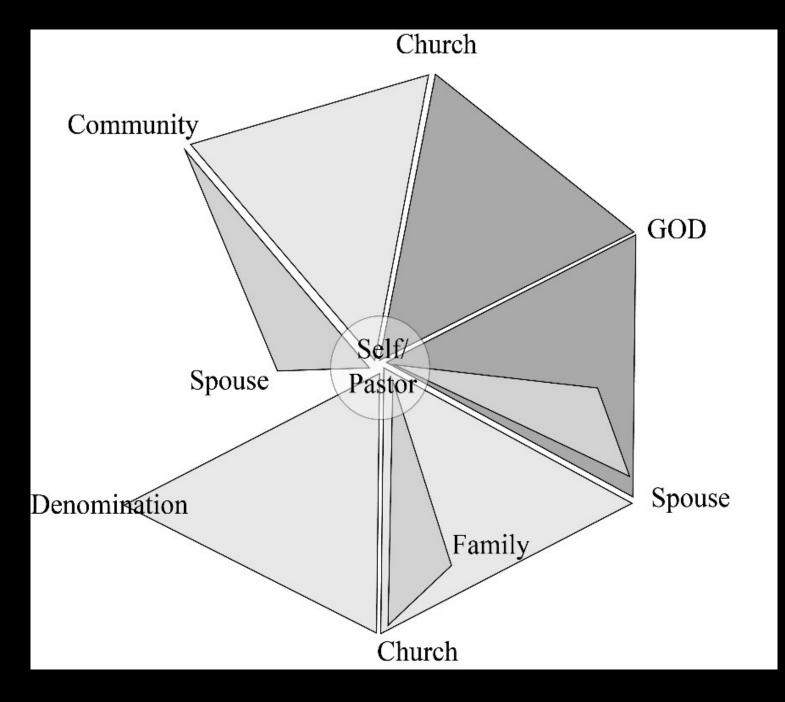
In a survey of counsellors who counsel clergy, marital difficulties was the most oft cited problem for which church leaders sought help. "Reasons cited for marital problems include long hours, infrequent leisure time which often does not coincide with most of society, low stipends, enmeshment of work and family systems, and expectations from the congregations and the couple themselves."

Whetham and Whetham, 13.

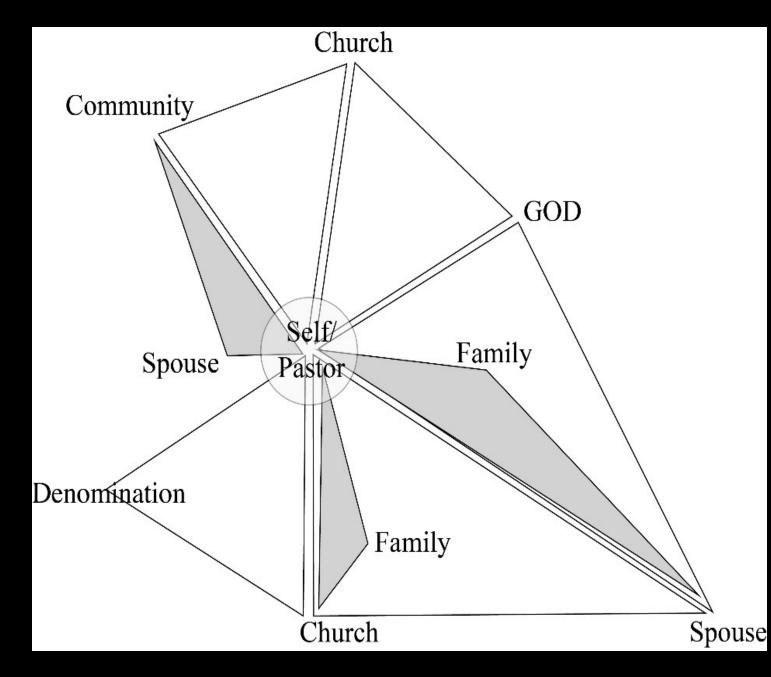
Any statement or suggestion that the pastor might be struggling with issues of intimacy in his marriage may jeopardise a call to a desired church or administrative position. It may also indicate a weakness in their skill-set that might place their career further in jeopardy. Pastoral couples may therefore be far more likely to sustain their lessthan-ideal marriage and struggle on rather than risking a tainted report on their ministry.

1. Distorted Relationships/Inappropriate Liaisons





When these triangles are working well each set of relationships between two enhances the growth and potential for learning from the third.



When these triangles are poorly defined and not working well, they become a series of triangles in which two sides are constantly vying for the love and loyalty of the third. "It is these triangles that in the field of personal relationships open the door to possibilities of promiscuity without responsibility."

Almost every choice will be conflictual while ever the sides of the triangle are considered to be in competition. For example, it is the church that provides the money for the provision of the marriage, yet it is the church that is often seen as taking away from the closeness or free time in the marriage.

The pastor-church-spouse triangle is the one most open to the potential of promiscuous behaviour and, in a poorly differentiated pastoral marriage, "can lead to break down with affairs with the church as fantasy mistress or in the extreme with members of the church (what someone has called extra menical affairs)."

Doug Sotheren, A Promiscuous Profession (Unpublished Paper)

"Being starved of intimacy with both people and God, places many lonely church leaders in a vulnerable position. Many either leave, or get their needs met in some other way."

"The sexual misconduct literature . . . identifies loneliness and a fear of intimacy as primary factors in sexual abuse." "Research among secular psychotherapists and counsellors in the U.S. indicate that 6-7 percent admit sexual intercourse with clients. This figure is almost half that of clergy."

A range of surveys suggest clergy are probably twice as likely to abuse as secular therapists.

Muriel Porter, Sex, Power and the Clergy (Melbourne, Victoria: Hardie Grant Books, 2003), 116.

2. Pornography



"The following topics are the most prominent in regards to internet pornography consumption and marital relationships: online sexual pursuits as a predictor of marital distress, separation and divorce; decreased sexual satisfaction; decreased sexual intimacy; infidelity; and other issues such as overspending and debt."

Vivian Chan, "The Impact of Pornography on Marital Relationships," The Wishingwell Counselling Service http://www.wishingwellcounselling.com/ family/the-impact-of-pornography-on-marital-relationships/ (accessed July 10, 2013).

Bridges lists among the effects of the use of pornography: "an increased negative attitude to women, decreased empathy for victims of sexual violence, a blunted affect, and an increase in dominating and sexually-imposing behavior."

Ana J. Bridges, "Pornography's Effects on Interpersonal Relationships," Department of Psychology, University of Arkansas <u>http://www.socialcostsofpornography.com</u> / Bridges_Pornographys_Effect_on_Interpersonal_Relationships.pdf (accessed July 10, 2013).



3. Depression

4. Loss of Ministry Focus

5. Burnout



"Pastoral couples need to develop deep and meaningful relationships in order to survive the diversity and intensity of the demands of a life-time of church ministry. "This is perhaps the most critical factor in coping with such a stressful role."

Whetham and Whetham, 13.



TILL THE CHURCH DO US PART