

How to Effectively Pray for Your Pastor

#1: Ask God to help your pastor discern and resist attacks in the powerful name of Jesus. These attacks wear pastor's down and even lead them to leave their calling. You can help your pastor with your prayers. Pray they will be able to discern and resist the attacks of Satan in the powerful name of Jesus.

#2: Ask God to fill your pastor with wisdom and boldness. There are many pressures to compromise what God calls pastors to say. Some things are not popular in our culture or churches. It is easy to give into fear. It also takes great wisdom to stay true to God's word and not be needlessly offensive.

#3: Ask God to fill your pastor with renewed spiritual vitality. The daily grind of dealing with emotional counseling situations, leadership decisions, teaching and preaching can drain your pastor's spiritual and emotional energy.

#4: Ask God to guard your pastor's family. Among the great challenges your pastor faces is the matter of family. As the spiritual leaders of God's people, it seems pastor's families are often singled out for extra attention by spiritual forces.

#5: Ask God to bless your pastor's leadership. Pastors are called to lead. Some lead with a team, others work mostly on their own. Whatever the situation, pastors are to equip the congregation to fulfill God's plans.

#6: Ask God to guard your pastor from loneliness. Loneliness can be one of the great challenges of pastoral work. Some studies have shown that the number one reason pastors leave the ministry is because of isolation.

#7: Ask God to anoint your pastor's prayer life. Friendship with God is one of the great privileges of Christians. This friendship is often enjoyed through the practice of prayer. Happy and meaningful prayer times refresh the soul and invite God's strength and help for the challenges of each day.

#8: Ask God to guard your pastor's peace. A pastor's life can sometimes be like boating on a stormy sea. Winds of adversity and criticism join waves of relentless demands to threaten a pastor's peace. Fear and anxiety can take over one's heart.

#9: Ask God to fill your pastor with the Spirit. As you pray for your pastor I encourage you to remember the verse of scripture found in Zechariah 4:6 it says, "Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit says the Lord."

#10: Ask God to allow your pastor to hear the Holy Spirit's promptings in the midst of life's distractions. God gives us his Spirit to be our guide, comforter and power source of our lives and ministry. Through his leadings we are kept from unwise decisions and led into effective service. Yet the daily demands and relentless schedule of a pastor can make it hard to hear the promptings of God.

My list is certainly not exhaustive, nor is it in any particular order. But I do see all of these areas as key to reaching our new and challenging culture.

1. **A new language.** If a pastor or church staff member does not “speak” social media, he or she is neglecting one of the fastest growing trends in our nation, indeed in our world. It is no longer a fad; it is a primary means of communication.
2. **A non-Christian culture.** Our nation is fast becoming a non-Christian nation. While we lament the relative decline in the numbers who follow Christ, we must also accept the reality that those in our community cannot be assumed to be like us, or to hold our values.
3. **The decline of cultural Christians in churches.** The Pew Research project confirmed the dramatic increase in the numbers of people who have no religious affiliation. For our churches, this development means that most people do not feel cultural pressure to attend churches. More and more, those who are there are convicted Christians and not Christians in name only.
4. **A new work/life balance.** Pastors and church staff members have always been on call 24/7. But now they are connected 24/7 as well with computers, smart phones, and other technological advances. For better or worse, the world of work and personal life is becoming increasingly blurred.
5. **Unregenerate church members.** Cultural Christians are those who really know they are not believers, but are affiliated with churches for cultural reasons. But another group includes those who may cognitively assert a belief in Christ, but have really not had a conversion. For certain, this development is not new. But we are seeing the cumulative cost of weak discipleship and false conversions in our churches. How will we respond to the issue of numbers of members who are not truly believers?
6. **The community as a mission field.** Can we change our mindsets and be better prepared? Our communities are not just changing because there are fewer Christians. They are changing with an influx of new ethnic groups and people of other religious beliefs.
7. **Less automatic cultural respect of church leaders.** In past years, those who held the title of “pastor” or some similar nomenclature were revered in the community just by the position they held. Such is not the case today. Respect must be earned one day at a time.
8. **A more critical world.** Many pastors and church staff members do not deal well with the more transparent and critical world in which we live. Some retreat to a form of passivity or paths of least resistance. And some quit altogether.
9. **A greater need for leadership skills.** The world in which we live is complex. We may long for simpler times, but that won’t change our realities. Church leaders must be better leaders in more challenging times.
10. **More churches in need of revitalization.** This last item may be last on the list, but the need is huge. As many as nine out of ten of our churches are in need of some level of major revitalization. There are tens of thousands of these churches, and the implications for equipping leaders for them are vast

In [Acts 14:19](#), Luke writes, “But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing he was dead.”

“Welcome to the ministry!”

One moment you’re taking a bow, and the next you’re dodging tomatoes, or worse, stones. Popularity in ministry is a perilous cliff with a jagged edge that can cut a ministry in two.”¹

“Remarkably, though laying lifeless in a pool of his own blood, Paul got right back up and walked back into the city from which he had been dragged and left for dead.”²

Why did he do that? He hadn’t finished his sermon. Luke says, “When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” ([Acts 14:21-22](#)).

Those four verses describe the overwhelming majority of ministers and pastors. They don’t know how to quit. They just keep getting up. No matter *who* knocks them down or *how many times* they get knocked down, and they “preach the Word in season and out of season,” week after week, year after year.

- 1) Most people are never aware of the criticism pastors receive or the gossip they’ve been the victim of because they stayed on the high road and never said a word.
- 2) Most would be stunned if they knew the number of times they’ve been betrayed by former leaders, staff members, or members of the congregation.
- 3) “Ministry is like war, and ministers like platoon leaders,”
 - “Sometimes platoon leaders give orders; sometimes they fire on the enemy; sometimes they clear minefields; sometimes they carry the wounded; sometimes they bolster the frightened with horseplay. Platoon leaders don’t spend a lot of time deciding if they’re talented at shooting or good at carrying the wounded or gifted at finding mines. Likewise, when you’re fighting principalities and powers in high places, it’s usually more productive for the kingdom to do things that need doing when they need doing, regardless of one’s strengths.”



“Christian service means invading a battleground, not a playground; and you and I are the weapons God uses to attack and defeat the enemy. When God used Moses’ rod, He needed Moses’ hand to lift it. When God used David’s sling, He needed David’s hand to swing it. When God builds a ministry, He needs somebody’s surrendered body to get the job done. *You are important to the Lord, so keep your life pure: ‘A holy minister [servant] is an awful weapon in the hand of God.’* 5