



C.S. LEWIS INSTITUTE

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

WOULD YOU TAKE THIS JOB?

JOEL S. WOODRUFF, ED.D.

PRESIDENT, C.S. LEWIS INSTITUTE



ould you apply for this position based on the following job description?

Disturbers are to be rebuked, the low-spirited to be encouraged, the infirm to be supported, objectors confuted, the treacherous guarded against, the unskilled

taught, the lazy aroused, the contentious restrained, the haughty repressed, litigants pacified, the poor relieved, the oppressed liberated, the good approved, the evil borne with, and all are to be loved.¹

This daunting job description is how the North African bishop, Augustine, described the job of a pastor around 400 A.D. I think that if you were to ask pastors if this was still relevant in today's world, they would answer in the affirmative. They might just add a few more descriptors, including committee meeting facilitator; late-night janitor; marital counselor; CEO; development and fundraising officer; broker of deals; wedding and funeral director; and preacher.

Those of us in the pew expect a lot from our pastors, and some of that is within reason. After all, James writes, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness," (James 3:1 ESV). On the other hand, pastors are asked often to do things that were not asked of pastors in the New Testament Church.

There have been a number of alarming statistics in recent years about the number of pastors who are leaving the pastorate due to the stresses and demands of the job. And we hear the shocking stories of pastors who have fallen due to moral failure. But I think





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that if you were to ask most pastors about their jobs, they would tell you that they wouldn't want to be doing anything else. They feel called and, while there are challenges, they find satisfaction and fulfillment in being pastors.

This brings us to the question, if the job of pastor is so challenging, how can we better support and care for our pastors? This question can first be answered by a call to prayer. Yes, most pastors would probably appreciate some more financial compensation and words of appreciation. However, the first thing we need to do is pray for them. Once we begin praying for our pastors, we will begin to be more in tune with the Lord as to how we can better support and help them as they lead their flocks.

The best tool for doing this that I know of is a concise book written by C.S. Lewis Institute Teaching Fellow and veteran pastor Stuart McAlpine. The publication is titled *Asking for Pastors*. This wonderful publication provides us with a means for developing a biblical strategy to pray specifically for our pastors.

While you may or may not be called to meet the demands of Augustine's pastoral job description, I do encourage you pick up Stuart McAlpine's booklet and intentionally begin to pray for your pastor. Tell your pastor that you are praying for him, and he will be encouraged. I also believe your church will be blessed as you see God answer your prayers for your pastor.

NOTES

¹ Augustine. *Sermo CCIX*, quoted in J.T. McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls*, p. 100.

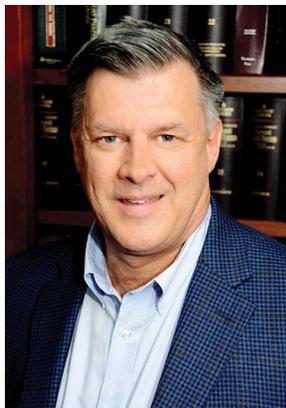


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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

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Joel Woodruff, President, C.S. Lewis Institute, has worked in higher education, “tent-making,” nonprofit administration, and pastoral ministries in Alaska, Israel, Hungary, France, and Northern Virginia. He served as Dean of Students, Chaplain, and Professor of Bible & Theology at European Bible Institute, where he helped train Europeans both for professional ministry and to be Christian leaders in the marketplace. Prior to joining the Institute, he was on the leadership

team of Oakwood Services International, a nonprofit educational and humanitarian organization. He is a graduate of Wheaton College, earned his M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and has a doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University.

As a Parish-Pulpit Fellow, he studied Biblical Backgrounds & Archaeology in Israel for a year.