

Sabbatical Thoughts *for Pastors*

A sabbatical is meant to be a time away from the schedule, pace and responsibilities of our usual work and ministry. It is meant to be a time of rest and the refreshment that can bring new creativity and new awarenesses we may need.

We love to coach Christian leaders through a sabbatical to help them find the refreshment that God intends away from their customary agendas. Sabbatical is a great time to give attention to those things God may have been nudging you toward.

If you are planning a sabbatical in the near future (or you'd like to take one!) here are a few things to consider as you think about how to focus your time:

In Your Relationship with God:

- What has the Spirit be nudging you to pay attention to, but has taken a backseat to the demands of ministry that cloud your focus?
- Into what area(s) of more freedom might Jesus be inviting you?
- What does "union with Christ" mean for you? Are you satisfied with your understanding of and experience of union with Christ?
- What do you need that might help you reawaken to God's love for you?

In Your Relationship with Others:

- Where do you tend to react or overreact? In what kinds of situations? With whom?
- Whom do you find yourself resenting?
- What pressures from others do you resent?
- Are you putting pressure on anyone to fulfil your agendas?

In Your Relationship with Yourself:

- What human limitations are you resisting? Or confused about? What does "rest" mean for you?
- What masks do you find yourself wearing? Why?
- What anxieties keep you from being truly "present" with others?
- How would you describe your challenges in spiritual formation at this stage of your life?

These are, of course, only a few of the issues that you may find helpful to explore with a coach during a sabbatical. If we might be helpful to you, email us at careforleaders@gmail.com for a complimentary online meeting to talk about you needs.

Sabbatical Thoughts *for Pastors' Wives*

If you're blessed to be able to take "sabbatical time" with your spouse, you will, of course, want to make the most of it. You may be just as in need of a change of pace as your pastor-husband. Sabbatical is meant to give you that kind of space. It can give you the margin to pay attention to things God may have been nudging you toward; it can help you give attention to some deeper freedom to which Jesus is calling you.

A sabbatical is different from a longer vacation. It's a time to help you rest, renew, and recalibrate; to reawaken to God's love and delight in you and in the way He has made you. We love to coach spouses through a time of sabbatical.

Here are just a few things that a sabbatical coach can help you consider and process:

In your relationship with God:

- The expectations on a pastor's spouse, especially when that spouse is the wife of a male pastor, can be overwhelming. What expectations do you feel the most often and how do they affect you?
- In what ways do you struggle to see yourself as God does? What does this mean about your view of His expectations of you? Do you struggle to believe that God has chosen you just the way you are?
- Has it become hard to remember that He delights in you and wants to give you a deeper sense of union with Him? Are you hearing God's voice over the voices of others, including your own?

In your relationship with others:

- Do you struggle to develop friendships?
- Do you find it hard to trust others? Have you felt betrayed and find it hard to forgive?
- Are you growing in your ability to handle conflict well?

In your relationship with yourself:

- Do you struggle to know how to take care of yourself in a God-honoring way? Are you committed to developing a self-awareness that aids in your spiritual formation?
- If you are also a mother, do you struggle to help your children thrive?
- The demands of a pastor's wife call for us to be women of "elegant confidence." What does this mean to you? What is your view of "calling?" Are you confused about or question your own calling? Has it changed over time?

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