

## A Job Description for Those Who Intercede for Pastors

You've prayed and prayed for your pastor-countless hours, some with tears-and God suddenly gives you a word for him. Maybe it's even a warning for your church. You anxiously share it with your pastor, but it falls on seemingly deaf ears.

Sound familiar? It's happened to me, and probably more than once to most intercessors. It's complicated when you find yourself in that position. The flood of emotions that follow-self-doubt, frustration, sadness, concern, even anger-are difficult to evaluate. God has given you a heart to pray, and many times it seems like a thankless job.

That's when it's time to brush off the old job description and get things into perspective. One of the pitfalls of intercession is that you may be tempted to take things into your own hands and try to conform outcomes to what you feel certain is God's will. Because you've invested so deeply and

emotionally in prayer, you may consciously or subconsciously try to manipulate the end result. Frankly, that is one of the reasons some pastors are leery of the concept of having personal intercessors: "Who is this person who says he is hearing from God? Does that mean I'm not?"

An important part of the job description--if we want to pray with power--is to recognize who is in authority. Our pastors were placed in a position of authority over us (Heb. 13:17). God knew what He was doing. Our mission is to prayerfully support their authority and submit to it at the same time.

Stepping out from under our God-assigned authority will make us easy marks for the enemy. God is very clear on His position regarding pride and rebellion of any kind (1 Sam. 15:23).

So what should be our attitude when we hear something in the prayer closet that could be difficult when conveyed to the pastor? Before you even approach your pastor, ask God for confirmation of what you are hearing. We can be wrong, and the enemy would like nothing more than to drive a wedge between a pastor and those who pray for him. This is one way he easily does that. Ask God to purify your motives and show you any way this may be a soul-ish prayer on your part (operating out of the mind, will, and emotions) rather than a spirit-prayer. Give the Holy Spirit time to minister to you thoroughly--stay in the Word. Next, ask God if the impression He gave you in prayer is something strictly for you to intercede about or if it is to be shared with your pastor. Frequently, it is a "for prayer only"

revelation. If it is something He wants you to pass on to your pastor, by all means do

so (Ezekiel 3).

Then comes the toughest part of your job description: Lay it down. Sharing what you hear with your pastor is helpful; pressing him to receive it is not. God will watch over and perform any word that is truly His. Don't attempt to take on God's role.

At this point, you may be thinking that the negatives of being an intercessor for your pastor outweigh the positives. But be encouraged. Pastors desperately need our prayers. They also desperately need

intercessors who are working with them and not against them. Our job is to: 1. recognize the times; 2. listen faithfully to God; 3. stand in the gap; and 4. entrust God with the process. Let's fulfill that job description in a humble, selfless way!

By Sandra Higley.

Sandra was the Editor of incenseRising and one of the founders of Pray! magazine.