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The Ministry of An Assisting Pastor

**(Or, More Things I learned
From My Pastor)**

by Larry Taylor

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Calvary Chapel Bible College
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INTRODUCTION

Throughout this writing, the term “assisting pastor” is used most frequently, in place of the more common “assistant pastor,” or the increasingly common “associate pastor.” This is done primarily to communicate the fact that in reality there is only one pastor in a church. Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa is one of the largest churches in the world, attended by over 30,000 people each week, with a staff of 250 people. But there is only one pastor of Calvary Chapel and his name is Chuck Smith. The rest of us are there to assist him in the ministry to which God has called him. Hence, we are assisting pastors, our job is to assist the pastor. Moreover, none of us at Big Calvary were hired because Pastor Chuck needed our expertise. We are there simply because Pastor Chuck does not have the time to do it all. If the church were smaller, we would not be needed.

In addition, the terms “assistant pastor” and “associate pastor” are borrowed from academia where professors are ranked as “professor,” “associate professor,” and “assistant professor,” in that order. But there are no ranks in God’s kingdom, just servants who love Jesus and care for His people.

Having been both senior pastor and an assisting pastor, I can share about this ministry from both perspectives. I know some of the things that a senior pastor needs, and I know first hand the joys of serving as an assistant. Both are great callings, filled with the joy of serving Jesus.

What follows is a fifty point outline on the ministry of the assisting pastor. It applies to anybody on a church staff who is not the senior man, such as youth pastors, Sunday School superintendents, administrators, and others.

My prayer is that this small work will be a blessing to you and to your ministry.

FORWARD

Once more, I can take no credit whatsoever for the material in this small book. Everything here was taught to me by my pastor of the last twenty years or more, Chuck Smith, the senior pastor of Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, California. Moreover, virtually everything contained here, Pastor Chuck taught to me non-verbally. Pastor Chuck believes that ministry must be “caught” and not “taught,” i.e., that ultimately it is something you learn by watching and doing, not by classes, reading books, or listening to lectures.

For those of you who are senior pastors, all you can do is share these principles with your staff, perhaps by giving them this booklet, then watch. Some will get it and some won't, and all the instruction in the world won't help those not called to the unique and rewarding ministry of assisting pastor.

I am also deeply indebted to Pastor Romaine, who for over 20 years has been Pastor Chuck's number one, right-hand man. Pastor Romaine is in the process of writing a book for assisting pastors which will be, when it is completed, the definitive work on the subject. No one knows how to assist a pastor better than Romaine.

In addition to Romaine's excellent example, I've had the privilege of watching and learning from Oden Fong, another of Pastor Chuck's assistants, and the director of Calvary Chapel Outreach Fellowships which oversees all of the nearly 500 affiliated churches; and Dave Rolph, the superintendent of Maranatha Christian Academy, and Calvary Chapel High School at Big Calvary (Costa Mesa), a brother who literally lives to serve and protect Pastor Chuck. And last but certainly not least, I've learned from Jeff Smith, Pastor Chuck's son and the director of the Word for Today. Jeff loves his dad, and knows how to serve from his heart. These guys are among the best friends anybody could ever have. And they are true servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. I deeply love and appreciate them. It is my prayer that this small work will be a blessing to you and to your ministry.

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1. Have a Servant's Heart

The prerequisite of any ministerial service is the heart. If the heart isn't right, nothing else will work right for very long. You can fake it for a season, but ultimately who you really are will show through.

Every minister of any kind or calling needs a servant's heart. Jesus said that the greatest in the kingdom was the slave of all. He also said that we must learn to be the servant of all. Not that we should learn to act like servants, but that we should learn to be servants. Servants are made by God. You can't fake it or work it up; all you can do is submit yourself to God and humbly beseech Him to make you like Jesus. What you do, how you act, and the things you say are a reflection of character of who you are. True servants act, talk, and think like servants.

Ask Jesus to give you the heart of a servant.

2. Look for Things That Need Doing and Do Them

The senior pastor does not have the time to tell you what needs to be done. Open your eyes, look around, see what needs doing; then do it, or find someone who can. Does the trash need to be emptied? Walkways swept? Snow shoveled? Heat turned up? Air conditioning fixed? Is there a wolf in sheep's clothing that needs to be sent away? Perhaps a person in distress that needs to be counseled? Bulletins to fold? Chairs to straighten? A carpet to vacuum? New worshipers to greet? Children to direct to the Sunday School? Teenagers to quiet down? Phones to answer?

Be creative. Look for the things that need to be done, and do them without being told. Put yourself in the place of the members of the congregation, and ask yourself what would make you most comfortable if you were them. If you were a junior high kid, what would bless you and make you feel at home? If you were a toddler in the nursery, what would you need? Put yourself in the place of every kind of person that comes to church, and ask God to show you what they need and want, then meet the need if you possibly can. Don't wait to be told what to do, look for ways to help, and do it.

3. Do not Expect the Pastor to be Your Buddy or Friend

Many assisting pastors get upset because they came on staff expecting that they would have lunch each day with the pastor, that their families would take outings together and that, generally speaking, the pastor would be their best friend. But God didn't call you to be the pastor's buddy, He called you to be his assistant, his helper, his servant. Moreover, if you are on staff, the pastor is your employer and boss, not your pal.

A true pastor loves and cares for God's people. His burden is to make them the best fed, best loved sheep on Earth. But there are too many of them. That's why he hired you. If there were not too many of them, you wouldn't be needed. The pastor needs help, loving and caring for the sheep. He simply cannot spend all his time serving and caring for you. You are there to ease his load, not to make it more burdensome. If the pastor wants to hang out with you, that's fine, but don't make him feel like he has to. He's just too busy loving those who have greater needs than you do, and that's what you should be doing also. You can hang out in Heaven.

4. Do not Expect the Pastor to Counsel You or Meet Your Needs

Again, the pastor is busy counseling and meeting the needs of the members of the congregation who are hurting sheep. You are there to help him do so, to care for others, not get cared for. Some people seem to enter ministry because they are carrying deep problems that they need help

with. They become a drain on the ministry instead of a help to it. You are at the church each day to minister to others, not to be ministered to.

Of course, the question arises as to where an assisting pastor goes for help if he has marriage or personal problems. The answer is that he goes first to his pastor, explains the situation, and seeks his advice; then, if it is a situation that cannot be quickly dealt with, the pastor can help find someone outside the congregation to counsel you towards resolving the problem. But this should always be done with the full knowledge and counsel of the pastor. Now, if the pastor has the time and the desire to counsel the assistant, that is fine, but the assisting pastor should not expect to come to work to get his needs met. He should come to work to meet the needs of others.

5. In the Pastor's Absence, Run Things Exactly as He Would If He were There

People are like sheep. They frighten easily, they get upset easily, they are skittish and jittery. The time to make changes in routines is never when the pastor is away. In his absence, make everything go exactly according to the routine. Keep every detail of the worship service exactly as the people are used to. They are already spiritually on edge because their shepherd is not with them. Don't add to their anxiety by disrupting the routine. Routines are comforting to creatures of habit.

When the pastor is away, do not fall into the trap of thinking that you are now in charge. He is still in charge. You are assisting the pastor, and your calling is to run things exactly as he would if he were there.

My job as one of Pastor Chuck's assisting pastors is to watch over the Calvary Chapel Bible College and Conference Center because Pastor Chuck doesn't have the time to be here himself all the time. Our campus is located an hour and a half away from the church, so part of my ministry is to be continually asking myself, "What would Pastor Chuck do if he were here now?" Fortunately, he's close enough to call, and I can get answers right away. But to be a good assisting pastor, you have to know the senior pastor well, in order that you might know how he would respond in certain situations. You must share his vision and his heart.

6. Be Unconditionally Loyal

If you can't be loyal to people like your pastor and your wife, you can't be loyal to God. In fact, we express our loyalty to God by showing fidelity to others.

Your pastor needs someone by his side who will support him, defend him, be true to him and to the vision God has given him, with no strings attached. Be a true friend. Be loyal no matter what is happening. Stand by the man God has raised up to be the pastor.

Many assisting pastors see their ministry as a stepping stone to being a senior pastor. And, it may, in some cases be that. But if it is, you will be a pastor elsewhere, probably far away from your present location. Don't build on another man's foundation. Don't seek to take his job for yourself. That is disloyalty and treason. It dishonors God. Don't seek to start your own ministry nearby. To do so would be to seek to steal sheep and divide the Body of Christ. If God has called you to be a senior pastor, go someplace where no one is ministering, and feed the sheep. If He has called you to be an assisting pastor, then be true, loyal, and make unconditional fidelity your trademark.

7. Never Gossip

Gossip is a sin that most of us feel we are not guilty of, and which most of us are very guilty of. Gossip may be defined as saying anything negative, whether true or not, to anyone about the

pastor or about the ministry. If there are things wrong, take it to the Lord in prayer. Tell absolutely no one, including your spouse. Do not repeat anything that would cast aspersion on the ministry in any way. Doing so dishonors Christ and His cause.

But, you say, what do you do if there are real problems? Pray about them and forget them. If that doesn't work, take your concerns directly and only to the pastor himself, and share with him honestly. If that doesn't work, resign, and move on. Under no circumstances should you ever say anything negative about the pastor or the ministry to anyone, even after you've quit.

In a situation where something in the church is so completely wrong that the sheep in the body are in spiritual danger, then say nothing to anybody, resign, and move on. If the church is a Calvary Chapel affiliate, then take your concerns and share them privately with Pastor Chuck or with Oden Fong, then drop it; leave it alone. Let them handle it. Trust God. He'll correct the situation. But do not gossip. It is a terrible sin before God.

8. Defend the Pastor and the Ministry from All Negative Talk, Gossip, Slander, and Anything that would Undermine God's Work

Anything that would hinder or cast aspersion on the ministry will adversely affect the work of the Holy Spirit in your town. Therefore, defend the ministry. When you hear anything even slightly negative about the pastor or about the ministry, intervene, correct it, and stop it. Gossip and slander can destroy a great work of God, and can ruin the reputation of godly people. Listening to it condones it. Step into the conversation and boldly rebuke the gossip, replacing it with that which is lovely, positive, and of good report.

Every church has its critics and its people who think they have a better way of doing things. We can be open to ideas and to constructive criticism, we do not have all the answers. But when the constructive criticism becomes destructive complaining, put an end to it.

As an assisting pastor, you must be the eyes and ears of the ministry. Know what the people are saying, and steer them in a godly direction.

9. Be on the Premises before the Pastor Arrives, and Don't Leave Until He Does

A big part of being helpful is being available. You can't help if you aren't there. When the pastor arrives in the morning, he ought to find you already on the job, and when he leaves in the evening, he ought to have you there to say good-night to. That way, you're available to help in whatever area is needed.

Now, of course, there will occasionally be times when you must leave ahead of the pastor, but these should be rare exceptions to the rule, and should be cleared with the pastor first. Ask him if it's okay to leave, and if he needs anything before you go. Most of the time, however, be there when he is. Things will regularly come up in the ministry that no one planned or foresaw. You have to be there to deal with those things. People stop by for counseling, crisis calls come in, someone is hospitalized, a contractor needs to be contacted about a leaky roof, the copy machine blows up, a secretary calls in sick, etc. These things require your attention, and you can't attend to them if you are not there. Your ministry is to ease the burden of the pastor; if you are unavailable, he has to handle these things, and his burden is increased.

Some assisting pastors would like to travel on missions trips or tours of the Holy Land like the senior pastor. The head pastor may occasionally send you somewhere for the good of the ministry, but generally speaking, it is the ministry of an assisting pastor to stay put and keep the

home fires burning brightly. You are not called to be a globe trotter; you are called to love and care for that particular flock of sheep.

10. Be at Every Service

This point seems so obvious to me that I hesitate to state it, but as I've traveled and visited other churches (I often fill pulpits for pastors who are away), I see that it needs to be stated.

There are several good reasons why you should be at every service. First, to share the vision of the ministry; you must be sitting under the same teaching that the congregation is listening to. People will often come to you later in the week with counseling questions or biblical questions concerning what the pastor has been teaching. You will need to hear the teaching to answer them. Secondly, you too need to be fed the Word of God so that you'll have something worth giving others. Thirdly, you need to be available to help where needed. Your job is to help care for this congregation, hence you need to be with them every time they gather. There is no more important time for you to be present than at the church services and Bible studies—that's where the sheep are; you can't care for them where they are not. Fourthly, you are setting an example for others to follow. If the meeting is not important enough for you to attend, why should they? People follow your example; they learn by watching you.

Every time the doors are open at the church, be there. Be at every service, at every prayer meeting (except the ones designated for women), and at every Bible study. If your church has multiple services which are identical, be at all of them. During the first, listen and learn, and during the others, watch and help from the back. When the door is open to the public, you should be there. In fact, you should have been the guy to open the door.

11. Look at the Pastor Frequently When He's On the Platform to See If He Needs Anything

As the pastor is preaching, he is in a unique position to see the whole congregation. Hence, he becomes aware of needs that you can't see from the back. He can see the disruptive child, the snoring man, or the self-appointed prophet who is about to jump up and interject his ideas. The pastor can see that folks are too hot or too cold, that some can't find a seat, that the music is too loud, or that someone needs assistance with a wheel chair.

Watch the pastor during the services. Know his expressions and his eye movements. Have a code worked out with him ahead of time so he can glance at you, then glance in the direction of the need, and you can investigate and meet the need. You don't want him to have to interrupt the service to ask you to take care of something.

Years ago, I went to Israel with Pastor Chuck and we attended a banquet at the King David Hotel. The waiters met our every need—you never had an empty water glass or dropped your napkin without someone right there to help. But you never really noticed the waiters either. They were quiet and unobtrusive, standing around the perimeter of the dining room carefully watching everything. And there was a head waiter who did nothing but observe, looking for needs. The other waiters (they were all men) looked at him regularly, and when he saw a need, he'd glance at them, then at the table, and off they'd go to help out. Assisting pastors need to be like those waiters.

12. Check the Lighting, Temperature, Disruptions

Before the service starts, check the temperature of the room. Most meeting rooms will feel cold with no one in them, so our tendency is to crank the heat up too far. Then when the room is filled with people, it quickly becomes stuffy, people doze off, and others can't concentrate. You want the

temperature conducive for an alert Bible study, yet comfortable at the same time. People shouldn't be bundled in their coats, nor should they be fanning themselves to stay awake. The room needs to be comfortable in winter and summer.

While you're checking temperatures, don't forget the Sunday School classrooms, the nursery, and the nursing mom's room. Jesus especially loves little children, and He wants them to be comfortable too. Pastors often forget these areas because adult men don't use them much. My wife and I have a new baby (quite a surprise in my mid-forties!) and she is frequently frustrated with "cry rooms" that allow men in them, because they are stifling hot, or have inadequate ventilation.

Speaking of ventilation, folks need circulating air to stay awake. Charles Spurgeon once knocked out a bunch of windows in his church so the folks could breathe and stay awake during the message.

Also, be sure to check the lighting. Make sure it's conducive to worship and simultaneously bright enough so people don't strain their eyes reading their song sheet and the Bible.

Finally, be on the lookout for disruption—babies crying, junior high kids goofing off, false prophets ripping off the Body of Christ. Find the disruptions and deal with them, but do so lovingly and kindly, demonstrating the graciousness which marks us as Christians.

13. Hold up the Pastor's Arms

As long as Aaron and Hur held up Moses' arms, the battle went well for Israel (Exodus 17:12). Moses needed help, his arms were weary. Pastors get tired, not of, but in God's work, and they need someone to hold them up, support and assist them, and lighten their load. That is the ministry of the assisting pastor—standing by the pastor's side, loving, supporting, praying, and helping him in whatever is needed to care for and minister to the people of God.

Unfortunately, I've seen some assistants who seem to hang on the pastor's arms, instead of holding them up. After a while, the pastor realizes he's better off without people hanging on him, and it would be easier to do the job himself.

Don't create a job for yourself; if you're not genuinely needed, move on. If you're unhappy, go minister some other place. But if God has called you to assist a particular pastor in a certain place, then be an asset to the ministry by helping and supporting.

14. Be Supportive and Helpful

To be supportive means to encourage and uplift the pastor; to bless him; and to strengthen him with prayer, encouraging words, and helpful ideas. To be helpful means to be useful in the details of the ministry, to pick up areas that need to be attended to, and to see them through.

Support is an attitude that affects emotions. Help is an action that accomplishes tasks. The pastor of a large church needs both.

Remember that the pastor is on the front lines. He is strongly and regularly attacked by the enemy. He needs prayer. He needs positive feedback. He needs to be encouraged that God is using him and that the fruit will come. He is human, and not beyond getting discouraged, but you can be a big factor to help avoid despair.

15. Don't Be a "Yes" Man. Give Your Opinion Clearly; Then Drop It

No pastor, nor anyone else in leadership, needs someone who nods stupidly and agrees with everything he says. Your pastor needs your advice, your opinion, and your view point on all the myriad of issues that arise in a ministry. Be open. Give your opinion honestly and frequently. Let the pastor know where you stand and why.

But, once you've given your opinion clearly, let it rest. The beauty of being an assisting pastor is that the final decision is not yours. If the pastor makes a mistake, it's his fault. God is able to correct him, so don't beat a dead horse. Give your opinion, then drop the matter. If the pastor decides to go in a different direction, support him. If it fails, resist the temptation to say "I told you so." Be supportive, but give your input too.

"Yes" men have no spine. They are unstable as water. Be strong. State your opinions, and give your reasons why you feel as you do. Then, walk away.

16. Pray Every Day for the Pastor

Without prayer, the pastor cannot succeed. With prayer, he cannot fail.

Every single day, pray for the pastor and encourage the rest of the staff to do so also. Pray without ceasing. Men ought always to pray and not faint.

Prayer is the life blood of the ministry. The church marches forward on her knees. Prayer changes things.

Pray more; talk less.

17. Keep Every Aspect of the Ministry Confidential

Confidentiality is vital for a variety of reasons. Confidentiality protects the rights and dignity of others. The opposite, gossip, destroys people.

Keeping matters confidential will protect the church from liability in an age that is quick to sue in court. Protecting people's privacy makes them feel safe and lets them know that this is a church they can trust. It provides positive morale and a healthy atmosphere. Unfortunately, the violation of confidential information about people is rampant within the church. Staff people talk among themselves about members of the congregation, husbands and wives discuss counseling situations, and pastors use people's life situations as sermon illustrations.

The result is that the church becomes a chaotic house of gossip where everyone knows everything about everybody else. To paraphrase James, these things should not be.

Absolutely everything that goes on in a ministry is confidential. Do not ever talk to anyone, including your spouse, about people's marriages and personal problems, salaries of church employees, budget considerations, board decisions and discussions, or anything that is private to a person or family. Churches have been destroyed by a lack of confidentiality.

The only exception is that the senior pastor needs to know everything in order to properly oversee the ministry. Sharing with him is biblical; sharing with any one else is sinful.

18. The Only Reason You Are there is because the Senior Man Doesn't Have Time to Do It All Himself—Assist Him, Help Him, Ease his Load, and Carry the Burden

Pastor Chuck does not need me or any one else on his staff, as far as I know. He could run the Bible College far better than I could. He could run the Conference Center far better than I could, too. But he's busy. He oversees a huge ministry that reaches out to millions of people, and he can't be everywhere at once. So, he's hired some assistants to help out. We are extensions of Pastor Chuck. Our duty is to run our assigned areas of ministry exactly as Pastor Chuck wants them run, just as he would run them if he had the time to do so.

Some assisting pastors mistakenly believe that they've been retained for their great expertise. They think they are of tremendous worth to the ministry. But God doesn't really need any of us. He chooses us because He's gracious and kind, knowing that doing so will bless us.

There is nothing worse than an assisting pastor who is seeking to build his own kingdom, trying to establish his own little empire within the ministry. Don't build on the senior man's foundation. Assist, support, help him, and ease his burden. Help carry his load.

Don't think too highly of yourself. Watch out that you don't become impressed with yourself. Take all the praises of well meaning people with a grain of salt. Remember that the only reason you are on staff is because God has blessed another man's ministry and now he needs help. It is God's ministry, through the senior pastor. It is not your ministry.

19. You Can't Help If You're Not There

Remember that when you are not there in the ministry, someone else will have to do your job. All the things you normally do, someone else will have to do while you are at lunch, taking the day off, or on vacation. If everybody bails out, the senior pastor is the only one left to carry the entire load. If you are the number two man, you should never take a day off or vacation when the senior pastor is away. Let him choose his days off, his lunch breaks, his vacations, then work around that. Take into consideration the rest of the staff and what effect your leaving will have on them. When it comes to lunch time or a day off, we can be amazingly self-centered. The greatest in the kingdom puts his desires and self last.

There are so many times when senior pastors are frustrated because no one is around, and the whole weight of the ministry falls on them. You can't help if you're not there. Be considerate of the needs of the senior pastor and the other staff people. Die to your needs, wants, and self. Put yourself last instead of first. Stay flexible and work around others.

20. Keep the Pastor Informed About Absolutely Everything—Be His Eyes and Ears, Be a Narc for Jesus

The Pastor needs to be told everything. He cannot oversee the ministry without data. Senior pastors hate surprises in their ministries. Tell the pastor all about the people in the congregation. Tell him what's happening at meetings he doesn't attend. Tell him how the Sunday School is going, what the youth group is doing, and the latest missionary efforts. Leave no stone unturned. Tell him everything.

Some ministries are so big that the Assisting Pastor doesn't see or talk to the Pastor regularly. If that's your case, write him letters. Pastor Chuck has far too much to do to talk to me every day on the phone or have me planted in his office when I should be out serving the people. So, I regularly write him a long letter, in which I tell him everything about the areas of ministry that I'm assisting him with. He needs input and data to make his decisions and oversee the ministry, so I give him

as much input as I can. I inform him of everything. If something goes wrong, I want him to hear from me first. I want him to have all information in case he needs to make decisions about the ministry. I don't expect an answer to the letters—it is just input from me to him.

Be the eyes and ears of the ministry. Listen to what people are saying. Pick up on the attitudes of the staff and leadership. Watch people to see who serves diligently and who goofs off. Be a narc for Jesus. Squeal on people. Narc on the guy who litters the parking lot. Tell the pastor everything. Absolutely everything.

21. Be Submissive and Loyal

We spoke previously on unconditional loyalty and how vital it is in a ministry. Submission is a part of loyalty. Submission is an attitude that continually says, "I'm on your side; I'm in your corner; I'm pulling for you; I support you; I'm with you; and you can depend on me. This is God's ministry through you. I'll not try to build my own kingdom. I am here only to assist and to help."

Submission means that you can take direction and follow through on suggestions and directives. It also means that the Senior Pastor makes the final decisions. If you don't agree with him, either keep quiet and support him, or resign and find a job working for someone you can support. Be a true friend, not just a fair weather one. Stand by the pastor in hard times as well as in the good times. Yield to the pastor's authority; he outranks you.

22. Carry a Pad and a Pen, and Take Note Every Time the Pastor Shares with You, So You Won't Forget Anything

Every time you are with the pastor, individually or in a staff meeting, take notes on all that he says. Write things down. Follow through on his ideas and desires. Writing the ideas down is the only way to ensure you will not forget something. Then, after they are written down, if you need to, clarify exactly what was meant. "So you want me to arrange to have new carpet put in the hallway? When do you need that done?"

Be specific. Be clear on what needs doing and when. Know what the pastor's priorities are. Then, keep the pastor informed of progress, and mark the items off your list as they are completed.

Pastor Chuck has a supernatural eye for detail. He deeply loves God's people, and he wants them to be blessed and administered to. So, when he comes by the Conference Center, he will walk around the grounds and notice dozens of things, most of them little, that need fixing, painting, or attending to so the place looks nice. When he walks around, I never leave his side. I'm right there with an answer for every question, taking notes on all that he says. Then, I clarify anything I'm unclear about.

Afterward, I follow up on my list, either doing the things myself, or finding someone else who can do them. And finally, I keep Pastor Chuck informed as to the progress of the various projects. If I'm not certain how to get a job done, I ask for his advice and direction.

23. Correct the Problems, Then Follow Up and Keep Them Corrected

Trouble-shooting is a large part of the ministry of an assisting pastor. Thousands of things need correction over time; so fix them and keep them maintained.

God uses Pastor Chuck to keep me humble. I'll spend weeks getting the Conference Center clean and fixed up. Pastor Chuck will arrive, park his car, and step on a cigarette butt we missed. Then it will rain for the first time in months, and the roof will leak right on the man's head. He'll look up

and quietly say, “You need to get that fixed, Larry.” I respond, “Yes, sir,” then I think how I’ll kill the maintenance guys. No, not really, but I do go to them for help to get the roof fixed as quickly as possible. Then, I write my pastor and tell him that the roof no longer leaks.

If there’s a problem in a Sunday School class, correct it. Then, check back every few weeks to make sure it stays corrected. If a pipe was leaking and is now fixed, keep an eye on it. Prevent problems from coming back again, if you can help it. Try not to make the same mistake twice. Keeping a list will help you keep problems corrected.

24. Allow the Pastor to Ventilate and Air His Frustrations, Don’t Take It Personally.

Pastors are people. They have moods just like anyone else. If the pastor is angry or frustrated and blows off a bit of steam in your direction, just let it go by. Don’t become defensive or upset. If the pastor is mad at you, he’ll tell you. And if he does, repent. Otherwise, assume he’s upset with something else and don’t take it personally. Just listen, be supportive and encouraging, and pray for the man.

25. Don’t Wear Your Feelings on Your Sleeve; Don’t Be Needy or Overly Sensitive

It is surely all right to have feelings, we all do. And it is fine to express your feelings, as long as you do it appropriately and in love. But, don’t be whiny or overly sensitive. Remember that you are in ministry to meet the needs of others, not to have others meet your needs.

Ministry requires a tough hide. As Lyndon Johnson once said, “sometimes you have to be like a jackass in a hail storm—you just hump over and take it.” To be in ministry, you have to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, while oblivious to your own feelings, at least most of the time, and dead to your own needs. Your energy comes from your fellowship with Christ, not from relationships with others. Overly sensitive people usually do not last long in ministry; they quit in despair when their feelings get hurt.

The assisting pastor must expect to give, not get. He should be looking for what he can offer others, not what they can offer him. Take your feelings and hurts, real as they are, to the Lord. He will heal the hurts because He is never insensitive or uncaring.

26. Don’t Make Excuses. When Corrected, Admit When You are Wrong. Take Responsibility and Make the Needed Changes.

As an assisting pastor, you will often, perhaps regularly, be asked to correct things that are wrong. What the pastor does not need is a long explanation about how whatever is wrong is not your fault. He probably doesn’t care whose fault it is, he just wants the problem fixed. He needs the heat adjusted on Sunday morning, the nursery supplied with disposable diapers, the phone answered on Saturdays, or someone to handle the premarital counseling. So, just do it.

So many people don’t take responsibility for things. Nothing is ever their fault, they are always blaming someone else for the mistakes and problems. If you are the number two man, everything that has been placed under your authority is your responsibility and, therefore, anything that goes wrong in your area is ultimately your fault. Own your responsibility. If there was a mix up or mistake, just take it as your own. What the pastor needs to hear is, “That’s my area and I dropped the ball. Sorry. I’ll have that fixed right away.” Instead, we often imitate Adam in the Garden of Eden, “It’s the staff you gave me, pastor.”

In working with both Pastors Chuck and Romaine at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, I’ve discovered that I blow it regularly. I neglect things and make mistakes; but neither of them is expecting me to

be perfect. And when I simply own the mistake (or even the sin), and do my best to correct it, those to whom I am submitted to in this ministry are perfectly satisfied.

27. Stick to the Simple Vision of the Ministry, e.g., Sharing God's Word in Love

Because you know the senior pastor well and because you have regularly sat under his teaching, you know what the vision of the ministry is. God has raised up each church in the community for a specific purpose. Your church exists for some reason, if it is of God. Know what the vision is and stick to it.

God has raised up my pastor, Chuck Smith, and the ministry at Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, to feed His people the pure and complete Word of God in an atmosphere of grace and love. That's what Calvary Chapel is all about. It's a place to get fed and grow in God's love. It's not a place to socialize, meet people, engage in political action, or see spectacular productions. Some of that may occur at Calvary, but the mission of the church is to feed the sheep in love. That is the core of every aspect of the ministry. In order to guide the Conference Center, I need to keep in mind that it exists primarily to feed God's people in love. Everything else is secondary.

As an assisting pastor, don't get complicated, don't try and build your own empire. Keep it simple. Know the simple reason that God has raised up your ministry, and stick to it.

28. Counsel from the Bible Exactly As the Pastor Would Do

Much destruction has been done in ministries because an assistant pastor has given counsel either contrary to the belief of the pastor, or even worse, contrary to the Word of God.

The counsel that people receive from you should be identical to the counsel they would receive from the senior pastor if he had time to meet with them. Therefore, you must know the senior pastor well, and be intimately acquainted with his teaching of the Word of God. I often find myself asking, how would Pastor Chuck answer a person. He's been my pastor for over 20 years and I've gone through the entire Bible with him at least a dozen times. I often hear myself using the same phrases and illustrations when I counsel with folks.

You are probably not a psychologist or psychotherapist, so do not try to imitate one. Your job is to listen to people in love, show them what the Scriptures say about their specific situation, and pray for them. If the Bible is silent in an area they are asking about, tell them that. No one needs your opinion. Everyone needs God's Word. No one needs to know what you *think* best or what you *think* you might do in a similar situation. Everyone needs to know what a sovereign and holy God has to say about their circumstances and behavior. Stick to the Scriptures. Give people the Word of God. Seek to help God's people find solutions to their problems through the Word of God.

29. Clear Everything with the Pastor Before You Do It or Buy It

The pastor is the *only* one in a position to see the big picture and oversee the entire ministry. He knows what expenditures are coming up and he needs to balance the various aspects of the entire ministry. He is the one to whom God has given a vision for the overall ministry. Therefore, he's the *only* one who is in a position to set priorities on purchases and projects.

Parenthetically, that is why a congregational system of church government does not work well. The senior pastor is the one with the vision and the understanding as to where God wants the ministry to go. Congregational-led systems seek to have committees make the decisions that affect the direction and flow of the ministry. When that happens, the pastor simply becomes a paid employee.

As an assisting pastor, it is your responsibility to clear every new direction, policy, and expense with the pastor that is out of the routine. Then he can direct the ministry in accordance with the vision God has given him. Remember, God gives the vision for the overall ministry to the pastor, not to anyone else.

30. Be Financially Frugal and Ultra-Conservative

You are handling God's money, not yours. It is God's, and it was given for His work by the sacrifices and hard work of His precious people, whom He loves so much that He died for them. Stewardship is paramount in ministry.

Before you take anything to the pastor for approval, ask yourself these questions: (1) Do we absolutely need this particular thing, or can we live without it? (2) Will the purchase of this thing make life better for God's people? Will it minister to the Body of Christ, or is it just for your convenience? (3) If we do need it, and it will benefit the folks in the congregation, have I found the best possible price by comparing distributors and investigating costs?

Then, after you've done your homework, submit a purchase order to the pastor for approval. If he disapproves it, accept his decision, and forget it. If he approves it, then keep scrupulous records and account for every cent.

It is a sad witness to the world when churches and ministries waste money, run up debts they cannot pay, or spend money foolishly or extravagantly. At Calvary Chapel, all of us on staff, including Pastor Chuck, live simple, frugal lives. It is better to do without than to cause some precious young believer to stumble.

31. Die to Yourself; Get Your Ego and Pride Out of the Way. Be in Ministry for What You Can Give, Not What you Can Get.

Get your ego out of the way. You are in ministry to serve, love, and help others; not for them to serve, love, or help you. You are in the ministry to give, not to get; to care for, not to be cared for. Forget your "rights." Forget all the talk about what you deserve. The truth is, we deserve hell. Everything else is grace.

Assisting pastors often become frustrated and discouraged, sometimes even angry and bitter, because they mistakenly feel that they are worth more money, deserve more time off, or need to be appreciated more. All you need is Jesus. Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Him.

Trust God. He will supply your needs and give you the love and acceptance that we all need. You are loved and appreciated by Him; that is all that matters.

32. Apologize Easily

Everyone makes mistakes. In my case, I make more than anyone I've ever met. It is all right to make mistakes. It is human to mess things up occasionally. If you're at all like me, you'll do some dandies. But when you goof up, own it and apologize for it. Be quick to apologize.

In the 70's, we were fed a lie which said that "love is never having to say you're sorry." Nonsense. Love says, "I'm sorry" again and again. Apologizing is the confession part of repentance. No one will think less of you, and why do you care what they think, anyway? Ultimately, all that matters is what God thinks of you. Admit mistakes. Own responsibility. Avoid excuses. Apologize quickly.

33. When Subordinates Mess Up, Take Responsibility Yourself, Own It, and Fix It

Any area that you are overseeing is your responsibility. If you are in charge of Sunday School and a teacher “drops the ball,” don’t blame them. It is your responsibility to recruit and train teachers that won’t “drop the ball.” If you oversee the counseling ministry, then you have to make certain that all the counselors are well-grounded in the Word of God, and share the vision of your ministry.

The pastor needs to be able to delegate areas to you and forget them. You should be running those areas of ministry to which you have been assigned, exactly as the pastor would if he had the time. People working under you will mess up, just like you do; so don’t blame them or make a scapegoat out of someone. For that area of ministry, the buck stops with you.

Having taken responsibility, fix the problem. That can require many different solutions. Generally speaking, it is better to work with people—to educate, motivate, and correct them, rather than letting them go. Of course, there are occasions when you simply have the wrong person in a job, and a change is needed. But more often, helping folks to become what is needed will result in better morale in the ministry and a more loyal, dedicated staff of employees and volunteers. If you do your job right in recruiting, training, and overseeing the right people, you should seldom have to fire anyone. If firing is the last resort, do it quickly and compassionately, but only rarely. Work with people. Talk to them. Help them.

34. Make the Pastor Look Good

Never make him look bad.

This is a basic principle of employment. Make the boss look good. Give him the credit for your good ideas. Decrease that he might increase. God honors humility and death to self. Don’t allow anything in your conversation or behavior that would reflect badly on the pastor or the ministry. If something is not right, take it to the Lord in prayer, and leave it. If needed, take it to the pastor. If it doesn’t change and you can’t live with it, resign quietly and part lovingly. Avoid public criticism. Present a united front. Someone once said, “Do what the man in charge wants, do it well, and life will be sweet.”

35. Be Humble, Stay Humble

Occasionally, I hear Christians praying that God will make them humble. God will never answer that prayer. He has commanded us to humble ourselves. Humility is acknowledging that what God says is true. Without Him we can do nothing. With Him, we can do all things. Humility is simultaneously knowing my inability and His unlimited ability. Humility is not thinking you are no good, it is recognizing that God can use anyone. Humility is relying on God for everything all the time.

Humility takes effort. Many ministers start out humble, but become prideful after they have enjoyed some measure of success in ministry. Many assisting pastors start out just wanting to help and serve. Then they gradually start feeling that they are indispensable, highly anointed, and the real reason the ministry is growing. Be humble; stay that way.

36. Enjoy the Ministry, Have Fun, Don’t take Yourself too Seriously, the Kingdom of God Doesn’t Depend on You

If you’re not having fun, you’re doing something wrong. This Christian life is one that is filled with abundance of joy—unspeakable joy and full of glory. It is the joy of the Lord which is our strength. Yet so many ministers seem sad or burdened all the time. Learn to relax. That doesn’t mean learn

to be lazy (you probably already know about that). It means to learn that the kingdom of God doesn't depend on you. You are no big deal. God can speak through a jackass, or cause rocks to praise Him. He doesn't need any of us. But, we have the glorious privilege of participating with Him in His work. He has chosen us because He chooses the weak and foolish things of the world to shame the wise.

Relax, the kingdom of God doesn't depend on your intensity. Have fun. Enjoy yourself. Serving God is thrilling and exciting. I love to get up in the morning. I love to come to the office. I love Jesus. I love Pastor Chuck. I love this ministry. I can't believe they pay me to do this. This is fun.

How can you be unhappy when you are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb, have the gift of eternal life, know that all your sins are forgiven forever, and have the glorious privilege and honor of serving God in a full-time capacity?

We tend to take ourselves so seriously. One of the things I love about Big Calvary is that the folks here know how to laugh at themselves, and they enjoy doing what they are doing. When you enjoy your ministry, it shows. After all, the work is all the Lord's—it's His ministry, not yours. All you are called to do is to hang out with Jesus.

37. Set the Spiritual Tone of the Ministry—Make it Loving, Helpful, and Friendly; a Place People Like to Be

Make the ministry a happy, friendly, reaching out, caring, loving place to be. Make it the kind of place people want to come to because they feel loved and cared for. Be loving. Be friendly. Be considerate. Be kind. Be like Jesus. Let the love of God, which He has placed in your heart, flow through you. Be an instrument meant for the Master's use.

Your attitude, friendliness, compassion, concern for others, integrity, honesty; the ethical way you handle people and situations; your love for the lost; your tender mercy towards the infirmed, dying, sick, frightened, lonely, and hurting; and your gentle counsel to the struggling lambs of God set the tone for the entire ministry. It compares the difference between a ministry of a hospital for ailing saints, to just a cold impersonal program that misses the point of the Gospel. The ministry will never be more compassionate, caring, loving, or spiritual than you are.

38. Create a Loving Environment

As an assisting pastor, you can create a loving environment in the ministry by: encouraging the rest of the staff and volunteers; praying daily for the others with whom you work; filling the premises with God's praises; and checking in with people regularly.

Praise music piped throughout the workplace helps keep people's minds focused on Jesus, and causes them to rest in His love. Reminding people regularly that the Lord loves them, and showing them that you are concerned about how they are doing will not only boost morale, but will also draw them closer to the Lord.

As you are serving God's people, don't neglect the other servants. The secretaries, custodians, maintenance people, bookkeepers, and volunteers are the backbone of the ministry. They too need to be loved, cared for, and served. See if they need anything. Help them when their workload is too heavy. Answer the phone if it is ringing. Pick up trash. Pitch in and help out. Encourage others in the Lord. Edify the Body of Christ. Serve all God's people in love.

Being a leader or an elder simply means you have more people to serve, more feet to wash, a lower place to take. Ministry is service to others for the Lord's sake.

39. Be On Your Knees before God

It is not only vital for you to pray daily for your pastor, but equally vital that you be a man of devotion and prayer yourself, and that you lead others in the habit of prayer. In God's kingdom, the way up is down. To stand tall in God's church, you must learn what it means to spend time on your face before His throne. Pray without ceasing for the pastor and for others, but also be certain you are walking in fellowship with Christ. That is something you cannot fake. You can fool the people, maybe even your pastor, but you can never fool God. Be a spiritual man. Spend time in prayer. Don't neglect your time each day alone with the Lord. Read your Bible, not only to prepare for a study you may be teaching, but just so God can speak to you individually, not as a minister, but as a man.

Years ago, Pastor Chuck told me, "Larry, get your people praying, and keep them praying." Be creative. Use prayer letters, prayer cells, prayer groups, prayer partners, prayer chains—anything you can think of to get the congregation in the habit of prayer and keep them there. Be on your knees and encourage others to be there with you.

40. Sing, Smile, Serve, and Love Others

The "three S's"—sing, smile, and serve. Make that a description of your personality. Have a song in your heart. Worship the Lord. Love Him. Adore Him. Worship Him every day.

Have a smile on your face. Be happy. Be friendly. Be polite and considerate. Act like you really believe that God loves you.

Serve others in love. Minister, with joy, to the needs of God's people. Act like you really believe God loves them.

41. Be Sure the Widows, Hospitalized, and Folks in Nursing Homes are Well Cared For

As assisting pastors, we need to minister to everyone God brings us, young and old alike; but there is a special place in God's heart for the fatherless, widows, and those who are sick and infirmed. Be certain that the members of your congregation who are hospitalized or in nursing homes are visited regularly. Call on them at least weekly, more often if their situation is terminal or critical. Charles Spurgeon once advised his ministerial students to "often be where men die." Doing so sharpens your priorities; and it puts you in touch with what really matters in life; it forces you to draw near God, who is a man of sorrows acquainted with grief.

Many Calvary Chapel churches are predominantly filled with relatively young people, but we must not neglect those who are near the end of their journey. Nor should we neglect others of special need, such as the weak, the "feeble-minded," the bereaved, and the sick. Get into the hospitals. Share the love of God in the nursing homes. Be at the bedside of the infirmed frequently. To do so is true religion and undefiled before God.

42. Be Creative—Look For More Ways to Help

Ministry is service. It is laying down your life for others. It is taking the place of the slave, the servant of all. It is following the example of Jesus, who though creator of the universe washed His disciples' feet. Open your eyes and be creative. Look for ways to help the pastor, staff, and congregation. Most true biblical love is demonstrated in the simple things of God's kingdom. Open doors for ladies. Take packages out of the hands of the one who is burdened. Sacrifice your

“study time” to sweep the steps or fix the plumbing. Get your hands dirty. Be in the trenches with the troops.

When I was a pastor over 20 years ago in a denominational church in Minnesota, I learned to bale hay, plow fields, inseminate cattle, dehorn calves, castrate hogs, and clean barns. That is where most of my ministry took place, not in formal teaching circles.

When we were building the present chapel for Big Calvary, Pastor Chuck was there late at night installing urinals, he was in ditches digging for pipes, swinging a hammer all day, and preaching at night to thousands in the tent.

Today, when Pastor Chuck stops by the Conference Center, he’s right in there helping with whatever repair project is in progress. You can find him laying carpet, under a truck dropping a transmission, in the attic studying water pipes, playing volleyball with high school kids, or staying up late, surrounded by Bible College students, answering questions. Pastor Chuck loves God’s people, and he never ceases to serve them. Nothing is beneath him. He wants nothing for himself, but the best for God’s children. Be like that.

43. Keep in God’s Love, Let Him Bless You

You can never do anything that would convince God to stop loving you. But you can, through disobedience and sin, put yourself in a place where His love does not reach you. Beware of sin. With Satan’s help, we are capable of committing every vile sin that man has ever invented. Guard your heart and mind. Be careful that you are only looking at, reading, and hearing that which pleases the Lord.

God desires to bless you abundantly, and cause your ministry to bear an abundance of fruit. Let Him bless you. Live a pure and godly life so that He can fill you and use you for His glory. Stay broken, humble, and obedient to the Lord so that His presence might overwhelm and bless you abundantly. Be willing to go anywhere and do anything for Jesus. Keep yourself in a place where He can use you.

Billy Graham once said that the three areas of primary vulnerability for ministers are women, money, and pride. Don’t set yourself up for a fall. Don’t be alone with any woman other than your wife. Stay away from movies and materials of a sexually graphic nature. Don’t rent questionable videos. Have an accounting system that is foolproof at your church. Stay accountable. Stay in submission to another. Stay broken and humble before the Lord. Guard your heart with all diligence, and deeply repent of sin if you stumble.

44. Stay Strong and Healthy; Fight the Good Fight; Keep Your Body under Submission; Be a Soldier, a Farmer, and an Athlete for Christ

Fight the good fight of faith. Be disciplined and faithful. Manage your time wisely. Be a good steward of the hours God has given you.

Bodily exercise profits a little. Stay strong and healthy. Take time to eat right, sleep properly, and work out at some form of exercise you enjoy. You don’t have to be a great athlete, but try and stay strong and healthy so you will have the stamina and energy to serve the Lord fully. Pastor Chuck is one of the most robust men I’ve ever met. I can probably out run him in a short race, but he has amazing stamina, and can work circles around me over the long haul, even though I’m twenty years younger than he is. Sometimes I get exhausted just following him around the Conference Center.

The Apostle Paul uses three figures in reference to ministry. First, he tells us to be good soldiers. A good soldier prepares well before the battle so that, in combat, his reactions are instinctive. He is faithful and diligent in preparation, and loyal and brave in battle.

Secondly, Paul tells us to be like Olympic athletes, focused solely on the goal of winning the race. Run to win. Be a man. Get in the game and give it 100 percent. The professional athlete eats, sleeps, and works out according to a schedule aimed at achieving his goal of winning the gold medal, taking home the Super Bowl ring, or winning the World Series. He doesn't eat for pleasure, he eats to win. Cut out of your life anything that might slow you down. Lay aside the sin and the weight which so easily surrounds you.

Thirdly, Paul tells us to be good husbandsmen—farmers for Jesus. When I pastored in farm country, and later when I owned a sheep ranch, I learned first hand what Paul meant. The good farmer is diligent and hard working. He makes hay while the sun is shining. And gets up early and works hard all day to get that crop in. He is a partaker of the fruit of his labors.

Be disciplined. Keep your body under control, in case having preached to others, you yourself would be cast away.

45. Impact Others Positively

Jesus needs real men in the ministry. I heard a preacher from another country once say that, in his opinion, the problem with America was renegade men—men who had shirked their spiritual responsibility, and abdicated their moral and ethical leadership in their homes, churches, and communities. Many denominational churches are run by women for women. Stand up and be a man. As my friend Raul Ries would say, “God doesn't use wimpy pastors.”

Be a man for Jesus. Be a leader, not a follower. Set the tone; take the lead. Be a positive moral influence. Stand up for what is right. Be on the side of truth. Take a stand for Jesus that others can respect and follow. Set the example of service and love. Determine, like Daniel, not to defile yourself with the world. Follow Jesus regardless of the cost. Go after Him though none go with you. Jim Elliot once said, “He is no fool who gives up that which he cannot keep, in order to gain that which he cannot lose.”

It breaks my heart to see pastors who are run by their wives. Guide your household in righteousness. Raise your children to love, serve, and respect God. Be someone others can positively imitate.

46. The Church is Like a Ship. Jesus is the Lord High Admiral of the Fleet; the Pastor is the Captain of your Vessel; You are the First Mate, the Chief Petty Officer—Responsible for The Crew, and Responsible to your Captain for All Things.

Jesus is the Lord High Admiral of the fleet. Your pastor is the Captain of your vessel. You are the Chief Petty Officer, the First Mate. You are responsible to your Admiral and to your Captain to care for the entire crew—their morale, their spiritual health, their souls. Watch over them diligently. Don't fall asleep on watch. Report everything to the Captain. When the Captain is off the ship, keep her steady as she goes.

Keep in communication with the Admiral for orders. Obey the orders of the Admiral and the Captain instantly and unquestionably, unless the Captain orders you to do something opposite of what the Admiral has commanded. A smooth ship runs on discipline, obedience, diligence; so be disciplined, obedient, and diligent. Keep her headed properly.

Be sure to watch your tongue—loose lips sink ships. Be reliable and steady. Be someone who can be counted upon. Sail her safely to port, and remember that your Admiral has it all under His control.

47. Watch Out For People with Ulterior Motives

Guard the sheep from wolves in sheep's clothing. Watch out for false doctrine, for those who are seeking to divert disciples after themselves. Watch out for those who want to get close to the pastor just because they want something—a job, a contract on the new building, whatever. If you're dealing with a misdirected sheep, correct him gently. If you're dealing with a wolf, run him off.

We raised sheep and dairy goats in Colorado for about five years. When the coyotes came around, my watch dog was after them like a terrier after a rat, and I was right behind with my shot gun. You don't negotiate with coyotes; you get rid of them if you love your sheep.

Defend the flock of God from that doctrine which will hurt them, and from those false shepherds who would fleece them. Don't be suspicious; conversely, be trusting and accepting, but don't be naïve, either. Be discerning, discriminating, and respond accordingly. The pastor needs your help to guard a large flock of God's lambs.

48. Rise above Petty Cliques and Divisions; Serve with Loyalty and Love

Every church has them—cliques, clubs, and division of all sorts. Rise above them. The ground at the foot of the Cross is flat. God loves all the people equally. Jesus is not a respecter of persons. Treat everybody in the Body equally with love, dignity, and respect. Whether rich or poor; black, brown, or white; visitor or regular; or old or young, treat all God's people as men, women, boys, and girls for whom Christ died.

Serve the entire Body of Christ with loyalty and love. Be true and faithful. Watch over the souls of the saints as one who will one day answer for their care. Live your life in the expectancy of the soon return of Jesus Christ. Live your life today so you'd be happy to stand before Him tonight.

49. Wash Feet, Pick up Trash, Wash Windows, Fix Things, Serve, Serve, Serve

Wash feet, pick up trash, clean windows, jump-start cars, stay late, arrive early, shovel snow, sweep sidewalks, set up chairs, fold bulletins, answer phones, visit hospitals, love the saints, counsel the weary, fix pipes, clean toilets, and wax floors—serve God's people in love.

I have never met a man who serves more than Pastor Chuck. During pastor's' conferences, he's there to get the gum out of the rug, he'll jump-start a car that has a dead battery, pick up trash, anything that needs doing. And he doesn't do it for show—that is who he is, all the time, everywhere. I've traveled to Israel with him several times, and he serves people there, taking medicine to someone sick in the middle of the night, helping others with whatever they need. Do what needs doing. Open your eyes. Don't wait to be "called"; you're already called—God told you in His Word to be the servant to all.

Be a servant 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 ¼ days a year.

50. *Walk Closely With Jesus. Love Him, Serve Him, and Do All Things unto Him. Maintain a Strong Devotional Life.*

Walk closely with Jesus. Love Him, serve Him, and do all things unto Him. Maintain a strong devotional life. The ministry will never be more spiritual than you are. Serve from your heart, not your head. Reflect Jesus to the people. You are His minister. Serve Him with all your heart, all the time.

AFTERWARD

For Senior Pastors Only

Those of us who are assisting pastors for Chuck Smith have the easiest job on earth, simply because Pastor Chuck is so kind, so godly, so spiritual, and so in tune with the Holy Spirit that following him is a joy. He expects none of these things from anyone; he'd sooner do the whole thing himself. He watches and observes, willing to do it all himself if God doesn't raise up help. He doesn't force anyone to be a servant. He makes no demands on anyone. He just watches and waits ever so patiently. Then God, in His timing, raises up true servants who instinctively do the things I've described in this little book. My point is that as a senior pastor, you're off base if you demand any of this, and equally off base if you try to force it to happen. My advice, after watching Pastor Chuck for twenty years, is to watch and be patient. Trust God to raise up the men you need to help you. And until He does, you do it. Be willing to do anything.

I once visited with a pastor of a church of fifty people who told me he wished he had a real assisting pastor. I said nothing, but thought, "Why would you need any assistant at all? Do it yourself."

As you wait upon the Lord, you'll discover that some people just "get it" when it comes to ministry and some never do. Pray that you "get it," and trust God that others will too. Don't be a lord or a dictator; be an example. Serve others and expect nothing in return. Jesus did.