

SAVE AMERICA Ministries

Presents Year 2003 Edition

The STATE of

MINISTRY MARRIAGE and MORALS

Pastoral Marriages are in Monumental Trouble

- Those in ministry "are equally likely to have their marriage end in divorce" as general church members. (Hartford Seminary study of 10 Protestant denominations - 4,440 people)
NOTE: The study did NOT include those who resigned due to divorce. - *Ministries Today*, Sept/Oct 1995.
- Second highest divorce rate among all professions. ("The State of the Pastor"-Injoy Ministries-*Partners in Prayer Report*).
- 77% of pastor's wives are dissatisfied with marriage. ("The State of the Pastor"-Injoy Ministries-*Partners in Prayer Report*).
- 24% of pastors have received marital counseling.

Pastoral Morals Mimic the IMMORAL MAJORITY

- 20% of pastors say they view pornography at least once a month.
- 33% of pastors confess "inappropriate" sexual behavior with someone in the church.
- 20% of pastors admit having an affair while in the ministry.
(*"The State of the Pastor"* - Injoy Ministries - *Partners in Prayer Report*).

Pastoral Risks are a Reality

- 80% of pastors believe ministry negatively affects the family.
- 33% of pastors believe ministry is downright hazardous to marriage.
- 50+% of pastors wives are severely depressed (Dr. James C. Dobson)
(*Pastors at Risk* by H. B. London and Neil Wiseman)

Our Conclusion

- Pastors are risking holiness in pursuit of personal and parishioner happiness.
- As a nation, we have become "like people, like priest"...a condition described by the prophets requiring prophetic intervention to woo and warn both people and pastor before divine judgment. (Hosea 4:9, Is. 24:2, Mal. 2:7-9).
- When those manning the "lighthouse" of the nation participate in turning out the light, shipwreck is inevitable.
- Pastors must restore authority of God's Word in their own house before we can hope for righteousness in the Church House.
- Pastors must repent...in openness and brokenness...before we will truly see oneness and brokenness among the people.
- Pastor and people alike must radically re-assess both philosophy and practice of ministry. Americanized institutional and organizational Christianity may comport and compete with secular norms and forms but is devastating to relationships, both with Christ and with one another. We need new and intentionalized teaching on Biblical hospitality which will dramatically affect our relations with one another and our views on what constitutes legitimate ministry.
Our philosophy, practice, and even purpose of ministry is so radically divergent from that of the first century as to be virtually unrecognizable. If we truly believed in the "Priesthood of all believers," pastoral marriages would radically change. H.B. London, head of pastoral ministries for Focus on the Family, is undoubtedly correct when he repeats: "The church is beyond change - what she needs is intentional revolution."
- Viewpoint determines destiny! Are America's pastors willing to pay the price to restore righteousness and reconciliation in all of our mutual relationships? One thing is certain. In the words of H.B. London and Neil Wiseman repeated five times in the introduction of *Pastors at Risk*..."Something has to be done." Where something has to be done, it can be done. But it will cost us dearly. Evangelist Sammy Tippit lamented amid hope that American Christian leaders will most likely cling to personal entitlements and personal kingdoms and will be unwilling to truly count the cost. Will you?

Suggested Resources:

- *Pastors at Risk* (1993) by H.B. London and Neil B. Wiseman, Victor Books.
- "Divorced Ministers," *Ministries Today*, p. 18, Sept/Oct. 1995.
- Injoy Ministries, John Maxwell.
- "Sex, Morality and the Protestant Minister," Kenneth L. Woodward, *Newsweek*, July 28, 1997, p. 62.
- The Barna Report (Premiere Edition).
- "Don't Marriage Vows Matter Any More" by Jack Hayford, *Charisma*, February 2001, pp. 60-68.
- *Viewpoint* audio tape - "The Scarlet Scandal" (April 3, 2001) with Chuck Crismier (cost \$6).

"I don't know of any other vocation that is more hazardous than that of a pastor."
Archibald Hart, Fuller Seminary.

