

stands for those two things – walking with God and pleasing God. Every pastor can do both – no one can stop him. And every pastor needs the resources that come through such an intimate relationship with God.

**London/Wiseman:** What a strength for ministry! Though we do not know if Enoch built any prominent churches or influenced any great movements, he walked with God and was pleasing to Him. Every pastor can walk with God and be pleasing to Him.

### Helps for Pursuing Personal Holiness

Jerry Bridges' energizing message must be heard by all pastors. For too long, pastors have shortchanged themselves by separating personal holiness from the practice of ministry, competency from character, and service from spirituality. To think of ways to bring the inner and outer worlds together, meet Michael Messner.

Michael Messner was a typical minister in the making who earned good grades, married well on the day after college graduation, and was voted by classmates as the "most likely to succeed." And when church leaders came to recruit pastors during his last semester in seminary, he had his choice of several strong entry-level churches.

Michael and his wife, Suzanne, moved to their first church and did well for two years. But he soon missed the academic stimulus of the seminary and felt trapped by the repetition of ministry. He hit an invisible wall like a high-spirited jogger and didn't know how to get around it.

Changing environments seemed to be his only answer. With his charisma and outstanding academic achievements, it was easy to move to another church in another state. But unfortunately he had to take himself with him, so the same pattern developed again: great start, boredom, frustration, loneliness, and an eagerness new challenges and scenery. Soon the "fast-tracker" fizzled again, moved on to become a counselor in a mental health clinic and grieves over what happened to

his dreams for parish ministry.

Recently Michael and Suzanne met a lovely retired couple, Tom and Sarah Kratz, who shared satisfying pastoral ministry for forty years in three churches. As the two couples developed a strong friendship in spite of the age differences, Sarah asked Suzanne, "What did Michael do in his ministry to feed his soul?" She continued, "Tom and I found joy for the journey because we discovered early on that he had to keep his soul fat, or he had nothing to give people that mattered much. So he committed time and effort to developing a holy character, and I encouraged him to do so because he was more fun to live with when he was spiritually strong and fulfilled."

Sarah is right. Ultimately, there is nothing more powerful or influential in the church than a fulfilled pastor who does his work with an inner zest, rooted in a pursuit of personal holiness with God. The following suggestions help to answer the question *how*.

### ● Recognize Your Need for Power to Control

Maybe Dostoyevsky is right, "Without God we are too strong for each other." Organizational control can be enticing and destructive, even to spiritually minded people. But abuse of administrative, ecclesiastical, or spiritual authority frequently conditions fair-minded followers to passivity at the same time it is withering the power grabber's soul. People do not stop following a leader because he is spiritually strong or persevering. Rather they quit or quietly turn to apathy and mediocrity because they believe the leader is controlling or ego-driven.

Though the Bible expects a pastor to be an overseer, it never permits manipulation, conniving, or dictatorship. In the work of God, leadership privilege or position should be held loosely while the work is taken seriously. The Bible trusts the pastor with authority for achievement but this authority was never intended for ego gratification or selfish pyramiding of supremacy.

Power seduces pastors in every sized situation. A little organizational authority turns some mild-mannered ministers