

The Wellness of Pastors – Do We Care?

(Kevin Hon)

During the past years of ministry, I thank God for His care upon me and for His timely reminder about the need to take care of myself. One day, I received an email message from a church brother, he would like to ask to see how can pray for me. I replied to this message with love and thankfulness. As pastors, we are servants of our Lord and we are His sheep. As we care for the wellness of His flock, we have to care for our wellness.

Through my observations of the life and ministry of pastors, including my own, I discover an important need to help all pastors to pay attention to their wellness regularly. Pastors are excited to witness the increasing wellness of God's people, for it is in the journey of "getting well" that we see the mighty works of our Lord. As they serve others, they have to seek for growing wellness of themselves.

As I reflect upon the wellness of pastors, the following verses from the Gospel accounts come to my mind. "On hearing this, Jesus said to them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'" (Mark 2:17) "When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, 'Do you want to get well?'" (John 5:6) We thank the Lord for the pastors, for their commitment to shepherd and to train disciples. Still, pastors are part of God's sheep, they will get sick and they need to get well in different circumstances.

In recent years, as we are encouraged to pay attention to church health, it includes the special attention to pastors' health and wellness. Pastors are facing a lot of challenges and difficulties. They need to take care of their own well-being and they need to allow people to care for them, so that they will serve the Lord with healthiness.

In the midst of ministry demands, it is important for pastors to set aside time to stop and to reflect upon their own life. They have to ask and answer the following questions as genuinely as possible: "How am I doing?" "How I am feeling?" It is crucial for pastors to regularly take a look at their own personal relationships, and relationships with God, family members, friends and God's children.

In the area of pastoral wellness, it includes practical living such as habits, physical health, exercises, eating habits, sleeping habits, emotions, leisure activities, time management, support systems, and so on. Pastors are serious about the need to take care of brothers and sisters, but this does not rule out the need to nurture their life in godly and healthy ways. Our gracious Lord will prepare divine moments for all, especially pastors, to help them to adjust, grow, and serve.

So, who can get involve to care for the pastors? All of the following persons have to take part: the pastors, the family members, the church leaders, and the church congregations. Pastors need to be open to others' care in order for them to care for others healthily. The following questions are for all God's people: How do I live and relate to our pastors so they may live a healthy life? What can we do to contribute to the wellness of our pastors practically?

The wellness of pastors will become important living testimonies to declare the goodness and care of our Lord. "It is well with my soul, it is well with my soul" is a declaration of faith and trust in the Lord. It is my prayer that pastors will declare the same regularly as they care for themselves and as people provide support to them. The wellness of pastors – do we care?