

**IX**

VOLUME IX



# The Pastor and His Family

Where Godly Leadership Begins

A Journal  
for Pastors

# Church Matters

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**Church Matters: The Pastor and His Family**

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# **Biblical Thinking For**

# Building Healthy Churches

# Editor's Note

by Taylor Hartley

**M**y grandfather has been a pastor for almost sixty years. He pastored the church my family attended when I was growing up. I can't begin to count the number of sermons I've heard him preach over my lifetime, to say nothing of all the times I tagged along with him on visitation.

By God's grace, I can say that the man behind the pulpit has always been the same man who sits at the head of our family's dinner table. He's a godly man: a man who seeks to walk uprightly before his Lord. Is he perfect? Not even close, and he'd be the first to say as much. Still, I think following him means following Jesus whether you're his grandson or a member of his church.

It's all too easy to think of the church as a world far removed from the home. But Paul didn't think that way when he told Timothy and Titus what a potential elder should look like. An elder must be "the husband of one wife" and able to "manage his household well, with all

dignity keeping his children submissive” (1 Timothy 3:2, 4). You see, the home is a man’s “proving ground” (an image you’ll hear evoked multiple times in this issue of *Church Matters*) for eldership in the church. Failure to lead at home is a nonstarter for leadership in the church.

What this means for you, pastor, is that your ministry necessarily depends on your being a godly husband and father, if the Lord has called you to those roles. All your exegesis and sermon illustrations won’t make up for being a bad husband or a lousy dad. In fact, if either (or both) of those describe you, you risk marring the faith of your wife and children and stunting the spiritual maturation of the members of your church.

And for those like me who aspire to be an elder, let’s not think we’re off the hook. We can aspire all day long, but if we’re not striving to be godly for the

sake of our wives and children, then it’s *do not pass go, do not collect \$200* for us and our aspirations. We might as well stop all the training and preparing if we aren’t intentional about leading our families well.

So, the stakes couldn’t be higher.

And yet, at the same time, God’s grace in Jesus couldn’t be more abundant. There is hope for pastors who are imperfect husbands and dads, which is all of us. That’s why I’m praying this issue of *Church Matters* would challenge you where you’re slipping and encourage you where you’re already heading in the right direction. Many pastors young and old have contributed articles to these ends. Lord willing, in gleaning from their wisdom, you and I will increasingly display for our families and our churches something true and compelling about God’s character and his great love for us in the Lord Jesus.

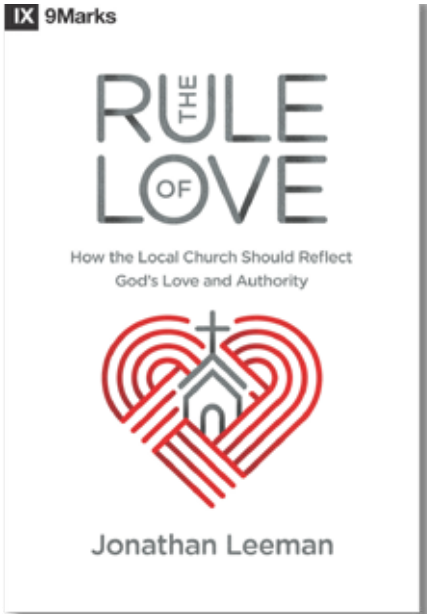


Taylor Hartley is the editorial director of 9Marks and a member of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

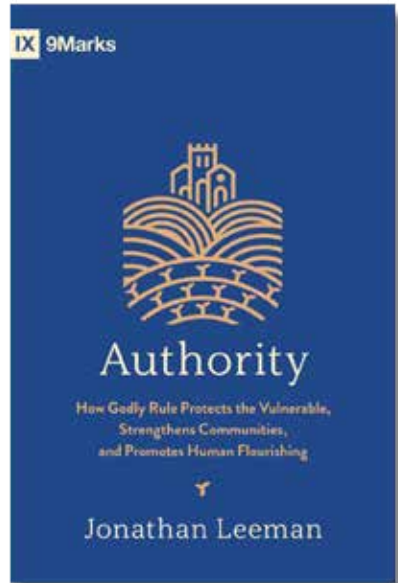
# Section One

# The Pastor's Marriage

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# Is it possible to be “successful” behind the pulpit while being negligent in your own home?

Maybe in the eyes of the world, but not according to God’s Word.

Those who care for God’s household must first manage their own household well. That’s not simply practical leadership advice—that’s a biblical qualification for any man who desires to shepherd God’s people.

This issue of *Church Matters* provides pastors with biblical and practical counsel for leading their families well. You’ll hear from fellow pastors, as well as pastors’ wives, who are seeking to apply God’s Word to some of the most important and difficult questions surrounding this topic.

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“God is not asking you to sacrifice your family for the sake of his mission. Your family is part of his mission, and he has made them your priority. ५”

*Matthew Bennett*

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