

When God Says, "Get Out Of Town!"

A Workshop on making Ministerial Changes

By Dick Gruber

Scriptural Basis:

Matt 21:22

Proverbs 14:12

Matt 25:29

Matt 25:40

Matt 26:39

Genesis 12:1

History Lessons:

Nebraska to Minnesota – Include your spouse in all major decisions

Minnesota to Oregon – Ask more questions

Oregon to Missouri – Include children in major decisions

Missouri to Minnesota – Include children in major decisions

Minnesota to Pennsylvania – Trust God for every part of the move

20 Reasons To Stay Where You Are

1. God put you there
2. Your spouse needs stability
3. The money is not better over there
4. There are worse pastors than the one you have
5. There are worse elder boards
6. There is a lack of workers everywhere
7. You'll have to find a new dentist
8. It costs a bundle to move
9. The children of your church need the best
10. The workers of your church haven't caught your vision yet
11. The pastor is not fully educated
12. God is bigger than your problem
13. Moving will only land you in a larger problem of the same family
14. Maybe you are the problem
15. There are still unsaved children in your area
16. Your treasurer needs to be educated
17. You have not yet reproduced your ministry in others
18. You'll have to find a new family doctor
19. Furniture is still heavy
20. God didn't tell you to go.

Reasons people leave (Jim Wideman)

1. Lack of vision
2. Frustration/Burnout
3. Moral failure
4. Not effective
5. Not willing to change
6. Change of philosophy (church, pastor)
7. Church outgrows you
8. You outgrow the church
9. Time to go (It is finished)
10. God promotes you

Common Courtesy

1. Return calls
2. Put away arrogance
3. Learn that People are important
4. Send any correspondence promptly
5. Be punctual for phone and personal interviews
6. Dress for success
7. WWJD?
8. Make no demands, instead, make requests
9. Don't allow past damage/bad situations to sour newfound relationships
10. Give your new pastor a chance to prove himself

How To Move (Jim Wideman)

1. Go on Time

- a. It is better to be on time than early or late
- b. Follow your heart
- c. Listen to God, He knows better than your friends

2. Do not prolong your escape/move

- a. A month is more than enough
- b. Once you have decided, leave
- c. When God releases you why stay around?

3. Go with your mouth shut

- a. Gossip is sin
- b. If you have a problem with someone, handle it according to Scripture or it will follow you
- c. Do not fellowship with people you never met with before the resignation
"You're leaving because of the money?"

- "It's the parsonage isn't it?"
- "Are you mad at anybody?"
- "If it is the pastor, we can get rid of him."
- d. Tell people the real reason you are moving (GOD)

4. Involve Your Family In The Decision

- a. In prayer before a conclusion is reached (Sarah- "God told me back in October...")
- b. In prayer throughout transition (The List)
- c. Let them help with practical aspects (Tim & Rachel choosing house)
- d. Give kids opportunity to ask hard questions (be honest)

5. Leave In Such A Way That You Can Come Back

- a. There doesn't have to be a fight (Dave & Mary's maybe move to Florida)
- b. God is moving you so what's the problem
- c. You will go through a grief process (find a friend, long distance, that can help you grieve)

Questions To Ask Your Future Pastor/Board

By Dick Gruber

I have found it necessary to develop my own set of questions for my prospective pastor and board. Whenever possible secure all answers in written form.

Staff Relationships:

1. Is there a staff retreat(s)
2. If so, how often?
3. Are wives ever involved in these?
4. Are expenses for this picked up by the church?
5. Does the staff party together?
6. Does staff meet for prayer on a regular basis? If so, When?
7. Does staff meet for fellowship on a regular basis? If so, When?
8. Does staff meet on a regular basis? If so, When?
9. Outline a typical staff meeting for me.
10. Who is my boss?
11. Does the church provide a private office?
12. Will the church provide my computer of choice?
13. Can I decorate my office in early American children's pastor?
14. Do I have/share a secretary?
15. If so, do I hire her?
16. Is she 100 % mine or does a percentage of her time shift to other ministries?

Policies:

1. What are office hours?
2. Is this considered Monday through Saturday?
3. Is there a standard day off each week?
4. Can office time be allocated for visits to schools, lunch with workers, etc.?
5. Is there an expected dress code?
6. Does the church encourage further education?(if so are finances provided?)
7. Is the church run on a strict budget?
8. If so, what is the allocation for children's ministries?
9. When are annual budget proposals drafted? Approved?
10. Is this money raised by my departments, or drawn from general fund?

11. Do I receive monthly update of budget status?
12. If so, is this broken down into line items, percentage used, left, etc.?
13. Is there designated parking?
14. Does staff become involved by policy in any local, community, or extra church organizations/events?

Benefits:

1. What is the base salary?
2. How often is this reviewed?
3. Does the church give merit increases?
4. If, So how often?
5. Is pay reviewed annually by calendar year or anniversary of employment?
6. Is cost of living considered in reviewal process?
7. Are medical or dental benefits provided?
8. Are retirement benefits provided?
9. Do I tithe through the church to the district?
10. Will all of this be enough to meet my family budget needs?
11. Is the staff paid each week, every other, or once a month?
12. If the church requires my wife to attend an event, are her expenses provided?
13. Will the church send me and my wife to a conference each year?
14. If so, is there a set limit on the cost of this conference? Which is?
15. How much time will I be allowed in ministry outside of the church?
16. What is your vacation policy?
17. Is vacation time allotted according to seniority?
18. Do you provide a mileage allowance?
19. Do you provide an entertainment allowance?
20. How does the church handle Christmas and the staff?
21. Will counseling be provided if I or a family member requires it as a result of the move?

Moving and Resettlement:

1. Do you pay all moving expense?
2. Is there any up front bonus or loan provided to help with resettlement?
3. Is there a preferred moving company?
4. Do you have a three year pay-back policy?
5. What is the timetable for my move?
6. If needed, will you transport Darlene and I up here in May to tie down loose ends on housing?

Philosophy:

1. Is my wife expected to be part of my ministry? Can she be?
2. Is there any regular time that I will be in ministry to the adults?
3. What is the present status and condition of this ministry?
 - congregational attitudes?
 - Sunday school, early childhood & elementary?
 - children's church? numbers? spiritual climate? workers?
 - nursery area? numbers? spiritual climate? workers? paid or non-paid?
 - mid week? numbers? spiritual climate? workers?
 - special, JBQ, puppets, clowns, etc...
 - kids choir? spiritual climate? workers? Do I lead this?
4. Do I have the liberty to try new projects?
5. What happens if I fail?
6. What is your philosophy of ministry to children?
7. Do you preach this or is it a silent belief?

8. Are there any methods, curriculums, or programs that you do not want me to be involved in?
9. Do you expect me to change any policy, personnel, or program immediately upon arrival?
10. What is to be my involvement in Rangers and Missionettes?
11. Do I have a say in curriculum used in the children's areas?
12. Who and what am I to be loyal to?
13. What is your reaction to this statement? I go to your church because of the children's pastor.
14. Can I continue to write for various publications?
15. Does creative work I do become property of the church?
16. I would like a written job description. Can you provide this?
17. Do you have a vision or specific expectations for the children's area?
18. If so, please explain?
19. Does your church cooperate with district functions? (camp, JBQ, etc.)
20. How long do you plan to pastor this church?
21. Do you feel any hesitation in a long term commitment to me and this church?
22. What does this church do for missions each year?
23. Is this church actively involved in BGMC? How? (\$1,584.38 last year)
24. What assignments beyond straight children's work will I be expected to perform?
25. If these tasks take more time than is reasonable, can lay or paid staff come in to handle them?

Home:

1. Is family to be a priority?
2. If so, how is this practiced?
3. If I spend mega hours at home or church on a project, can this be compensated for in flex time at the completion of such a project?
4. Will you tell me when I am doing to much or little?
5. Occasionally I need someone to care for me? Is that you?
6. My children are well adjusted. If they should become psycho, what will be your and the church's response?
7. How capable is the youth pastor?
8. What will he do to see that my teens are integrated into his program?
9. Does he provide ongoing discipleship/leadership training among the teens?
10. Can you outline the youth program for me? Music? Band? Orchestra?

Conclusion:

The last thing the next children's pastor needs is your whining, disgusting, negative, departure from the church. Prepare the way for him/her. Be God's person, following God, in a Godly manner. Prepare the workers, the children, the pastor for the next leader.

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Phil

4:9