

Intro: At our Elders meetings we have started having a short devotional/study time before we do our business. This past Monday there was a question that was asked that caught my attention: What is your “One Thing?” Apostle Paul said...this ONE THING I DO. It speaks to what we are passionate about...what most important to us For me the answer came immediately: CHURCH: I LOVE CHURCH. Spiritually it is my ONE THING:

This morning we have an amazing opportunity to talk about that ONE THING...Especially as it relates to Pastors. We are going to do 3 special things:

- Welcome Pastor Mario Leonart: New Pastor at IBVN His wife Yoaxis
- Welcome Pastor Rauldel Garcia: Candidate for Pastor at 1st Baptist Waldorf (Where Pastor Mario)
- Celebrate/Say Goodbye Pastor Jorge C. Retiring Pastor of IBVN

Illus: Musical Chairs!

As we seek to do those things this morning I find myself in an unusual place. All week I have been trying to organize my thoughts, reconcile them with the Word of God, prepare a message...20-25 mins! In itself that is very difficult...but when you match that up with the reality that I am deeply passionate about this topic... And that I want to honor a man that I respect beyond almost anyone I know....makes this a very challenging day.

As I prayed about what bible passage I should speak from one came to mind immediately. Perfect for what we want to do.
2 Tim 4:1-8 Pg 843

As we say Goodbye to one Pastor and Hello to two others there are three points I want to share with you

1. A Pastor Must Always Remember Who He Ultimately Serves.

Vs 1-2

- As Pastors we must always remember we have a sacred calling. We are called and commissioned by God. *“In the presence of God I give you this charge:”* Lit = Before the eyes of God I place this sacred calling in your hands Never forget...you are called, empowered and blessed by God. Do nothing that would ever lead anyone to question that calling. **Illus:** Imagine how that must have felt to Timothy: As intimidating as it would be to hear Paul say it: BEFORE GOD

- Many times we (both the Pastor and the People) get confused about who the Pastor “works for” Yes we are accountable to the Elders, and ultimately to the Church. But a Pastor must NEVER forget that his first and primary calling is to serve and please the God that placed him in ministry.
~We do not ultimately serve the church organization ~We do not ultimately serve people
~We do not ultimately serve the denomination ~We dare not serve ourselves!
A Pastor is NOT called to be a MAN pleaser. He is called to be a GOD pleaser: And that by definition will displease some men! Sometimes it is impossible to please both God and man. And when you have to choose and you will: Choose to please God!

- Sometimes the Pastor forgets his ministry will be judged. The day will come when your ministry will be evaluated...not by men...but by God Men evaluate our ministry every day: In the long run while we are CONCERNED we are not CONTROLLED by that
~*In the presence of God:* Lit = *Before the face of God: “In the sight of God”* Don’t ever forget...He is watching!
~*I Charge you:* Lit = I call you to account: I challenge you before the one you are pledged to honor and serve
~View of Appearing and Kingdom: While you are busy about your ministry: Keep these two things always in mind:
1. Appearing: Jesus could appear at ANY time! Will you be found doing what He has called you to do?
2. Kingdom: The ultimate test of your ministry is not what happens today: But what happens in eternity!
*There are things that you might do today that everyone celebrates...that negatively impact the Kingdom
And there are things that you might do today everyone disparages: But it builds the Kingdom.*

Illus: Because the temptation to please men, the temptation to forget eternity for the pressures of today, temptation to be so concerned about what others think that we can so easily compromise our calling I keep an etching on my wall. Come from a monument erected in honor of George Whitefield in a church built for him to preach in
“I am content to wait for the Day of Judgment for the clearing up of my character. And after I am dead I desire no other epitaphs than this, here lies G.W. what sort of a man he was the Great Day will discover.”

2. A Pastor Must Always Remember What He Is Called To Do.

Vs 3-6

As a Pastor there are plenty of people that will want to write your job description for you! I submit to you that as helpful...or harmful...as that might be...there is a very clear set of expectations in the bible for us Time will not allow me to cover them all in detail, but I do want to at least mention them...and briefly speak to each.

A Pastor's Job Description According to the Apostle Paul (9)

- Preach the Word: Not current events, Not newspaper, Not what people want, not own opinions: Preach Word!
- Always Be Prepared to serve, God and People: Lit = *to be at hand, to be at attention, to be on call!*
- Pastor the People: Shepherd: By that what Paul is saying is: Give them what they need...not what they want!
~Correct: *Going wrong, gently To put on the right path, to help to understand the right direction or action*
~Rebuke: *Intentionally doing wrong, To chastise and call to account, to say STOP IT sometimes*
~Encourage: *To find those doing right and help them continue to do what is correct, cheer them on the right path*
- Be Patient: Do all of those three things patiently: Be longsuffering, not quick tempered, not harsh
- Protect the truth: vs 3-4: You are the one called by God, along with the Elders, to maintain sound doctrine
You are responsible to know the truth, teach the truth, defend the truth of Word of God
- Practice Being Calm: Don't lose your head when everyone else loses theirs! Keep cool and presence of mind
- Pay the Price of leadership: What we do is hard: Endure hardship: It is tough: That's OK! Price for leading others
Every other spiritual leader paid that price: Moses, Elijah, Peter, Paul, Jesus
- Work at sharing Jesus: Do the WORK of an evangelist: It is important to understand, DO IT (Cannot delegate)
- Fulfill your ministry: Lit = Fill your ministry Full: Do all that God calls you to! Don't shortchange Him
So, that is really simple, right! That is "all" you have to do...along with your family...wife, children...COME FIRST!

After 30 years of being a full time Pastor in one church I have a couple thoughts I want to make about what we do.

I thought about sharing the conclusion of a highly respected Occupational Psychologist: (Basically job is impossible!!!)

- A Pastor's work is never done: I tell young Pastors: *"If you can't learn to go home with important things undone"*
- A Pastor is like the plate spinner in the variety show: *Always running to save something about to fall and break!*
- A Pastor can never take his fans or critics too seriously! *"Not as good as your fans say you are...or a bad as enemies"*
- You serve an audience of ONE...never forget that!

Pastor Raudel and Pastor Mario: You are both experienced, seasoned men. I challenge you...follow in the footsteps of Paul
Transition To William Rey

3. A Pastor Must Always Remember How He Should Define Success. Vs 7-8

Just like there being 1000 different sets of expectations of what a Pastor should do, there are the same or more def of success
Fortunately, Paul did not leave us uninformed, he set an example for us, AND spelled out what success looks like for a Pastor.

You will know you are successful when:

- You have poured your life out in service to God and His people...and there is nothing left! (*Drink offering*)
- You sense God's release from service: *Time for my departure is at hand:* Ex: Pull tent pegs, Untie Boat
Illus: Just as there is a very clear sense of CALL, There is a very clear sense of RELEASE (Spiritually discerned)
- You have faithfully fulfilled all God has put you there to do: *"Fill Full Your Ministry"* Vs 5
You are not called to do everything: Not every need is a call: BUT YOU ARE CALLED TO DO WHAT GOD SAYS!
~You have fought the battles He put you there to fight
~You have run the race HE SET out for you
~You have kept the faith: Refused to surrender spiritual ground to those who are not mindful of kingdom things
- You look forward to judgment of Christ, knowing you have done your best for Him (Crown of Righteousness)

We are all seeking the same thing, right? *"Well done, good and faithful servant!"*

Illus: I want you to notice something: Nowhere does Paul talk about winning: He talks about FINISHING WELL!

Some battles you fight...not because you are going to win...but because they are too important to NOT FIGHT!

Jorge, Two days stick out in my mind:

- 4 ½ years ago sitting in my office and you saying what would you think of a SS class, I said: What about a church!
- 4 months ago: me at my desk, you saying...God has told me it's time to go: Ready to argue: Reading Joshua/Moses

Based on those 4 years in between I want to say to you:

1. I have watched you pour out your life: Day after day, week after week, Great personal/family cost (No apology: Our Call)
2. As much as it grieves me: I cannot or will not argue with you over God's release: I trust your heart here
3. I have watched you fight the fight (Tears, Time, Tragedies, Triumphs) I want to say: "Well done good and faithful servant"
4. I have no doubt but that God has a treasure chest in heaven in store for you...You have done well. I love and respect you.

You have heard me say it many times in laughter, but I want to say it with sincerity: *"I want to be like you when I grow up."*

Actually, there is a third day that I remember, which causes me to rejoice beyond measure: "This has been the BEST, most fulfilling, most effective, most satisfying part of my ministry. It has been wonderful way to finish! Thank you for letting us...RTBC...and IBVN...be a part of that wonderful journey. You have blessed us beyond measure. My prayer for you is that God will bless you in the measure which you have blessed us!

- Invite Pastor Mario and Pastor Raudel up for laying of hands and prayer: Jorge Prays Spanish William Translates
- Invite Jorge up for laying on of hands and prayer: Dennis prays English, William Translates

Final Song: Oh Happy Day