PASSING THE TORCH
Preparing for Pastoral Transition

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One view of Pastoral Ministry is most likened to a *Relay Race* consisting of multiple participants on one team with a common goal or goals.

Each participant has a role or assignment in this race and the rules only allow a certain space within the competing field for a participant to accomplish his assignment.
Pastoral leadership was never meant to begin and end with an individual.

“For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” (1 Corinthians 3:4-6)
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Consider this…

“If your ministry’s continuance is dependent on your existence, then it may not be of God!”
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Hindrances and Roadblocks to Timely Transitions

• Ego and Arrogance (thinking more highly of one’s self)
• Power Intoxication (must be in charge)
• Financial Instability (counting up cost to step aside)
• Emotional attachment (relational connections)
• Love of being needed (sense of value)
• Lack of other interests (consumed by ministry)
• Being viewed as a Quitter
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Examining Historical Biblical Transitions:

MOSES – JOSHUA

ELIJAH – ELISHA

JOHN (the Baptist) – JESUS
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Consider this...

“To every thing there is a season, and a time
 to every purpose under the heaven:”
(Ecclesiastes 3:1)

We can therefore conclude that God
ordains all of our seasons and times!
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MOSES – JOSHUA

ISRAEL is considered the 1st mega–CHURCH
which by default would make…

MOSES the first mega–PASTOR
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God concludes that Moses’ tenure as Pastor is complete. Transitioning time!

Notice that Moses retired from his Pastorate at 120 years of age yet his eyes were not dim, nor was his physical strength totally depleted. (Deuteronomy 34:1-7)
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Moses demonstrated his love for the ministry and calling of God by assuring Israel of having adequate, competent and godly leadership. (Numbers 27:12-20)

Authentic leadership is always concerned with legacy; continuation of works; and at least the next two generations. (Proverbs 13:22)
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Consider this...

“If the church is not bigger than you, then it’s not a church, it’s a club!”
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The first passing of the mantle from Moses to Joshua was very smooth and without incidents of splits, riots, etc. (Joshua 1:1-2)

Moses did not go away fighting or screaming nor did he have a spirit of sabotage. (Deuteronomy 34:9-12)
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Consider this...

“A house divided against itself cannot stand!”

“Once a garment is torn or ripped, it will never be the same!”
The Prophet Elijah was a huge figure in Israel

- Highly anointed by God
- Called down fire from Heaven
- Slew hundreds of false prophets
- Did not experience death like us
- Was carried away into Heaven
Elijah did not die a normal death as was the case with Moses. (2 Kings 2:11-13)

- There was no corpse to mourn
- There was no body to bury
- There was no grave to mark

Yet Ecclesiastes 3 applied to him as well.
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This passing of the mantle from Elijah to his armor-bearer Elisha was again very smooth and without dissention. (2 Kings 2:11-15)

However we do witness a reluctance on the part of the church leaders to give total respect to the Elisha’s leadership. (2 Kings 2:16-18)
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Consider this...

“You will never reach the promises of your future by living in your past!”
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JOHN (the Baptist) – JESUS

John the baptizer was born of humanity, yet he was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus Christ the Messiah. (Luke 1:13-17)

- His ministry was to preach repentance
- His sanctuary was the wilderness
- His apparel was simple
- His diet was modest
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John accepts the irrevocable truth of his life’s purpose, expectancy and existence.  (Mark 1:6-8)

John introduces Jesus as his successor without hesitation or reservation.  (John 1:29-34)

Unlike Moses’ death and Elijah’s flight to Heaven, John is beheaded by order of King Herrod in a Roman jail cell.  (Matthew 14:10-12)
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Consider this...

“You cannot curse what God blessed!”

“One plants, another waters but it is God that increases!”
This passing of the mantle from John (the baptizer) to Jesus Christ was also without animosity between the two disciple groups. (Matthew 11:1-3)

Even after the New Testament Church was birthed and rapidly growing, the disciples of John were re-baptized by Apostle Paul in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 19:1-6)
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Consider this...

“It’s impossible to drive behind a parked car!”
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Pastoral Transitions are inevitable and cannot be avoided. People and generations are always evolving and ever changing.

Therefore, the same should be expected with respect to leadership.
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Consider this...

“Every Pastor must specialize in ministering to their generation.”

“A Pastor cannot minister to an I-pad generation with 8-track cassette tape methodologies!”
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You must redeem the time that God has given you and “work the works of Him while your daytime exist.”

The fact is… Useful time will be no more for all of us one day and it comes sooner than you think.
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Consider this...

“A successful Pastorate is not necessarily judged by years or church members; but by hearing the Lord say... Well done!”
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Consider this...

“Consider the wonders of the Canadian Geese”
QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU SO MUCH!