



Sheep Caring for the Shepherd that Cares for the Sheep

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Let's talk
about pastors

Let's talk about pastors.

- What *is* a pastor, anyway?
- Can *anyone* be a pastor?
- Is being a pastor a *job*?
- What kinds of skills and abilities required to be a good pastor?

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

**It starts with a unique
“calling”—an inescapable
sense that “I must do this, no
matter what.”**

*Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying,
“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”*

Jeremiah 1:5-6

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

The call is biblical:

- Moses
- Jeremiah
- Peter
- Saul/Paul



Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.

The call is personal.



“There are 2 things that are eternal—
the word of God and men’s souls.
I decided to give my life to both.”

Pastor Monty Dunn
Friendly Baptist Church, Branson

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

The call is specific.



The call leads a pastor to a specific place, to a specific people--a church.

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

The call at that specific place
involves:

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

Sublime joy in the work
Love for the sheep
Love for the Great Shepherd

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

Weekly sermon and Bible study
preparation

Administration

Counseling

Crisis ministry

High people contact

Interruptions

**Being a
pastor is like
no other job
in the world.**

Many “bosses”

Isolation

Family in a bubble

Criticism (some justified, some not,
mostly behind the back)

Conflict

Spiritual weight

Broken hearts (Jer. 20:7-18)

**The COVID-19
crisis has
intensified
pastoral stress
tremendously.**

“I’m just tired.”

“I’ve been discouraged for the past few months.”

“I feel like the ground is constantly shifting beneath my feet.”

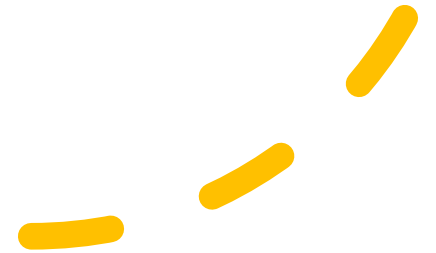
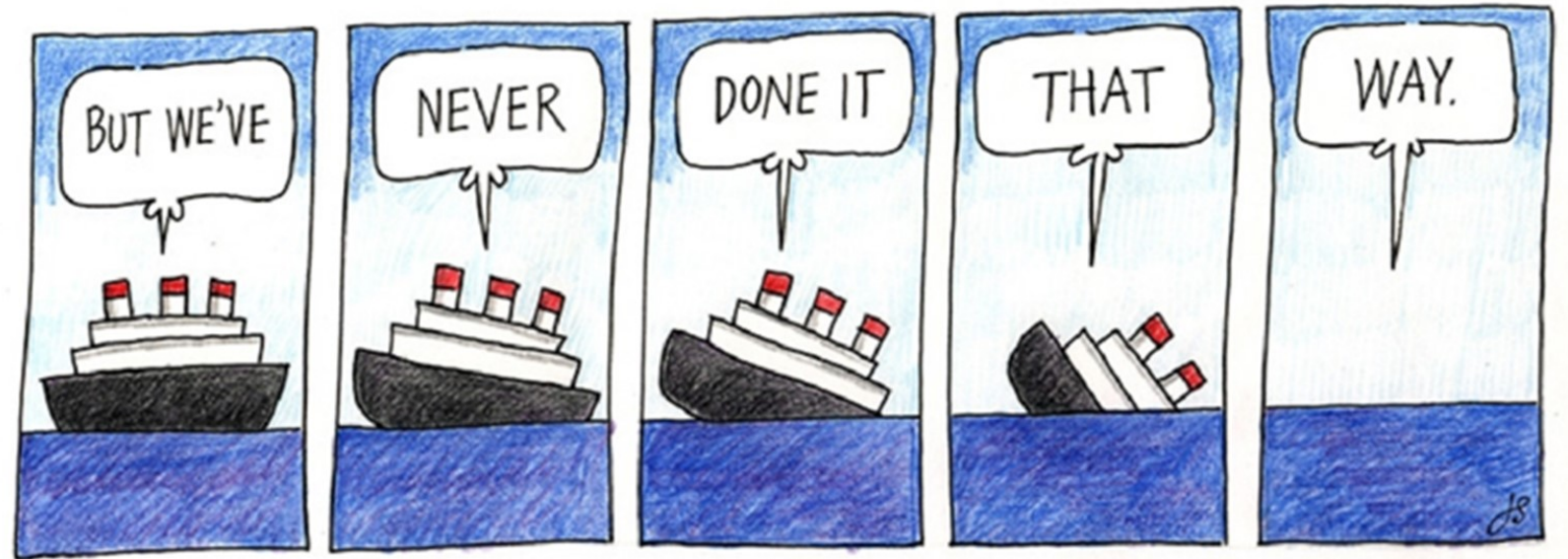
“We’ve had a person test positive. What should I do?”

“I feel like I’m in a no-win situation.”

“We’ve never done that.”



The COVID-19 crisis has intensified pastoral stress tremendously.

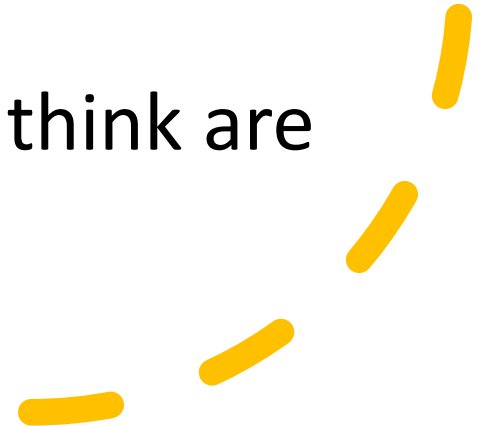


**The COVID-19
crisis has
intensified
pastoral stress
tremendously.**

“I don’t want to go on-line/do a drive-in service/use pre-packaged Lord’s Supper elements/cancel services/wear a mask/etc.”

“How are we going to do children’s and youth ministry/Sunday School/offerings/business meetings/etc?”

“We’ve lost people that I don’t think are going to come back.”



PASTOR

You can't open
the church building
yet! It is a huge
health risk!!
You are wrong
if you do.

It is all a big hoax!
A conspiracy!
A media frenzy!
Read this article!
This link!
Don't be afraid!!

My wife,
husband, dad,
grandparent...
uncle... sister...
brother... niece...
just passed away
from Covid-19.

Here are the
25 things you
need to do if
you want to meet
in your building
again.

My family is
going to stay home
for awhile before
coming back.
Sorry can't
be there.

Don't ever open
the building again!
Home is so
much better!

We need to open
the church
building!
I need to be there
and see everyone!
**WHAT ARE YOU
WAITING FOR??**

**No matter how
much you love the
sheep,**

**no matter how
much joy you
have in the work,**

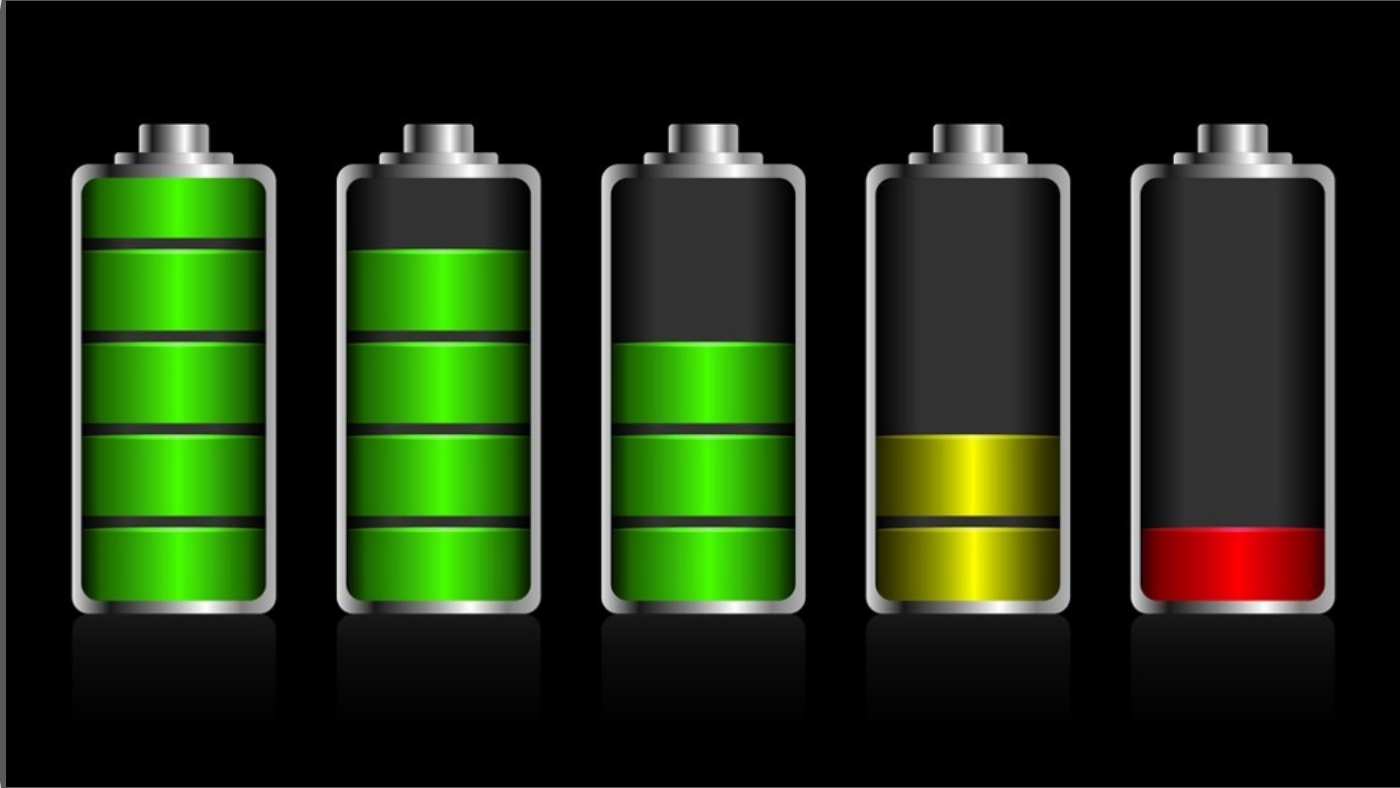
all pastors experience periods of,
not being tired **OF** the work,
but being tired **IN** the work.

Satan loves attacking weary and
wounded shepherds.



No matter how
much you love the
sheep,

no matter how
much joy you
have in the work,



*For He Himself knows our frame;
He is mindful that we are but dust.*

Psalms 103:14

Real life situation:

A pastor loves his church and loves the ministry, but years of toil have taken its toll.

Possible options:

Church doesn't notice.

Church action:

Nothing.

Possible consequences:

Real life situation:

A pastor loves his church and loves the ministry, but years of toil have taken its toll.

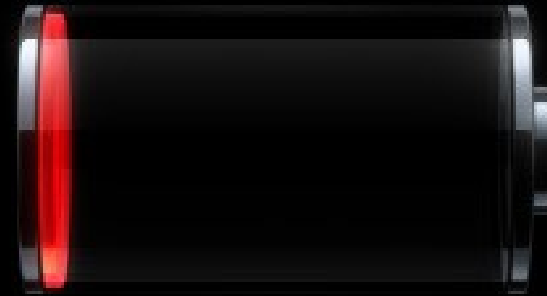
Possible options:
Church notices.

Church action:
Nothing.
Pink slip.
Takes steps to love their pastor.

Possible consequences:

**If you love
him,
don't let this
happen to
your pastor!**

Uh oh.



After a certain amount of time in ministry,

an extended time of unplugging from ministry responsibilities allows a pastor to

recharge his spiritual batteries and get new energy and focus for the next years of a church's ministry.



**questions/
comments**



2

How granting your
pastor a

**ministry renewal
leave**

can be a blessing
for your pastor
and your church

Ministry renewal leave

what is it?

an intentional, extended time of unplugging from ministry responsibilities allows a pastor to

- recharge his spiritual batteries and
- get new energy and focus for the next years of a church's ministry

Ministry renewal leave

what it isn't.

- It's not the same as a vacation.
- It's not an escape.
- It's not academic leave.

Ministry renewal
leave

What does
the Bible say?

**And on the
seventh day
God ended His
work which
He had done**

and He **rested** on the seventh day
from all His work which He had done.
Then God blessed the seventh day
and sanctified it, because in it He
rested from all His work which God
had created and made.

Genesis 2:2-3

**Observe the
Sabbath day to
keep it holy,
as the Lord
your God
commanded
you.**

Leviticus 25:4

But in the seventh year there shall be
a sabbath of **solemn rest** for the land,
a sabbath to the Lord.

Leviticus 25:4

And He said to them,
“The **Sabbath was made for man**,
and not man for the Sabbath.”

Mark 2:27

**And Jesus said
to them,
“Come away by
yourselves to a
lonely place
and rest a
while.”
Mark 6:31**

So then, while we have opportunity,
let us do good to all people, and
especially to those who are of the
household of the faith.

Galatians 6:10

Let the elders who rule well be
considered worthy of **double honor**,
especially those who labor in
preaching and teaching.

1 Timothy 5:17

ministry renewal leave:

an intentional, extended time of unplugging from ministry responsibilities allows a pastor to recharge his spiritual batteries and get new energy and focus for the next years of a church's ministry

**How can it help
our pastor?**

A deeper relationship with God.
Decompress from the demands,
pressure and expectations of 24/7
ministry.

Re-connect with family.

Greater self-awareness.

A new commitment to his calling.

A sharper perspective on his
ministry.

ministry renewal leave:

an intentional, extended time of unplugging from ministry responsibilities allows a pastor to recharge his spiritual batteries and get new energy and focus for the next years of a church's ministry

How can it help our church?

A refreshed and renewed pastor.

Discovering gifts and abilities within the church.

A new appreciation for what he does among us.

Higher pastor retention.

ministry renewal
leave

“yes, but...”
(common objections)

from the church’s perspective:

Why should he get that much time off? I work hard too.

Isn’t this just a glorified vacation?

Why should we pay him if he’s not here?

How will we survive without him?

Will he leave us after he gets back?

We’ve never done this for any of our other pastors. Why now?

ministry renewal leave

**“yes, but...”
(common objections)**

from the pastor’s perspective:

Nobody in my church gets that much time off.

My church can’t get along without me.

If I’m gone that long, there may be conflict in the church.

What if an emergency comes up?

Does it have to be that long?

I can’t afford it.

ministry renewal leave

What pastors say.

“I think it added years to my ministry... the refreshment I received injected new energy into my ministry.”

“I felt so refreshed and renewed. I was able to remember why I love this ministry, the purpose of why we started this church, and rediscover the love of the people in the church.”

Reponses from a survey of 22 pastors, conducted by Rev. Roger Funk, Doctor of Ministry dissertation

ministry renewal leave

What pastors say.

“The sabbatical communicated to me that my church cared about me as their pastor. It allowed me to take my breath and prepared me to enter into the next phase of ministry with new energy and joy. If I had not received this break, I would have moved on to another church.”

“I learned something, it was on the eleventh morning when I awakened and became aware that I was rested. It became clear to me that all our one-week vacations, as helpful and appreciated as they were, never brought me to the place of full rest.”

Reponses from a survey of 22 pastors, conducted by Rev. Roger Funk, Doctor of Ministry dissertation

ministry renewal leave

What not to do.

Don't assume that you can't do this.

Don't assume that you can't live without each other (pastor and church).

Don't fail to develop a plan that includes specifics on

- what will happen at the church
- how we will handle the pastor's "re-entry"
- how we will evaluate the experience (church and pastor).

ministry renewal leave

How to do it well.

Decide.

Considerations:

- health of the church
- pastor's physical, spiritual and emotional health
- time frame (how long from now, and how long a time away)
- finances
- plan for "re-entry"

ministry renewal leave

How to do it well.

Plan.

for the church:

- Develop a policy for ministry renewal leaves.
- Who will do what in the pastor's absence?
- What do we hope to achieve?

ministry renewal leave

How to do it well.

Plan.

for the pastor (written, submitted to the church):

- What are my goals?
- How will I achieve my goals?

ministry renewal leave

How to do it well.

Evaluate.

Church:

- How we did in the pastor's absence.
- What God did in the pastor's absence.
- Should we adjust our ministry renewal leave policy?

Pastor:

- What I did.
- How God spoke to me while I was away.
- What's next.

ministry renewal leave

next steps

Should we adopt a ministry renewal leave policy?

If so,

- how will we set it up?
- when will we send the pastor on his leave?
- begin planning for his leave.

If not,

- what is our plan to ensure that our pastor is emotionally, spiritually and physically healthy?

**questions/
comments**



3

Developing your
church's plan for
**ministry renewal
leave**

ministry renewal
leave plan

**considerations
for the church**

Church health

Clear purpose

Clear communication with all
involved

Staff roles

Take as a whole

Financial plan

- regular pay/benefits
- additional funds

Re-entry plan

ministry renewal
leave plan

**what to include in a
ministry renewal
leave policy**

Who is eligible

How often

How long

How far in advance to request

How to request, what to include

How to approve

Who will “take up the slack”

Follow-up and evaluation

ministry renewal leave plan

considerations for the pastor

Plan ahead

Work with church leaders

Include in your proposal:

- purpose of your ministry renewal leave
- describe how it will
 - contribute to your own renewal and development
 - contribute to the effectiveness of your congregation/ministry
- outline of how you will spend your time
- plan for assigning responsibilities to others while you are away

ministry renewal
leave plan

examples

**questions/
comments**



more information

YouTube video: CBS This Morning “Pastors experiencing burnout look to sabbaticals to invest in mental health”

Sabbaticals for Ministers: The Benefits for Pastors and Congregations. Focus on the Family’s “The Pastor’s Advocate Series”

“A Sabbatical Guide for Pastors” Bill Gaultiere,
soulshepherding.org/sabbatical-guide-pastors

“Writing a Sabbatical Policy”
pastorserve.net/writing-a-sabbatical-policy

“Sabbatical Policies: Samples and Templates”
Great Lakes Region of the Wesleyan Church
<https://thegl.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sabbatical-Packet-Sample-Policy-Worksheet-Letters-1-1.pdf>

Sabbatical: Helpful Hints for a Successful Sabbatical. Dallas Theological Seminary
dts.edu/download/alumni/placement/DTS-Alumni-TheSabbatical.pdf

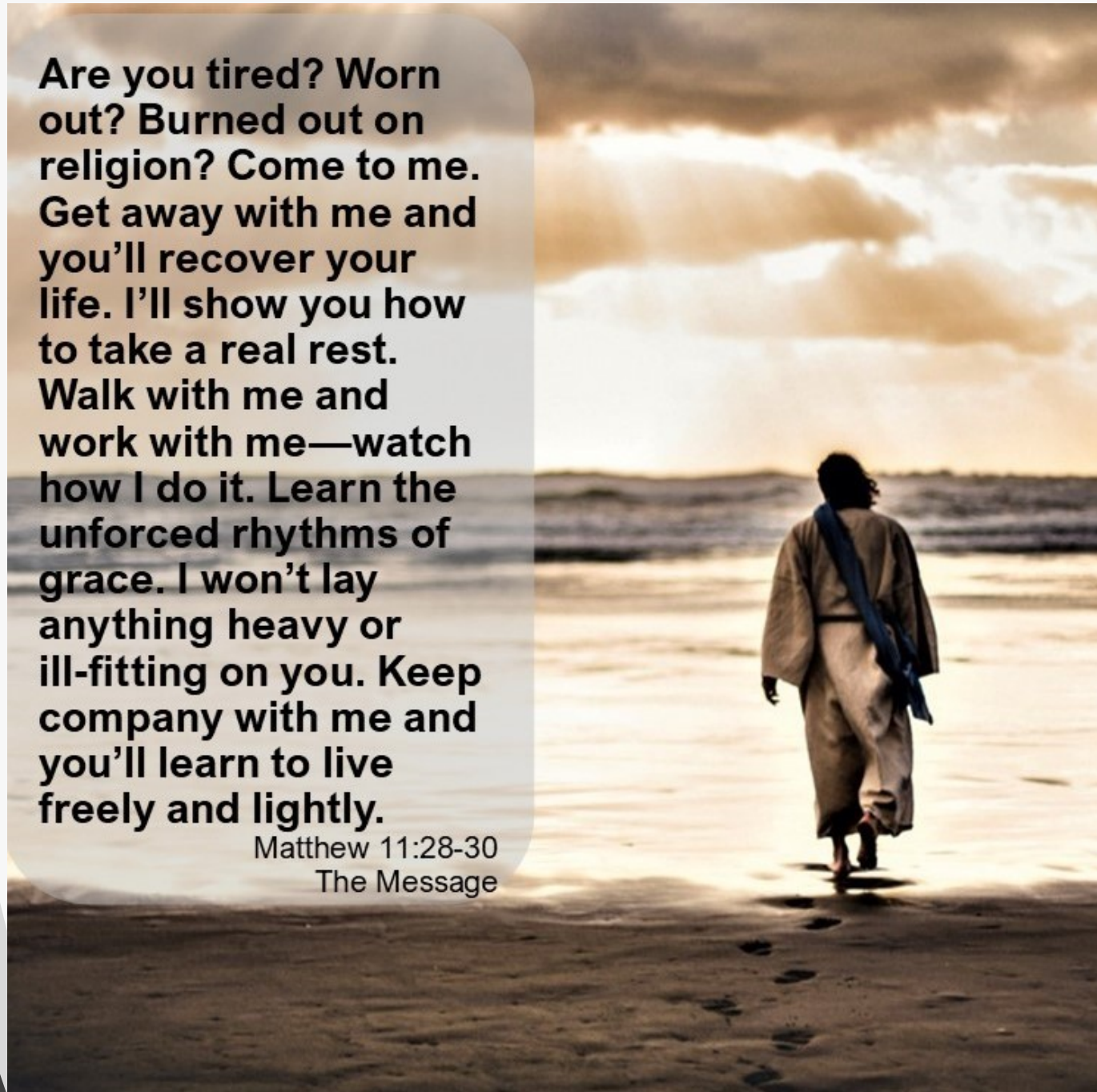
Planning Sabbaticals: A Guide for Congregations and Their Pastors. Robert C. Saler

A Sabbatical Primer for Pastors. David C. Alves

A Sabbatical Primer for Churches. David C. and Marcy Devers Alves

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

Matthew 11:28-30
The Message



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