

JOHN RHODES

Success Secrets for Pastors

Ministry



Releases

Success Secrets for Pastors

John Rhodes

The Ministerial Association
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Contents

Introduction	5
Chapter 1 The Pastor as an Administrator	9
The Church Board	9
Church Budgets	14
Working With Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses	17
The Pastor's Membership Records	27
Working Through Committees	34
The Nominating Committee	39
Chapter 2 The Pastor as an Evangelist	45
Church Meetings for the Public	45
Evangelistic Church Socials	51
Chapter 3 The Pastor as Preacher and Priest	57
The Pastor's Study	57
Preparation of Sermons	61
The Worship Hour	66
The Prayer Meeting	68
The Communion Service	71
The Baptismal Service	76
Dedication of Children	78
Weddings	82
Second Marriages	92
Wedding Commemoratives and Anniversaries	93

Chapter 4 The Pastor as a Shepherd	95
Ministry to the Aged	95
Ministry to Shut-ins	97
Dealing With Absentees	99
The Pastoral Visit	101
Visiting the Bereaved	103
Memorial Sermon	107
At the Graveside	112
Funeral Verse	113
Work for Children and Youth	118
Service Personnel	126
 Chapter 5 The Pastor as a Promoter	 127
Periodical Campaigns	127
Ideas for the Church School	128
Promotion of Sabbath School Objectives	129
Ingathering	133
 Chapter 6 The Pastor's Public Relations	 143
Looking Forward	157
Acknowledgments	158
CEU Registration Request	169

Introduction

Few books available today contain concrete, workable ideas and methods for the busy minister. Scarcer still are published materials especially adapted to the requirements of Seventh-day Adventist pastors. Feeling the need for such material in my own pastoral work, I decided to make a survey of useful methods and plans devised by my fellow ministers in North America. I soon discovered that other ministers felt the same need that I did. They wanted a collection of ideas in one volume, to be used as a reference book.

With help from the leaders of the La Sierra College department of religion, I prepared a forty-eight-point questionnaire on the various aspects of pastoral leadership. Two copies of the questionnaire were sent to each conference president in North America, with the request that these leaders choose two men in their field who excelled in one or more of the points listed, and send me their names. A good number of the presidents responded, and the men recommended were consulted either by interview or by letter. They were invited to share samples of their cards, forms, or other materials that aided them in conducting successful pastoral programs. Many of these ministers contributed materials and ideas.

Group interviews with pastors of churches yielded further valuable materials. Other men, hearing of the project through *Ministry*, wrote and volunteered their ideas.

Some of the success secrets in this book will appear commonplace to seasoned pastors, but the ideas are given here for the benefit of those with less experience.

If this book will add one or two new workable ideas to the pastor's program, its preparation will have been worthwhile. If, in addition, it serves

as a springboard to the development of other useful plans in pastoral leadership, it will have been a real success.

Ministers laboring in countries other than the United States and Canada may find ideas which are impractical in their fields. Even in America customs vary, and so will methods. The plan of soliciting Ingathering funds in a New York City skyscraper community poses a problem entirely different from that of caroling in Boulder City, Nevada.

No pastor should read this book with the thought of measuring his own success. This is a collection of ideas not of one pastor, but of many. The material should serve as a well from which all of us can draw.

The methods collected here are no substitute for God's Holy Spirit. Though God never designed that His church should be run in a loose, disorganized way, much less did He design that ideas and methods should be used as a substitute for dependence upon Him. Success comes "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6.

Together with this collection of ideas, I wish to submit these timely words from the pen of Ellen G. White:

As activity increases and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a savior of our activity. We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work.

—*The Desire of Ages*, page 362.

Where spirituality and leadership exist together in the right proportions, I believe there will be true progress in our churches.

—The Author

The Continuing



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Each chapter of this book concludes with an “Assignment” section prepared by Ministerial Continuing Education. If you read all six chapters of *Success Secrets for Pastors* and faithfully perform all of the prescribed exercises, you qualify for two Continuing Education Units (CEUs) which fulfill the annual continuing education requirement for Seventh-day Adventist ministers. Complete the CEU Registration Request on page 159.

Never think that you have learned enough, and that you may now relax yours efforts. The cultivated mind is the measure of a man. Your education should continue during your lifetime; every day you should be learning, and putting to practical use the knowledge gained.

—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 561.

*CEUs are non-academic credit and cannot be applied to a degree.

The Pastor as an Administrator

Centuries ago Jethro counseled Moses:

Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

—Exodus 18:21, 22.

Like Moses of old, ministers today find themselves under many pressures. They, too, will sink under the load unless they can find ways of incorporating lay leadership into their program. Jethro's counsel is still valid today. But how can a minister secure the cooperation of his laymen?

Let us look at some of the methods successful ministers have used in enlisting the talents of their laymen in the work of the church.

The Church Board

The highest body of the local church is the Church Board, and securing the cooperation of this board is the pastor's first move in organizing the church for action. First he must consider the time and place of meeting, the agenda, the method of calling the meeting, and the type of leadership necessary to hold a successful meeting.

The Time of Meeting

Most pastors prefer a regular Church Board meeting night, at a time when no other meeting will interfere. Some favor an hour following prayer meeting. They feel that this plan bolsters prayer meeting attendance, and that the prayer meeting makes a good prelude for a board meeting. Also the members, knowing they have only a short time to meet, finish the business more quickly. My personal feeling is that devoting a special evening to church business elevates the importance of the work of the Church Board and averts difficulties that might arise if the prayer meeting should run late.

Announcing Meetings

Most pastors send out a notice of the time and place of meeting to all board members. This plan can be augmented by sending out a post-card agenda of the evening's discussion, to which a note is added: "Save this card. It is your agenda."

If no agenda is included, a multipurpose card may be used, as follows:

Any Place Seventh-day Adventist Church

Dear Church Member:

Your attention is called to a meeting of:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elder's Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Officers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deacons' Board | <input type="checkbox"/> School Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church Council | <input type="checkbox"/> S.S. Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ushers' Council | <input type="checkbox"/> AYS Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Pathfinder Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services | |

Date _____ Time _____

Place _____

Respectfully,

Pastor

John Rhodes trabaja para la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día como pastor, evangelista, y secretario ministerial. Su ministerio se destaca por ser un modelo de liderazgo en la provisión de "alimento" para su congregación y por su liderazgo en el crecimiento de la iglesia. Se distingue por utilizar siempre fuentes pastorales. Este volumen es la edición más reciente de su colección de sugerencias para un pastorado efectivo.