



Gear List for the Pastorate

By Cliff Foster

Like you would expect at any trade craft or job, there are essential tools that are unique to that profession. Here is a list of ten things, a Preacher should have to conduct the ministry of the Pastorate; a proverbial gear list.

1. Preacher & his Bible - In the electronic age, many rely upon cellphones and laptops for their Bibles, which is fine. However, the paper Bible is best for the ministry. It serves as an icon of your faith and symbolism to those who look to you for strength & guidance.

Additionally, the Preacher will form a special bond with their paper Bible as it becomes a part of who you are. This type of connection cannot be formed with electronic Bibles. This emotional and spiritual bond forms over time through preaching and praying while using the same Bible. This bond will serve as comfort in times of need & crisis that will inevitably arise during the execution of the ministry.

2. Black Suit – In modern America, there is less and less value in wearing a proper suit when executing the office of the pastorate. No matter what the local church culture for wearing a suit may be, every Preacher should have at least one black suit that fits correctly. If you are dynamic in your clothing size, then you will need more than one, but always have a properly fitting suit that is clean and ready. When executing the duties of Pastorate, a Black Suit is vital in formal scenarios, you just need a different tie; such as for guest speakers, weddings, funerals, job interviews, and the unlikely scenario of legal proceedings.

3. Ordination Certificate – As a Pastor, you will need to maintain accessibility to your ordination certificate. While it is generally unnecessary in the execution of the pastorate, it becomes necessary when interacting with legal authorities, such as when applying for non-profit or voluntary work, or providing proof for weddings (if challenged), etc. In the eyes of the law, this certificate functions as legal proof that you are a member of the clergy.

4. Carry an Identifier – Always carry or at least easily accessible some form of identifier such as a lapel pin stating 'Pastor' or a name badge with 'Pastor' and/or 'Church Name'. In most Baptist subgroups, the Baptists do not wear apparel that identifies them as members of the clergy. There will be times when you will need or want to be recognized as a Pastor who is functioning in an official capacity, such as hospital visits, evangelism efforts, humanitarian work, etc.

5. Bible Study program on your cellphone - There are many methods of studying the Bible and sermon preparation. However, these methods work when you have the luxury of time to do so. A Bible Study program that contains the Bible and various commentaries & language commentaries will allow you to study for the next sermon when you don't have the luxury of time. As a Pastor working a secular job and/or children still in school, you will find yourself studying for sermons in restaurants, school/sports events, waiting rooms, in the car, etc., as you endeavor to keep balance with the ministry and family.

6. Pocket Recorder – As a Preacher, work to carry a pocket or hand-held recorder that is not your cellphone. This device will serve as a consistent time tracking device on the pulpit, so that no matter what speaking setting you are preaching in, you can manage your allotted speaking time appropriately. Additionally, it allows you to check what you actually said or wish to have said in the sermon when you are reflecting on the sermon message. It also allows you to listen to yourself to hear what the audience is hearing, which helps you improve your presentation skills. Lastly, you can have the files transcribed for writing projects, if you choose to do so.

7. Breath Strips or Breath Mints – Always, Always, Always carry breath strips or breath mints. Nothing is more distracting than a Pastor with foul coffee breath, and then they are trying to have private spiritual moments, such as prayer, counseling, etc. Women are especially susceptible to smells, and bad breath can be offensive. Get in the habit of preventative use.

Recommended:

8. Giveaways – In modern America, Business Cards have declined in importance due to electronic media. Work to carry some form of giveaway with the church logo or web address, such as pens, coins, button, sticker, etc. There are many vendors and options for cheap giveaways that are fun easy to carry about. When meeting new people in the ministry, consider giving them items like business cards, which are less likely to be tossed.

9. Church Website – In the age of electronic media, a clean and straightforward church website is highly recommended. These Website addresses can be easily added to signatures and giveaways, allowing people to connect with more information about the church. A simple plug-and-play website can cost as little as \$50 per year. Engaging in Social Media & Blogs has advantages and disadvantages that must be carefully considered before proceeding with them, but a nice church website has great value to the modern ministry.

10. Prayer List – Most people 'say' they have a prayer list, but they don't, or they have various scraps of paper called a prayer list. It is highly recommended that a Pastor maintain a running prayer list. However, instead of focusing on individual ailments people ask you to pray for them about, you should have a running list of names. As you meet new people in the ministry, add their names to the list and regularly pray for all the names on list. God is aware of the ailments but pray for them by name. There is power in prayer, and greater power in praying by name. Lastly, the regular consulting of names allows you to be better at remembering people's names, and it does matter to people that the Pastor remember their names.