



Timely Message for This Time of Disruption in EVERYTHING

Serving Leaders in Life

This article was written by Thom S. Rainer, founder and CEO of Church Answers. (www.churchanswers.com)

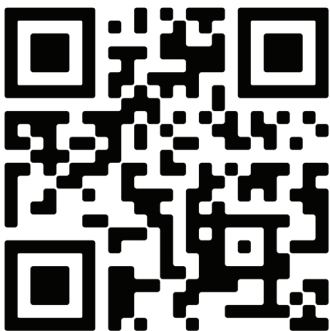
Pastor: Throughout history, the church has undoubtedly experienced more difficult times for pastors, but leading a church today is much tougher than it was 20 and 30 years ago. Certainly, some demographic, economic, and cultural shifts have occurred that reflect this reality. Yet some of the challenges can only be understood in the context of spiritual warfare. Let these words from Thom Rainer serve as an encouragement and guide.

“Six Reasons Why Pastors and Church Leaders Must Be More Courageous Today”

If I could choose one more course for ministry training and preparation, it would be “Courageous Leadership.” I hear from so many pastors and staff who are trained well in the classical disciplines, but who are ill-prepared for the real world of church ministry.

To see the article on Thom S. Rainer’s* website [click here](#) or use the QR Code below.

So, what are some of the specific reasons pastors and church leaders must be more courageous today? Though my list is far from exhaustive, allow me to name six of the key factors.



1. **There have been dramatic shifts in culture, most of them adversarial to biblical Christianity.** Church leaders can no longer assume that biblical values are normative in culture today. To the contrary, many of the cultural mores are antithetical to Christian truth. The pastor must take a stand in this adversarial environment while remaining pastoral and compassionate.





2. The position of pastor is no longer held in high esteem in many communities. When I was a pastor in the 80's and 90's, I could count on some level of respect from community members because of my vocation. That is not the case most of the time today.
3. Church critics can be vicious. Have you noticed that, throughout the Bible, the greatest harm to a believing community comes from dissension among the believers? Opposition from the outside is a challenge; dissension from within can be devastating. Church critics today seem to have gone wild!
4. Pastors must push against the "me" mentality of many church members. For reasons I have noted for years, many of our church members see church membership as tantamount to country club membership. They pay their way and get their perks. Pastors who push against this pervasive and unbiblical mentality often do so at great cost.
5. Good church leaders must say "no" often. The best church leaders say no to the good so they can say yes to the best. Those who receive a "no" don't often receive it well.
6. Ultimately, church leadership is spiritual warfare. Paul leaves no doubt to this reality in Ephesians 6:13: "Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the tactics of the Devil." Pastors and church leaders are truly engaged in spiritual warfare. They must have courage, a courage that can only come from God.

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I am not certain about the mindset of Joshua before he led the people of God into the promised land, but it seems like he needed an extra dose of courage. Repeatedly in Joshua 1, God tells him: "Be strong and courageous . . ." (Joshua 1:6).

Church leaders need to be reminded of the need for courage today. Serving as a pastor is an impossible job without the strength and courage that comes only from God.

Church members, may I encourage you, even exhort you, to pray that your pastors and church leaders will have the courage they need to lead God's churches? Let me hear from you.

