

can help the new minister anticipate the social trends and mood of the community. If the incomes and housing starts are up, the people are often optimistic. If these things are down, it can discourage a people. If new ethnic groups have relocated into the community, this may create anxiety among some church members and a challenge to ministry for the church.

Fourth, the new minister should work hard to appreciate local customs. Almost every community has customs of which they are proud, and to outsiders, these customs may appear odd. These items often involve culinary traditions, historical sites, natural resources, or economic opportunities in the community. The minister should never belittle these items, and he should never fail to appreciate them. In fact, he can accelerate bonding by understanding and appreciating these customs. If the community is near mountains, hike them. If the community has a number of ranches, start riding horses (slow horses). If the community is proud of its bar-b-que (and every southern community is), like it. If they are enthused by high school football, go to the games and shout yourself hoarse. Sometimes a minister must communicate that he enjoys the community and the people before people will listen to what he has to say.

Fifth, a new minister can begin bonding in a new community by visiting godly pastors of growing churches and seeking their insights. Effective evangelistic pastors have analyzed the community and know what it takes to reach that community. These pastors can serve as a short cut to wisdom. New ministers should exercise caution at this point, of course, because theology is related to evangelism. The new minister will not want to visit the Kingdom Hall, and he should probably avoid the health and wealth prosperity church in the community, too. A

godly pastor, however, with a biblically defined ministry can offer insight.

Sixth, the new minister needs to preach well in the start-up of a new ministry. I suggest he work especially hard at preaching and teaching throughout his ministry, but the first couple of months are especially crucial. New people will attend the first couple of weeks of a new minister's work and will consider salvation and church membership. Some Christians have delayed joining the church until the new minister arrives. As difficult as it is to say, some members have suffered spiritually because of an inadequate ministry during the interim. During the start-up of a new ministry, the minister may want to give special attention to preaching about salvation, the Lordship of Christ, the purpose of the church, repentance, renewal, and revival.

Seventh, the new minister should give himself immediately to personal evangelism. Soon after he arrives, he should demonstrate that he intends to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5). He can visit the lost spouses of church members. He can visit children who have inquired about salvation or baptism. He can give his business card to every business in the community and say, "When a customer or employee needs help, give them my number." As he does this, he should take someone with him to demonstrate personal evangelism.

Finally, the new minister can begin training Sunday School and Open group study leaders in evangelism and church growth. These Bible study leaders are among the most committed members in a local church. They know the Bible better than most, and they desire to see a new day of evangelism. They have received more training than other church