



## **15 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PREACHER'S FAMILY**

J.J. Turner, Ph.D. ©

The preacher lives in a glass house without blinds. Every aspect of his life is the focus of the members' eyes. His family is placed under a special spotlight, as the members usually have a different standard for his family than for their own families. Not even the elders' families undergo the scrutiny the preacher's family has to endure.

In my years of preaching and training preachers I have seen preachers fired because their wives didn't keep up the parsonage. Yet, I have never seen an elder asked to step down because his wife was a sloppy housekeeper. This double standard raises several questions:

1. Where in the Bible does it state that a preacher must have a wife and family? This would mean that Jesus and Paul wouldn't be hired.
2. Why do some congregations set higher standards for the minister's family than for their own families?
3. Where does the Bible state that a preacher must have a "perfect" marriage and family?
4. What are some of the typical expectations of a preacher's family that aren't expected of members?
5. Where are the qualifications for a preacher's family? Don't the passages on marriage and relationships apply to all Christians? Why single out the preacher's family?
6. According to the Bible how many children should a minister have? Can he have too many children?
7. Where did the expectations and rules for a preacher's family originate? With God or man?
8. Why are all eyes on the preacher's family but not on the other families in the congregation?
9. How should the minister handle his family problems? What should he do that members don't have to do?
10. What role does the preacher play in creating the family image?
11. What should a preacher do if he has serious family problems?
12. Why/when should a preacher be dismissed if his family doesn't measure up? Who determines this rule?



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13. How can a congregation have a better understanding of the place and expectations of the preacher and his family?
14. What would be the positives or negatives of seeing the preacher's family as being human, just like the other families in the church?
15. How should the preacher and his family handle this double standard?

While preachers want to have a family that exemplifies the principles of Christianity; they understand that this doesn't mean that they will (or should) be "perfect." They understand that their families, as well as all the families in a congregation, must "let their light shine"; not because they are preachers, but because they are Christians.