

A Well-Rounded Ministry Life

Internship (Prelude)

Active Pastoral Ministry

Interim Ministry (Postlude)

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Internship (Prelude)

- “A program to provide novices in a field with apprenticeship training.”
- “A professional learning experience that offers meaningful, practical work related to a person’s field of study or career interest”

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Internship (Prelude)

- “A structured experience that relates to a person’s career goal.”
- “An opportunity for gaining work experience . . . an important step in building a solid career.”

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Internship (Prelude)

- Every employment (to my knowledge) requires or offers an internship except . . . the church!!! Which is the only profession dealing with a person's eternity.
- Let's view two examples at opposite ends of the secular world.

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Physician

- "A medical intern is a physician 'in training' who has completed medical school and has a medical degree but . . . does not yet have a license to practice medicine unsupervised. This is a time of practical training."
- Each country has different requirements. One example: "The doctor practices under supervision in designated hospitals in six-month rotations (surgery, obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics)"

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Physician

- United States
A medical internship typically lasts one year – transitional and/or specialty track. Most physicians complete a specialty track medical residency over two to seven years, depending on the specialty.

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National Mortuary Board

- Internships last from one to three years and have the following requirements:
 - ✓ Assist in embalming 75 bodies
 - ✓ Conduct at least 75 funerals
 - ✓ Arrange at least 25 funerals (pre-need)
 - ✓ Submit a monthly report to the Mortuary Board

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So . . .

An internship is required to birth a baby and bury a body, but not in the eternal work of Biblical ministry?!!??

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How About . . .

“A ministry intern is a pastor in training who has completed their college/seminary degrees but has not yet been ordained or licensed to practice ministry unsupervised. This is a time of practical training . . . during which they will study and be examined for ordination.”

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Principals to Consider

- 1. Conduct an interview and orientation
- 2. Assign actual ministry activities
- 3. Full-time is probably the best, but at least 30 hours per week
- 4. Allow for freedom of individual expression and insights in areas of personal preference . . . or performance evaluations
- 5. Regular staff/team meetings for encouragement and exhortation

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Principals to Consider

- 6. Assign outside reading and CEUs for learning
- 7. Public encouragement and appreciation should be displayed

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People to Contemplate

Timothy

Titus

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Interims (Postlude)

The interim pastor is a retired or semi-retired pastor. He brings many valuable assets to a church by way of experience and expertise in various areas of ministry. Experienced pastoral care and leadership is invaluable to a local church facing a vulnerable time of transition from one settled pastor to another. Therefore, this time can be one of unity, healing, and blessing.

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Text

There are Biblical examples of those who were told not to retire

When Joshua had grown old, the Lord said to him, "You are now very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over. (Joshua 13:1)

- Between 85 – 100 years old
- God still had work for Joshua to do
- Joshua had much to offer in wisdom, experience, commitment, leadership, and more

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Text

There are also Biblical examples where retirement from active leadership is mandated

The Lord said to Moses, "This applies to the Levites: Men twenty-five years old or more shall come to take part in the work at the tent of meeting, but at the age of fifty, they must retire from their regular service and work no longer. They may assist their brothers in performing their duties at the tent of meeting, but they themselves must not do the work. This, then, is how you are to assign the responsibilities of the Levites." (Numbers 8:23-26)

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Text

- The Levites were the ones in leadership by serving God in doing much of the work in and around the Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting, and Temple. They were obviously allowed to serve from age 25-50.
- The scripture is silent as to why they needed to retire at 50, but we may draw some parallels without doing injury to the text.

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Text

1. Note v 26 – they were not told to completely stop serving, but were told to become assistants to the younger Levites. Regular service was to become occasional service.
2. Could the above picture a mentoring relationship? Levites with 25 years of wisdom and experience now assisting and training the younger Levites who were just starting out in ministry.

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Text

3. Setting up the Tabernacle with furnishings, as well as lifting the sacrificial animals, was strenuous work. Letting the younger men “carry the load” could have been a way of identifying leadership in the younger men and relieving the older men from the strain.

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The interim combines both Biblical narratives (Joshua, Levites) – allowing experienced pastors to “retire” from the daily stresses of carrying a flock while still allowing for continued service to the Lord. A wise shepherd protecting and preparing a flock to call a younger shepherd.

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7 Practices of Effective Interim Pastors

1. Intentionally prays for the church daily
2. Demonstrates an abundance of love
3. Understands the specific context and needs of the church
4. Makes tough decisions so the incoming pastor doesn't have to handle them
5. Has clear, written, and mutually agreed expectations of the interim pastor's role
6. Helps the staff work through the interim time
7. Gives significant time to sermon preparation

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7 Ways Interim Pastors Can Fail Churches

1. Fails to communicate often and clearly
2. Sends mixed messages about whether the interim pastor is a candidate to be pastor
3. Hangs around the church after the interim is complete
4. Aligns with power groups in the church
5. Beats up the church for a failed past
6. Acts without a comprehensive understanding of the inner workings of the church
7. Attempts to push an individual agenda through the church

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