

10 Reasons Our Pulpits Are Polluted

I was recently with a friend (whom I will leave nameless) who said his city is in such a mess because “the pulpits are polluted!” When he said this, I immediately began to think and pray about the implications and reasons for this strong statement. Upon reflection, I found his statement to be true based on conversations I have had with numerous leaders across the globe.

The following are 10 reasons there is pollution in some pulpits today:

1. The pastor has an unholy union with politicians. In Scripture, we have numerous examples of how religious leaders compromised their faith and obedience to God for the sake of political favor and access. In Amos 7:12-13, Amaziah, the priest, commanded the prophet Amos to stop prophesying at Bethel because it was the king’s sanctuary and a temple of the kingdom. In 1 Kings 22, we see how all the prophets only prophesied what King Ahab wanted to hear, except Micaiah, the prophet. Also, all the chief priests conspired to put Jesus to death when they said that they had no king but Caesar, thus aligning themselves with the Roman emperor over the Lord of the universe (John 19:15).

I have observed many religious leaders compromise their faith by supporting political candidates and platforms so they can have access to power and money. This, almost more than any other point, is the reason for schisms, posturing and a lack of true spiritual power in the pulpit today.

2. The pastor puts the branding of their name before the health of their local church. Some spiritual leaders merely use their church as a platform to enhance their own name. They

put all their effort into elevating their name without care or concern for the congregation's health. When a spiritual leader is more concerned with their own brand than the spiritual condition of their church, it pollutes the pulpit.

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3. The pastor is not relationally accountable to anyone. Whenever a spiritual leader has no real accountability, they are more vulnerable to temptation. A leader with no oversight is a lone ranger and can easily go off track. This is another reason for pollution in the pulpit today.

4. The lead pastor is surrounded by "yes men." All lead pastors need strong leaders around them with the capacity to help them think through complex issues. When they lack this, they create a vacuum of creativity and problem-solving and open the door to huge mistakes.

Furthermore, when a leader only has yes men around him, there is nobody to push back against unethical practices that open a door to various calamities. I have learned that the stronger and more secure a leader is, the more he will surround himself with other strong leaders in their inner circle so iron can sharpen iron. A lack of strong leaders around a lead pastor causes much pollution in the pulpit today.

5) The lead pastor isolates himself. One of the biggest reasons for pulpit pollution today is when a spiritual leader lacks intimate relationships with leadership peers. This isolation causes them to deal with external pressures by themselves, which can result in depression, discouragement and hopelessness.

6) There are no sexual boundaries. One of the most common reasons spiritual leaders fall into sexual sin is because they counsel members of the opposite sex. In my opinion, as a general rule, men should counsel men and women with women.

When this is not possible, a male leader should have his spouse or another mature spiritual female leader with him when he meets with a woman. Lacking these boundaries can result in pollution in the pulpit today.

7. There are no financial boundaries. There are churches I know in which not even the trustees know what is going on financially! Sometimes the pastor pays all the bills because he may not trust another with that responsibility. These are dangerous practices because they can tempt the lead pastor to “cook the books” and misappropriate tithes and offerings. It can also open up the door to scandalous accusations regarding financial malfeasance.

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If at all possible, if the pastor insists on signing checks, two signers should be required. The trustees should also receive weekly reports, and the CPA should audit the books regularly and give an annual report. Without the proper financial boundaries, the pulpit can easily be polluted.

8. Ministry is driven by ego. When the primary motivation of the lead pastor is to produce results that satisfy their ego, trouble is not far away. When spiritual leaders are driven by ambition instead of being led by the Holy Spirit, they tend to embark on huge projects presumptively. The result is that they eventually experience unnecessary financial hardship because God only provides for the vision He gives. Ministry ego is one of the most common reasons for pollution in the pulpit today.

9. The Bible is not the primary source for preaching. When a spiritual leader rarely cracks open the Bible and only fills themselves with newspapers and current events, their preaching will lack the power and purity of the Word.

Some lead pastors act more like social activists than

shepherds because their preaching is politically and economically informed more than being biblically informed. This is another reason for pollution in the pulpit today.

10. The lead pastor is not walking with God. Last but not least, perhaps the most important reason why there is pollution in the pulpit today is because the lead pastor lacks a robust devotional life. Unless spiritual leaders regularly seek God and devour His Word, they will begin to act and think like the world instead of reflecting the lifestyle of the Word.

Since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, we are all susceptible to falling into sin and polluting our pulpits, families and environment. May the Lord surround us with godly friends and overseers with integrity, and may He grant us an intense hunger to seek Him now more than ever! May we have great power in the pulpits to release the glory of God over congregations, cities and nations.

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