



Thriving Under Church Leadership

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Women's leaders serving under male headship in the local church ([1 Tim. 2:9-15](#); [Titus 2:1, 3-5](#)) encounter this protective covering as both a joy and a challenge. There's a delicate balance to achieve as strong female leaders fulfill their God-ordained role in submitting to, yet influencing, male leaders. We asked respected pastors to offer counsel to women's leaders. Here's their playbook.

Join the Pastor's Team

Express your desire to serve graciously and biblically under his leadership.

Never make the slightest hint that you're not backing him 100 percent.

Exhibit absolute integrity.

Refuse to listen to or engage in negative, backbiting conversations that target the church or its leaders. Be known as one who spreads gracious, affirming words that respect the role and work of men.

Enfold the pastor's wife.

Even if she is distant or difficult, look for ways to honor her while remaining faithful and encouraging. Care enough to cover her entire family in prayer. Consider using the [30-Day Praying for Your Pastor's Wife Challenge](#). Acknowledge your gratitude for the family's sacrifices and service. Release her from superhero expectations.

Get clarity on the vision.

Make certain that every women's ministry activity, event, and program complements the overall church mission and fulfills the pastor's objective for the women he shepherds.

Be a Team Player

Be mindful of the church calendar.

Sync women's activities with the whole so no ministry area is slighted or overlooked. Church members shouldn't be forced to choose between competing activities.

Come alongside other church ministries.

Consider how the women's ministry can respond to church needs or contribute to joint projects. Promote the objectives of all church ministries as vigorously as you promote your own.

Don't be Sidelined

Speak up.

Make sure the pastor stays informed of developments affecting women's lives. Ensure that he doesn't get caught off guard by being unaware. Offer insights from a woman's viewpoint that a male leader might miss. Ask for his opinion and counsel as needed. Get approval first where approval is needed.

Model gratitude for male headship.

Set the example of how to love and pray for the pastoral staff and elders. Distribute the [30-Day Praying for Your Pastor Challenge](#). Thank-you notes, gift cards, and homemade gifts from your kitchen can spur on male leadership as captains of your team. Give them thumbs-up or high-fives to affirm their leadership!

Pastors are to pastor.

According to Titus 2, women's ministry is not intended to pastor or shepherd women. Speak into the unique issues facing women, but don't intercept the pastor's position.

Read the Signals

One pastor commented, "Don't think that there is not a man in the world except Jesus who is not somewhat insecure about women-especially pastors. Don't believe that he does not love you very much; he does, whether he shows it well or not."

There will be times when as a female leader you feel misunderstood or ignored even by the most excellent pastors. Remember the ministry load they carry and choose to believe the absolute best of their character. Our sovereign King can be trusted to care

for the beloved bride of Christ, despite the frailties of its leaders, both men and women.
Of that we can be confident.

What steps can you take to affirm and encourage your leaders this week?