

A Long Tenured Preacher

by Wayne Goff

Since I have been with this local congregation for 27 years, I think I qualify as a “long-tenured preacher.” Charles Hodge wrote a little book titled *Your Preacher*. And I would like to share some excerpts from his book on tenure.

“The hardest job preaching is long tenure with a local church. It takes patience, understanding, and courage. Ironically each year in a long ministry is harder — not easier. This may sound unreasonable to most (it did even to me) but observe: (1) Familiarity breeds contempt. The ‘new wears off’ and routine sets in. In time the preacher knows the members and their faults; they also know him and his. It takes a heap of understanding from both sides... (4) You must study harder. Every week means two new sermons and several new classes. You really have to dig. But the worst aspect, ‘You compete with yourself.’ It is thrilling to ‘beat the predecessor,’ but after several years you either ‘beat yourself’ or ‘yourself beats you.’ You lose either way. (5) Both churches and preachers change. After ten years both the preacher and church are different.... (6) There does come a time when preachers must leave. This is tragic yet true.”

Wayne's Note: I consider it a great privilege to have been here to work with this congregation through its many ups and downs. Everyone, for the most part, has been supportive and encouraging. Some have caused much trouble, left us, and broken my heart. Read **I Corinthians 3:14-15**.

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