



The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision

By Gerald Hiestand, Todd A. Wilson



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Pastoral ministry today is often ruled by an emphasis on short-sighted goals, pragmatic results, and shallow thinking. Unfortunately, those in the academy tend to have the opposite problem, failing to connect theological study to the pressing issues facing the church today. Contemporary evangelicalism has lost sight of the inherent connection between pastoral leadership and theology. This results in theologically anemic churches, and ecclesial anemic theologies.

Todd Wilson and Gerald Hiestand contend that among a younger generation of evangelical pastors and theologians, there is a growing appreciation for the native connection between theology and pastoral ministry. At the heart of this recovery of a theological vision for ministry is the re-emergence of the role of the "pastor theologian."

The Pastor Theologian presents a taxonomy of the pastor-theologian and shows how individual pastors—given their unique calling and gift-set—can best embody this age-old vocation in the 21st century. They present three models that combine theological study and practical ministry to the church:

The Local Theologian—a pastor theologian who ably services the theological needs of a local congregation.

The Popular Theologian—a pastor theologian who writes theology to a wider lay audience.

The Ecclesial Theologian—a pastor theologian who writes theology to other theologians and scholars.

Raising the banner for the pastor as theologian, this book invites the emerging generation of theologians and pastors to reimagine the pastoral vocation along theological lines, and to identify with one of the above models of the pastor theologian.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*The Pastor-Theologian* may be a small book, but it is an ambitious one. Gerald Hiestand and Todd Wilson summon the church to return to a time when pastors were theologians and theologians pastors, when pastors served as *intellectual* shepherds of the church. The renewal of what they call ecclesial theology will provide a needed transfusion into theologically anemic pastoral ministry and pastorally anemic theology."

-- **Peter Leithart**, Theopolis Institute

"If you're looking for canaries in the church's coal mines, consider our seminaries and divinity schools. In some cases, the seminary has simply become one more outpost of the academy, hijacked by the ideals of the research university, almost allergic to pastoral formation. In other cases, the seminary is reduced to a management seminar where the pastorate is confused with technique. *The Pastor-Theologian* is an antidote to both, a vision for ecclesial theology and a theological ecclesia. We need this book because we need pastor-theologians."

--**James K.A. Smith**, Calvin College

"Hiestand and Wilson shine a spotlight on a seismic fault whose damage to the church has been under the radar: the great divorce between the pastoral ministry and academic theology. They argue compellingly that a healthy church body needs red blood (pastoral energy) and gray brain cells (theological intelligence) to grow into Christian maturity. This is a book written in faith - the kind of faith that moves institutional mountains and raises, if not the dead, then at least defunct concepts - like the pastor-theologian."

--**Kevin J. Vanhoozer**, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

"What an exciting and timely book! Gerald Hiestand and Todd Wilson not only make a compelling case for reviving a distinguished tradition of pastor-theologian thought leaders. They also point the way for how this kind of leadership--much needed today!--can address the very new conditions in which the present day churches are called by God to minister."

--**Richard Mouw**, Fuller Seminary

"The case that Wilson and Hiestand present is winsome and utterly convincing, as they trace the history of the rise and demise of the pastor-theologian, and the resulting theological and ethical anemia of the church. But more, they provide us with a nuanced profile of the ecclesial theologian, and a reasoned way forward. *The Pastor-Theologian* is an exhilarating and heartening book-- and a must read for the church and the academy where it will produce lively, ministry- changing discussion!"

--**R. Kent Hughes**, Sr. Pastor Emeritus of College Church in Wheaton

About the Author

Gerald Hiestand (PhD Candidate in Classics and Archeology, University of Kent, Canterbury) is the Senior Associate Pastor at Calvary Memorial Church, and the director and co-founder of the Center for Pastor Theologians. Gerald is interested in thinking and writing about the intersection of theology and the ecclesial context. Gerald and his wife have three children, and are adopting their fourth from Ethiopia. They live in the village of Oak Park, just outside of Chicago.

Todd A. Wilson (PhD, University of Cambridge) is the Senior Pastor of Calvary Memorial Church in Oak Park, Illinois and the chairman and co-founder of the Center for Pastor Theologians, a ministry dedicated to

resourcing pastors engaged in biblical and theological scholarship. He is the author of *Galatians: Gospel-Rooted Living and Pastors in the Classics*. Todd is married to Katie, his high school sweetheart, and they have seven children, three biological and four adopted from Ethiopia.

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Brandy Greenawalt:

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