

April 7, 2014

“My Pastoral Desire”

I am an avid Abraham Lincoln reader. Anything written about him or by him, I love to read and take in. I try to read five or six books a year on his life and leadership. He is a historical and literary hero for me – and currently I have been reading a tome on him entitled *Lincoln* by Richard Carwardine.

Henry Raymond, the Washington correspondent of the *New York Independent* newspaper said of the 16th President: “Mr. Lincoln is *always* approachable and this is greatly in his favor. The people can get at him and impress upon him their views without difficulty.” It was said that the President made ordinary men and women feel as a neighbor rather than the head of state.

Honest Abe is quoted: “I feel – though the tax on my time is heavy – that no hours of my day are better employed than those which bring me again within the direct contact and atmosphere of the average of our whole people.”

The openness and availability of our 16th President marked him out as a unique and special kind of leader who was able to mobilize our nation to face its worst national crisis (probably ever).

The passion and desire of my hero is also my own pastoral desire. I long to be a pastor that is available to the people of my congregation and community. I want to be the one that greets each person as my neighbor regardless of who they are and allow them to be comfortable to share their heart and concerns with me.

So many people begin conversations with me with the words, “I am sorry for taking your time...” and then go on to tell me what they are in need of or what they want me to know.

I want each of you to know that when you come to me (in either private conversation or on the phone), I want to make time for you and allow you to feel at home with your pastor. If our visit requires more time than I can give at that moment, I am more than happy to make a follow up appointment with you so I can give you the attention you deserve.

So please call on me at any time. You are the reason I am in ministry. If you see my car at the church, feel free to stop and say hello or share with me your heart (as you need). Call me on the phone (and if I don’t answer, please leave a message on my voice mail and I will return your call).

Like Lincoln, I want to be available to the people whom I lead. Thank you for allowing me the great privilege of being your pastor!

