

Activity	Crossing Lines	Applicable Scripture
<b>Hugging</b>	Warm nonsexual hugs are great and good for every human being. We all need affectionate touch. This is true in same and cross gender hugs. Hugs which lean to avoid full frontal contact are safest for pastors. If the person you are about to hug is unfamiliar to you it is best to ask if it is okay to give her a hug. Lingering full frontal hugs, especially cross gender are not wise and cross the line.	Greeting one another with a holy kiss.
<b>Flirting</b>	Part of human interaction is playfulness—even cross gender play. The line with flirting gets crossed when the pastor engages with the same persons—too often younger females—and a dependency, even though slight is developed. If the pastor feels like it is innocent but a young lady seems to make it a point to get her pastor flirting fix every time there is a church meeting it is best for the pastor to back away so his spiritual influence is not hindered in this person’s or observers’ lives. Innocent for him is not necessarily innocent for her. If the pastor insists it is innocent and gets defensive when approached about this it is usually because he has developed a subtle and powerful conscious or unconscious dependency on what he gets from the interaction.	Pastor, do not be brought under the power of anything except the Spirit of God.
<b>Emotional Attachment</b>	<p>Pastors are God’s representatives to a broken world. At the heart of pastoral ministry is having a heart—truly caring for those, male and female, under his care. Weeping and rejoicing empathetically with parishioners is good shepherding. However, allowing his heart or a parishioner’s to move into the realm of emotional intimacy reserved for marriage crosses the line.</p> <p>Regular meetings alone with opposite sex counselees, staff or volunteers can be risky. Avoid emotional affairs by avoiding the risks. The risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether they meet behind closed windowless doors.</li> <li>• Whether meetings regularly extend past hourly time slots.</li> <li>• Whether they meet outside of normal business hours.</li> <li>• Whether he discusses his personal problems with her.</li> <li>• Whether she comes bearing gifts, “spoiling” her pastor.</li> </ul>	A pastor is to be a “one womaned man”—What ever this passage means it means his heart should belong to one woman.

- When either of them engage in speech which is overly affectionate, reserved for married people or would create embarrassment if published in the bulletin or accidentally found its way on to the church sound system.
- When either begins to believe he/she is special to the other.
- When she thinks it is okay for her to meet emotional needs the pastor's wife doesn't.
- Whenever the agenda for the meeting becomes personal instead of professional.
- When one or the other fudges only slightly on the truth about the meetings or relationship to themselves or others.
- When the spouse of either begins to question the meetings or relationship.
- When there are calls, texts, emails which occur often, outside of normal hours or transact anything but necessary business.
- When meetings occur alone away from the office.
- When he realizes he is getting personal nurturing or ego strokes which are border line.
- Whenever anything is being said which would hurt either of their spouses.
- When disloyalty to a spouse is practiced.
- When staff, Board members or attendees notice and question the closeness of the pastor with said female.
- When most counselees of the pastor are female.
- When the pastor's spouse is unperturbed by his excessive work hours.
- When cockiness or arrogance is a trait others notice in the pastor.
- When the pastor has more female friends than male friends.
- When minor female counselees call him "Dad".
- Any speech or behavior which is shared which they know must become their secret.

This is not an exhaustive list of what is risky behavior.

	<p>Pastors who are sincere, trustworthy, emotionally healthy and spiritually mature proactively avoid taking risks which could hurt himself, his family or his church.</p> <p>Inappropriate emotional attachment is typically mutual but an unusually risk averse pastor may find himself in a situation where a woman attaches herself to him emotionally without his reciprocation. He will feel innocent and protest his innocence because he is; but if he is not willing to hear and understand the concern of others (spouse, staff member, and board member) expressed regarding this woman's excessive attachment to him and act on their concerns he is taking unacceptable risk and is no longer innocent.</p>	
<b>Physical Involvement</b>	<p>Long frontal hugs, kissing or any affection which leads to sexual arousal or needs to be hidden from others is crossing sinful physical lines. What bodies communicate in secret is reserved for spouses even if it is not overtly sexual. These displays of physical affection naturally and gradually grow out of unsuitable emotional attachment.</p>	<p>It is difficult to imagine physical involvement without Matt 5:19 kind of lust involved.</p>
<b>Sexually Acting Out</b>	<p>Physical behavior with anyone other than your spouse which is designed for sexual arousal, leads to more intense arousal or is overtly sexual like digital, oral or genital intercourse is acting out, sinful and to be avoided. Often pastors engage in establishing false boundaries which allow some form of sexual activity but don't allow for other activities like actual intercourse. These are then excused as being less sinful, less like adultery or somehow more acceptable but, of course, this is not the case. If only one party performs a sexual activity on the other it is no less sexually acting out by both of them and just as wrong. Sexual Acting Out naturally and gradually grows out of Physical Involvement.</p>	<p>This is fornication pure and simple and though sexual purity is not specifically named as a precondition for an Elder/Pastor in 1 Timothy or Titus the idea of being blameless surely includes this.</p>