



# A letter from

## ALISTAIR BEGG

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It never once occurred to me when I was a boy that I would one day be called to pastoral ministry. My ordination in October of 1976 established me on a course from which, by God's grace, I have never thought to change. The two years spent in the company and under the tutelage of pastor Derek J. Prime laid the foundation for all that has transpired. To this day, the example he provided continues to challenge and inspire me. For thirty-eight years, the Parkside family has displayed a long-suffering affection for me, and the privilege and responsibility of doing what I do keeps me alert and hopefully growing in grace.

This is a calling that I share not only with my colleagues here but also with fellow pastors around the nation and throughout the world. I join you in expressing my deep appreciation for pastors during

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this month, known as Pastor Appreciation Month. Part of our mission at Truth For Life is to teach the Bible in a way that strengthens the local church. One of the ways we seek to do that for pastors is by hosting an annual conference for ministry leaders called Basics. It's an enriching time of fellowship, studying God's Word, and encouraging one another to commit to the basics of pastoral ministry—preaching the Gospel! This is the instruction given to ministers of the Word by the apostle Paul: “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:1-2).

Having missed gathering at Basics the past two years, we are very keen to be “back in business” May 2-4 next year. It's not too soon to ask for your prayers or to suggest that you sponsor a pastor to attend by way of the gift of a registration. We're hopeful that Tony Merida from Raleigh, North Carolina, and John Woodhouse from Sydney, Australia, will be with us to share their experience and offer us encouragement.

Two of our previous speakers are the authors of the books we've selected for you this month. Rico Tice issues a strong challenge to Christian leaders in his new book, and Sinclair Ferguson invites us to consider

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what it means to love God's church as we understand our place within His family.

Someone we would have loved to invite to Basics but who never could join us continues to challenge us from a distance by his books:

“Just when the world is becoming more aware of its need, the church is becoming less sure of its mission. And the major reason for the diminishing Christian mission is the diminishing confidence in the Christian message.” —John Stott

With my love in the Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read "Alan Watts". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent initial 'A'.