

Pastoral Teaching A Biblical View

I received a request to write upon the subject of pastoral teaching, which I am probably the least qualified to do. However, as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I will give my own experience, and add to it things I have learned of other ministers' experiences, and finally give what we see in the bible.

When I was called to the ministry, the preachers, in the churches I attended, were not bible teaching expositors. Some did preach bible doctrines, but seldom read a scripture verse and expounded thereupon. There was a lot of preaching about tradition and what grandpa said. Things that were not biblically edifying.

Before I came to the ministry, I was blessed of God to visit Mount Pisgah PBC, in Alabama, where there was a man of God, Elder Ben Keeble, who preached from the bible. Experiencing this was the greatest influence upon my ministry. Seeing this, to the delight of my heart and mind, I knew immediately that this was what preaching the Gospel was all about. When I knew that I must answer the call to preach, I requested of God that he would always give me a bible text, and the understanding of that text, to preach upon, or if I had no bible text to preach upon, to give me a mind to acknowledge I had no message from God and take a quiet seat.

There were no avid bible ministers to whom I could go and discuss bible truths and doctrines in my younger years. I had read a lot in the bible, in my younger years, but never applied myself to concentrated bible study, much to my own regret. They were spent seeking what God would have me to preach upon.

In my later years I was exposed to ministers who did read and study the bible. These men took the time to teach me the necessity of thorough bible study, upon any subject text that you might preach upon. They taught me the necessity of looking at bible text, in the context of the surrounding text, and the teaching of the bible as a whole. Some encouraged me to observe the grammatical construction of bible text, which is necessary to rightly divide the word of truth. They encouraged me to do methodic bible study to build a sound base of knowledge of bible truths.

Elder J. Y. McCormick encouraged me to read, especially different commentaries and writings upon scriptures. As he pointed out, God does not reveal everything to one single person, and this broadened the scope of my biblical perspective.

I was given a bible study program, Power Bible CD, by Elder J. E. Griffis, who was a great encouragement and teaching example in my ministry. This program really helped me in my study of God's word of truth. It also started me to making notes: the program has this ability to let you add your notes on scriptures as you study. This led me to writing about scriptures, from which I learned much. If you write about something, you can go back and read it several times, allowing you to learn to express the thoughts in a clearer manner. I had often experienced seeing something in scripture revelations which I could not rightly express. Writing down messages helped me greatly in this area, teaching me how to express what I saw with greater clarity.

Reading histories of ministers in the far past, I found that they used to write their sermons before preaching them. I tried this and found it made me a better preacher and teacher. I also learned that

even with a written sermon prepared, you must allow liberty for the Holy Spirit to lead you, which may take you away from the written sermon to various other revelations, which were given extemporaneously. In my experience this often happens.

Undertaking methodic bible study changed the whole of my ministry, in delivery and content. I began to be avid about teaching the whole truth of the bible. This developed most when we began having bible study at my home church, Mars Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Hoboken, Georgia. I found that not only did this make me study more, but it also helped to teach me how to better express revelations from God's word of truth. We have three ministers who attend our bible study, two younger ministers and myself, me being the oldest in the ministry. I have seen us all grow in bible knowledge, and the ability to express those things God reveals from the scripture. All our public ministries have grown from having weekly bible study.

In the last couple of years, I have been blessed to hear of many other ministers' experiences from a website named Elder Record, hosted by Elder Chris Folsom. You can find this website at: elderrecord.podbean.com There, I learned that many ministers were bible students under other Elders, who asked them questions, debated scriptures with them, even gave them assignments to study upon. Always encouraging them to read and study the bible in its entirety. This is the same picture we get from the bible itself.

I pause here to give credit to God, who called me, a very unqualified youth, and filled me with a desire to be faithful to his word of truth. All glory, and honor, goes to God, for any benefit to others from my call to be a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Study as we may; it requires the revealing of the truths and mysteries of God's word by the Holy Spirit moving in our hearts and minds. Knowing the weakness of my own mind, I give all credit of these revelations to God, realizing that my weak mind cannot put together Old and New Testament scriptures that rightly divide God's word, and give the past teaching and present use of the teachings of God.

Consider the writings of Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to Timothy, a young minister being raised up under his divine guidance, found in First and Second Timothy. There are some things that I want to point out about Timothy and the teaching he received, which give us a biblical example of pastoral teaching.

First, consider the upbringing that Timothy had. He was raised up in the nurture of God's word of truth by his mother and grandmother, seen in: **2Ti 1:5 "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."** This should serve as a reprimand, to us all, that we teach God's word of truth to our children and grandchildren. These women taught Timothy at home as is their duty as taught by scripture. This is a great responsibility of mothers, and grandmothers, given in scripture.

Second, Timothy was called to the ministry by God, while he was under the teaching of Paul the apostle, seen in: **1Ti 1:2 "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord."** We learn from this text that Paul took Timothy under his tutorship and ministered to him in nurturing the gift of preaching Timothy received.

Paul admonishes Timothy to live out a godly life, which matches the teaching of God's word of truth, seen in: **1Ti 1:18-19; 18 ¶ "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"**

Paul charges Timothy to give heed to stick to the bible, only, in preaching and teaching. He says to Timothy; don't let vain teachings of men turn you from God's truth, seen in: **1Ti 1:4-5; 4 "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. 5 ¶ Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:"** He adds; you must exercise living and preaching with true love for God and your fellow Christians.

Paul teaches Timothy to be fervent and constant in prayer, seen in: **1Ti 2:1-2; 1 "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."** I would add; every minister of the gospel should entreat God, to lead them to the bible text they are to preach upon, for every sermon they preach. God, only, knows who will hear each sermon, and the needs of those who will hear the sermon.

Paul gives some things necessary for men to be qualified to serve in the office of Ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, seen in:

- **1Ti 3:1 "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.**
The man should desire to be a minister, not for self-promotion, self-gain, or personal honor, but for the promotion and glorification of the name of God, the greatness, glory, and power, of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to the furtherance of the cause of Christ.
 - Notice, according to the bible, the offices of apostles; prophets; evangelists; pastors and teachers; and deacons; are assigned by God to a man, not a woman. This does not mean that women don't have responsibilities, and or duties, in the church family. It simply means; God has not set them apart to serve in any of these offices.
- **1Ti 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;** The minister must be living a blameless life; he must be married to one woman; he must be vigilant, sober, and of good behaviour, which means to be of sound mind and in control of his emotions; he must be hospitable, which means he should love having company; he must be apt to teach. It is needful, that those who feel the call to the ministry, be given the opportunity to teach the bible and the truths that it teaches, before they are ordained into the office of Elder. I can, from my personal experience, testify that this is needful. Not being well studied, and taught in the whole of biblical truths, when I was ordained into the ministry, looking back, there have been times that I preached bible text out of context and thereby taught in error. Because of my inexperience and not having had ministerial leadership, I made many mistakes as a pastor. Thoroughly, test each candidate before ordination: for thorough bible knowledge and soundness of faith in Christ. Again, the office is given to the man, the husband, who is of the male gender.
- **1Ti 3:3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;** They must be living a godly life, regardless of their past. They should have been living the godly Christian example long enough to make you believe they will continue therein.

- **1Ti 3:4-5; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)** They must have exemplified their capability to rear children who are well grounded in the truth of God's word, the bible. If they can't teach their own children, what makes you believe that they can teach God's flock? They must exemplify that they are not dictators over those under them, but rather, that they rule over them with the love of God in their hearts, as a father caring for his family. "**Father**" is a male, not a female.
- **1Ti 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.** He must be one who has lived and practiced for some good amount of time. Novice means one who is newly planted, not only in church membership and walk, but also not new in the call to the ministry. Ordaining a man to quickly can cause him to become exalted in the flesh, and thus he may fall, under the snare of pride, into the snare of the devil. "**He**" is the male gender.
- **1Ti 3:7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.** He should have a good reputation, not only in the church, but also in the world, the community in which he lives. Regardless of his past life, he should have lived the Christian life, long enough to overcome his bad reputation of his past life, and long enough to establish a good reputation in the community. "**He**" is the male gender.

Paul admonishes the called minister, and those who are looking to ordain him to the office of Elder, observe that this man is able to stand up under persecutions. **1Ti 4:10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.** You don't want to ordain a minister who exemplifies they will buckle under the strain of persecution and the reproach of men. They must be strong in faith and trust in God, and in God's word of truth, the King James bible. Know and understand; once ordained into the ministry, they will be persecuted in many ways, most of which the laity will never experience.

Paul admonishes further: **1Ti 4:14-16; 14 "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."** The minister must not be one, who takes the office of Elder lightly, or is careless in the use of the office. They must be a man who is wholly committed to the office, and to the Lord. One who lives and teaches the doctrines of the truth of God.

We are admonished as Elders, serving in the office of Elder, to: **1Ti 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.** We are to not ordain an Elder into the office of Elder, until he has sufficiently proved worthiness of the office. Again, I testify; the short time I was set aside, given liberty by my home church to exercise preaching and praying only, before I was ordained, was way to short, in my opinion.

Paul admonishes further, the minister must willingly give all glory and honor to God and Christ: **2Ti 1:9-11; 9 "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."**

"not according to our works," If a man claims to be a self-made minister, do not ordain him. Works are not the qualifier for the office, but rather, good works are the evidence of being called and qualified by God. God does not call the qualified, but rather, qualifies the called.

Read and study, thoroughly, First and Second Timothy, as well as the other scriptures that teach about the ministerial offices as listed in: **Eph 4:11-16; 11 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."**

Remember, the word Pastor means one who shepherds. Thus, a pastor is one, who is qualified by God, with the ability to meet the requirements set forth by the bible to oversee, and care for, a church body. Ultimately, I believe, he will be one who has the two great commandments, given by Christ in the New Testament, in heart and mind in all that he does in the exercise of the office of **"pastors and teachers"** seen in: **Mt 22:37-39; 37 "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."** Jesus, the great Shepherd of all God's people, exemplified this in his incarnation. Thus, we understand; a pastor is man, who will deal with others as they would deal with themselves, always in love, never in anger, or with hatred, or in a vengeful manner.

Notice, **"pastor and teacher"** are joined together, not separate offices. This tells us that the office of pastor and teacher is different from that of evangelist, which is one who preaches the gospel, meaning they are given the ability to preach, but do not have the gift of being a father of a family of God's people.

In conclusion I say to you; if you are a church body choosing a pastor to serve you, be careful to observe the teachings of the bible, and select a person whom God has qualified for the office of pastor and teacher. A man who exhibits the qualities required to be worthy of the office.

For pastors of church bodies, who have subjects that feel the call to the ministry, be careful to follow the guidelines set forth in the bible in handling them. Take the time to be sure they are thoroughly schooled in biblical knowledge, and have godly understanding, before you ordain them to an office. Spend a lot of time with them and learn who they are both at church, and abroad.

Take them under your wings, as Paul took Timothy under his wings, and guide them in all biblical truths. Be willing to allow them the privilege, of exercising their gift under your watchful eye. Give them opportunity to teach the bible, and ensure their biblical knowledge is thorough and firmly grounded in the truth of God. Question and test them, when in duress and when at ease.

This is what I believe the bible teaches about the office of a pastor. I was ordained, and immediately called to the pastorate of a church, and have served in the office of pastor for most of my ministry at various churches. God allowed an affliction in my life, Meniere's disease, which caused me to have to retire from my physical work, and to give up the office of pastor, being physically disabled. Looking back, I was not fully qualified then, and don't feel to be fully qualified even today.

However, I will tell you; God used this physical disability to set me down and cause me to read and study the bible with consistency. The last few years of my life have been the greatest growth in biblical knowledge in the whole of my life. I do not say this in the spirit of feeling myself to be smarter than others, rather in humility, and thankfulness to God for this time in my life. I give God the glory, of any benefit of my studies, and ministry, which may be of benefit to others.

I ask, of any that may benefit from my ministry, that you also give the honor and glory to God, for it is truly, and fully, his. Further, I covet your prayers for the sustenance and leading of God in the continuance of my ministry. When God has finished his work with me here in time, I pray that he will take me home immediately. I do not wish to linger after my work is finished and be the cause of trouble or confusion. May we all be remembered as God's ministers, and avid children of God, Amen!

Elder Clarke Lee, 03/01/2022