

# Pastor Training School



## The Pastoral Epistles Spiritual Leadership

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# Bad News About Your Pastor

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

Don't let your pastor become a statistic. Be a blessing to him, so he can continue to be a blessing to you.

**The bad news is this:** pastors today are faced with more stress, more problems and more challenges than ever before. Statistics today are frightening. More and more pastors are leaving the ministry. Why? Because they are human, and can't everything that everyone expects them to be.

We, the church, are expecting pastors to be many things that they aren't called to be. Instead of allowing God to define their ministry, we've created our own definition. This definition takes him from being our spiritual leader and protector, and made the pastor into our baby sitter and servant.

**Take a look at these alarming statistics:**

- Fifteen hundred pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout or contention in their churches.
- Four thousand new churches begin each year, but over seven thousand churches close.
- Fifty percent of pastors' marriages will end in divorce.
- Eighty percent of pastors and eighty-four percent of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastors.
- Fifty percent of pastors are so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could, but have no other way of making a living.
- Eighty-five percent of pastors said their greatest problem is they are sick and tired of dealing with problem people, such as disgruntled elders, deacons, worship leaders, worship teams, board members, and associate pastors. Ninety percent said the hardest thing about ministry is dealing with uncooperative people.
- Seventy percent of pastors feel grossly underpaid.
- Eighty percent of pastors' spouses feel their spouse is overworked.
- Eighty percent of pastor' wives feel left out and unappreciated by the church members.
- Eighty percent of pastors' spouses wish their spouse would choose another profession.
- Eighty percent of pastors' wives feel pressured to do things and be something in the church that they are really not.
- The majority of pastor's wives surveyed said that the most destructive event that has occurred in their marriage and family was the day they entered the ministry.

The bad news is that your pastor, like pastors everywhere is at risk of becoming just another statistic. He is expected to do so much, be so much, and give so much that many times there is nothing left for him. We, the church, can't afford to keep losing pastors to burnout and contention.

## **What Can You Do?**

### **Pray For Your Pastor**

The greatest gift you can give your pastor is to take the time to pray for him. We need to realize that pastors and other ministers are prime targets for the devil. If he can cause a believer to fall, it's a victory for his kingdom. But, if he can cause a minister to fall, he can hurt the lives of many other believers. We have a responsibility before God to hold up our leaders in prayer, and seek God's protection over their lives.

### **Be Reasonable in Your Expectations**

Too many people expect the pastor to be everything. I have heard stories about people expecting their pastor to pick up their children from school, talk to them when they can't sleep, mow their lawn, and fix their car. God has given specific instructions about what a pastor is supposed to be. Let him be it, and protect the calling and anointing God has placed upon his life.

### **Compensate Him Appropriately**

There's an old line about the church board praying something like this, "Lord, you keep our pastor humble, and we'll keep him poor." That attitude is way too common. Pastors and their families have the same financial needs as everyone else in the congregation. In fact, they often have more expenses, because of the needs of visiting people and ministering to them.

When God established the tithe, he said that it was to go to the Levites (the ministers); not to pay for the mortgage on the church, the electric bill, and the youth field trip. At that time, the Levites consisted of about seven percent of the population of Israel. Therefore, if everyone tithed, the Levites received a little more than the average income of the congregation.

This is a good guideline for us to use today. A pastor should receive slightly more than the average income of his congregation. That will allow his family to live and minister without having to worry about money.

### **Respect His Privacy and Time**

So often, being a pastor is a 24-hour a day job. Granted, there are always emergencies that come up at the most inopportune times. But, a hangnail, or the flu isn't an emergency. Your pastor needs time to study, time to pray, time to rest, and time to be with his family.

Pastor's children have become a joke in our society today. Although the church expects them to be perfect, the world expects them to be hellions. Why? Because, they usually are. Why? Because dad is so busy taking care of everyone else, he doesn't have time for his own family. Don't expect him to give up his wife and children, to take care of yours. That's your job.

### **Let Your Pastor, and His Wife Know You Appreciate Them**

Everyone needs some encouragement now and then. One of the motivational gifts mentioned in Romans 12: 6-8 is exhortation. This gift is badly lacking in the Body of Christ today. It is especially lacking towards those in ministry. We expect them to encourage us, forgetting that they need it as well. A kind, or encouraging word, a card, or even a small gift will work wonders to build up your pastor and help him to continue in the calling God has given him.

# The purpose of the Pastoral Epistles

## BEHAVIOR AND RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CHURCH, [1 Timothy 3:14-6:21](#)

### The Description of the Church, [1 Timothy 3:14-16](#)

[\(1 Timothy 3:14-16\)](#) **Introduction:** this passage begins a new division of subjects in 1 Timothy—the believer's behavior and relationships in the church. This first passage is one of the greatest discussions on the church in all of Scripture. It is a passage that every church and believer needs to study and heed.

- [1. The purpose of the Pastoral Epistles—that men might know how they ought to behave in the church \(v.14\).](#)
- [2. The description of the church \(v.15\).](#)
- [3. The truth of the church \(v.16\).](#)

**1. [\(1 Timothy 3:14-15\)](#) Church— Pastoral Epistles— Scripture:** these two verses explain why Paul was writing to Timothy and why he was later to write to Titus and Philemon. In essence these two verses give the very purpose for all the Pastoral Epistles [\(1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon\)](#). Paul was writing to tell believers how they should behave within the church, that is, within the household or family of God.

The word "**behave**" (*anastrephesthai*<sup>PWS: 323</sup>) means the conduct, walk, and behavior of a person; but it especially refers to how a person relates to other people. Therefore, the great concern of the Pastoral Epistles is how believers behave in their relationships to God, to each other, and to the unbelievers of the world.

Remember: Timothy was in Ephesus and Paul was writing from Macedonia. Paul hoped to visit Ephesus and Timothy soon, but he was not quite sure that he would be able to leave Macedonia. Therefore, he was spelling out in some detail...

- how Christian believers are to conduct themselves within the church.
- how Christian believers are to behave and witness to a world that is lost and reeling under the weight of corruption and evil.

**2. [\(1 Timothy 3:15\)](#) Church:** this verse gives a great description of the church, a description that spells out three great pictures of the church.

**1. The church is "the household [*oikō*<sup>PWS: 2022</sup>] of God."** This does not refer to the building of the church, but to the household of the church, to the people of the church. The church is a body of people who have committed themselves to form a family of people, a family centered around God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church is a *family of people*...

- who believe in God and in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- who have committed their lives to live for Christ.
- who have based their lives upon the promise of eternal salvation promised by the Lord Jesus Christ.
- who have committed themselves to live as a family with all other believers.

Simply stated, the church is a body of people who have committed their lives to live as the family of God. God is the Father; Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father; but we, the followers of God, are the adopted children of God. Every person who truly follows God is a true member of the church, that is, of the family of God ([John 1:12](#); [2 Cor. 6:17-18](#); [Galatians 4:4-6](#)).

The point is this:

- ⇒ How should we behave toward our Father?
- ⇒ How should we behave toward our brothers and sisters?

The answer is found within the family relationship.

**a. The children of a family are to love, obey, and learn from the Father.**

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" ([Matthew 12:50](#)).

"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. This is the first and great commandment. and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" ([Matthew 22:37-39](#)).

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" ([John 7:17](#)).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" ([John 14:21](#)).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" ([John 14:23](#)).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" ([2 Tim. 2:15](#)).

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD: Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" ([1 Samuel 15:22](#)).

**b. The children of a family are to love and help each other.**

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" ([Matthew 22:39](#)).

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" ([John 13:34-35](#)).

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" ([John 15:12](#)).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" ([1 Peter 1:22](#)).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" ([Acts 20:35](#)).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" ([Romans 15:1](#)).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" ([Galatians 6:2](#)).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" ([Galatians 6:10](#)).

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" ([Hebrews 10:24](#)).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" ([Hebrews 13:3](#)).

**2. The church is "the church of the living God." The word "church" (*ekklēsia*) means an assembly, a gathering, a company of people who have been called out by God.** But note: God is the living God; He is not some dead god. He is not some idol or figment of man's imagination. He is the living God who is actually alive and is vitally concerned with how men behave and conduct themselves. This means a most significant thing.

God calls people to His church. He calls them to join His assembly, His gathering, His company of people. But it is up to people whether or not they come to His church. He is the living God; therefore, He actually speaks to the human heart and calls people to follow Him and to live for Him. There are times when every person feels and senses the call of God within his heart to come and join His company of people. But the decision is up to the person. God loves the person; therefore, He will not force the person to come to Him.

"For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" ([1 Thes. 1:9-10](#)).

"For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" ([Hebrews 10:30-31](#)).



**3. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth.** The church *supports* the truth just as pillars and ground support a building. The church props and supports the truth, holds together and binds the truth. William Barclay points out that Paul could also be thinking of the meaning of *display* (*The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, p.102). Pillars, whether short and small or towering and large, always appear to have an air of stateliness that attracts attention. Therefore, the church is the pillar, the display, the demonstration of the truth that attracts people to Jesus Christ.

The church holds the truth up before a world that misbehaves and dies, yet does not have to die. The church—the family and company of God—is God's instrument upon earth to proclaim the truth to the world. What truth? The glorious truth of the Incarnation—that God has loved the world and has demonstrated His love by sending His Son to save the world ([1 Tim. 3:16](#)). This is the glorious truth that the church supports and holds ever so highly before the world.

**Thought 1.** A piercing question is this: How many within the church are really supporting the truth before the world? How many are really holding up the truth by behaving and conducting themselves as they should? How many are holding up the truth by proclaiming it as they should?

**"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)).**

**"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" ([1 Cor. 3:11](#)).**

**"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" ([Ephes. 1:20-22](#)).**

**"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" ([1 Tim. 6:19](#)).**

**"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" ([2 Tim. 2:19](#)).**

**"[Christ] to whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 2:4-5](#)).**



**3. (1 Timothy 3:16) Church— Incarnation:** this is one of the great verses of Scripture; it is the glorious truth of the church—the truth that all true believers confess before the world. It is the truth which the church and its believers must never deny, neglect, ignore, or question. It is the only truth that offers hope and salvation for man beyond the grave. Deny and destroy this truth and all are lost and doomed to death forever. Why? Because all man-made and self-proclaimed truths end in the grave. But this truth will never die, for it is the truth of God's unbelievable love, the great "mystery of godliness."

What is the mystery of godliness? This is the only reference to it in the Bible, and note the truth of it: it is "without controversy," that is, indisputable, undeniable, beyond any question. It is the truth that all genuine believers confess. And what is being confessed really happened. God has done six wonderful things for man. This is the mystery of godliness, the mystery that has now been revealed to man.

**1. "God was manifest [revealed] in the flesh."** God actually became a man in the person of Jesus Christ. He actually partook of flesh and blood.

**a. Jesus Christ identified with man perfectly.** By becoming Man, He experienced all the trials and sufferings of men; therefore, He is able to succor and deliver men through all the trials of life.

**"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:16-18).**

**"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:15-16).**

**b. Jesus Christ became man in order to take away the sins of men.**

**"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).**

**"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (1 John 3:5).**

**"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).**

**c. Jesus Christ became Man in order to destroy him who had the power of death, that is, Satan.**

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" ([Hebrews 2:14-15](#)).

**Thought 1.** The Incarnation is indisputable, undeniable, and irrefutable. It is a fact: God did come to earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" ([John 1:14](#)).

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" ([2 Cor. 5:19](#)).

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me" ([Hebrews 10:5](#)).

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)" ([1 John 1:1-2](#)).

**2. Christ was justified or vindicated in the Spirit.** When Christ walked upon earth, He proclaimed this truth: He was the Son of God who had come to earth to save all who would believe Him. But the vast majority of people did not believe Him. They denied, ignored, neglected, rebuked, mocked, questioned, argued against, and cursed Him. Many tried to use Him in order to get what they wanted, and others plotted to murder Him. But He was *truly the Son of God*; therefore, the Spirit of God vindicated Him; the Spirit of God proved His claims. How? The Spirit of God did three things.

- a. The Spirit of God enabled Christ to live a sinless and perfect life.** The one thing that man knows is this: no man can live a sinless life. If a perfect life could ever be lived, it would have to be lived by God Himself as a Man, and this is exactly the point. Christ proved that He was the Son of God by living a sinless and perfect life.

"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" ([John 8:46](#)).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" ([2 Cor. 5:21](#)).

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy

God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" ([Hebrews 1:8-9](#)).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" ([Hebrews 4:15](#)).

"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" ([Hebrews 7:26](#)).

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" ([Hebrews 9:14](#)).

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" ([1 Peter 1:19](#)).

"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" ([1 Peter 2:22](#)).

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" ([1 John 3:5](#)).

- b. The Spirit of God vindicated Christ by giving Him the power to do the mighty works of God.** Christ worked so many miraculous works of healing and ministry that John could only say that the world itself could not contain the books if they had all been recorded ([John 21:25](#)). The point is this: no man could do the works that Christ did. Only God Himself could perform the kind of miracles Christ did. Therefore, the very works of Christ were the proof that He is who He claimed: the Son of God Himself.

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" ([John 2:11](#)).

"The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" ([John 3:2](#)).

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" ([John 10:25](#)).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" ([John 10:37-38](#)).

"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" ([John 14:11](#)).

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" ([John 15:24](#)).

- c. **The Spirit of God vindicated Christ by raising Him from the dead.** Men killed Him; they crucified Him upon the cross. But He was truly the Son of God; therefore the Spirit of God proved His claim by raising Him up from the dead.

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" ([Romans 1:4](#)).

"[The power of God] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" ([Ephes. 1:20](#)).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" ([1 Peter 1:3-4](#)).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" ([1 Peter 3:18](#)).

**3. Christ was seen of angels. The angels are *heavenly beings* who have always seen and beheld Christ.** In fact, they are the very ministers of Christ who have been created to carry out His will in the other world, the spiritual world or spiritual dimension of being. Therefore, it is only natural that the angels were involved when Christ came to earth to save man. They were involved...

- in the preparation for His birth ([Luke 1:26f](#)).
- in His birth ([Luke 2:8, 13](#)).
- in His temptation ([Mark 1:13](#)).
- in His trials ([Luke 22:43](#)).
- in His resurrection ([Matthew 28:2f](#)).
- in His ascension ([Acts 1:10-11](#)).

Angels are the ministering spirits of Christ who saw all that happened to Him. They saw Christ secure our salvation. The point is this: angels are living beings who have lived with Christ in a real place throughout all of eternity. Therefore, the promise of Christ—that we too shall live with Him eternally—is true. Heaven and angels are real. There is a real world, a spiritual world and dimension of being where God and Christ actually exist.

**4. Christ was preached to the Gentiles, to all the nations of the world.** This is a glorious part of the "mystery of godliness": that Jesus Christ came to save all people, even the heathen—those who knew absolutely nothing about God and are so immoral, depraved, and corrupted, and so hopeless and helpless in life. Christ is not the exclusive Savior of the Jews nor of any other nation including America. He is the Savior of all people and all nations, both Jew and Gentile alike.

**"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" ([Matthew 24:14](#)).**

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)).**

**"And the gospel must first be published among all nations" ([Mark 13:10](#)).**

**"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" ([Mark 16:15](#)).**

**"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" ([Luke 24:47](#)).**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).**

**"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" ([Rev. 14:6](#)).**

**5. Christ was *believed on* in the world.** This was the very purpose for the *Incarnation*, the very reason why Jesus Christ had come to earth: that some might believe on Him and be saved to live with God eternally. Note this: when Christ left earth and ascended into heaven, there were only one hundred and twenty who were following Him and who began to share the gospel. But within fifty years every nation of the world had been touched for Christ. Thousands upon thousands had accepted Christ—so many in fact that Paul declared that the gospel had been carried to the ends of the world.

**"But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" ([Romans 16:26](#)).**

**"[The gospel] which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth" ([Col. 1:6](#)).**

**"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister" ([Col. 1:23](#)).**

The point is this: what is the difference between the witness of the early believers and our witness today? Why were they able to reach so many and we seemingly reach so few? The answer is the truth of this point: belief. They truly believed on Christ; they rested their past, present, and future upon Him. They cast their souls and lives upon Him. They totally committed their lives to Him. They gave Him all they were and had. This kind of belief is missing today. The belief that so many have is a belief *about Christ*: that He is the Savior of the world. However, a belief about Christ is not *believing on Christ*. It is not turning one's life over to Him; not casting one's being—all that one is and has—upon Him.

The glorious "mystery of godliness" is that a person can be saved by believing on Christ—really believing on Him.

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)).**

**"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" ([John 5:24](#)).**

**"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" ([John 11:25](#)).**

**"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" ([John 20:31](#)).**

**"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" ([Romans 10:9-10](#)).**

**6. Christ was received up to glory.** This is a reference to the ascension and exaltation of Christ. He has been exalted as the Supreme Majesty of the universe, as Lord of lords, and King of kings. He is the God of the universe who rules and reigns over the universe in glory and majesty, dominion and power. Jesus Christ has completed the great work of salvation. He has been taken back into heaven, back to the very place from which He had come. He sits at the right hand of the Father, and He shall sit upon the throne of heaven until He chooses to return to earth and bring human history to its climactic consummation,

**"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" ([Mark 16:19](#)).**

**"Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God" ([Luke 22:69](#)).**

**"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" ([Ephes. 1:20](#)).**

**"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" ([Phil. 2:7-10](#)).**

**"Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" ([Rev. 5:12](#)).**

This is the great mystery and godliness now revealed to men.

- ⇒ God was manifested or revealed in the flesh (in the person of Jesus Christ.).
- ⇒ Christ was justified or vindicated in the Spirit.
- ⇒ Christ was seen by angels, actually seen by heavenly beings.
- ⇒ Christ was preached to the Gentiles—to all the nations of the world.
- ⇒ Christ was believed on in the world.
- ⇒ Christ was received up and exalted in heaven.



## Call of. To be ambassadors and shepherds.

### § Luke 6:13

(**Luke 6:13**) **Disciple— Call:** Jesus chose His men from among His disciples. There were a large number of people following Jesus as disciples. A disciple was a learner. But a disciple in that day was much more than what we mean by a student who just studies a subject taught by a teacher. A disciple was a person who *attached* himself to his teacher and who followed his teacher wherever he went, studying and learning all he could from the teacher's life as well as from his word. (See Matthew 28:19-20 )

Note that Jesus called His disciples to Him; He called all those who had attached themselves to Him. (It would be interesting to know who all these were.) Out of these disciples Jesus chose twelve to serve as His apostles and to join Him in His great mission and ministry. They were to serve with Him in a very, very special way (Luke 6:17-19)

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

**3. (Luke 6:13) Apostle— Ministry— Believers— Ambassador:** Jesus chose His men to be apostles. Note three things.

1. The word "**apostle**" (*apostolos*) means to send out. An apostle is a man chosen directly by the Lord Himself or by the Holy Spirit (cp. Matthew 10:1-2; Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:13; Acts 9:6, 15; Acts 13:2; Acts 22:10, 14-15; Romans 1:1). He was a man who had either seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus.

2. Jesus called Himself an apostle (*aposteilos*, John 17:3) and He is called the *Apostle* and High Priest of our profession (Hebrews 3:1).

3. Others were also called apostles (Acts 14:4, 14, 17; 1 Thes. 2:6; 2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25; Galatians 1:19; Romans 16:7). However, there is a distinct difference between all these and the twelve whom Christ chose. The first twelve were...

- chosen by the Lord Himself while on earth.
- chosen to *be with Him* during His earthly ministry (Mark 3:14).
- chosen to be trained by Him alone, personally.
- chosen to be the eyewitnesses of His resurrection (Acts 1:22).
- chosen to be the ones who were to carry forth His message which had come from His very own mouth.

There is a sense in which the gift of apostleship is still given and used in the ministry today (see section on Apostle—Matthew 10:2).

**Thought 1.** The believer is the ambassador for Christ, one who goes forth representing Christ Himself both by life and word. The believer is to *reflect* the very life of Christ.

**"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" ([2 Cor. 5:19-20](#)).**

**Thought 2.** The Lord does pick *a few* from among His followers (disciples) to serve Him in very special ways. Every church has to have its leaders; and every area, state, country, and generation has to have its leaders. God must have those who will go beyond in sacrificing and giving, serving and ministering in every place and generation.

**"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" ([John 1:6](#)).**

**"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" ([Jeremiah 3:15](#)).**

**"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" ([Jeremiah 23:4](#)).**

**"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" ([John 21:17](#)).**

**"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" ([Acts 20:28](#)).**

**"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" ([1 Peter 5:2](#)).**

**"Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me" ([Isaiah 48:16](#)).**

# Choosing Church Leaders

**Judas' Fate and Replacement: Choosing Church Leaders, [Acts 1:12-26](#)**

**[\(Acts 1:12-26\) Introduction:](#)** this is an instructive passage on choosing church leaders.

- [1. The essentials to choosing church leaders \(v.12-15\).](#)**
- [2. The need for church leaders: Judas' fate and empty office \(v.16-20\).](#)**
- [3. The choosing of church leaders: the replacement for Judas \(v.21-26\).](#)**

**1. [\(Acts 1:12-15\) Leaders, Church:](#)** the essentials to choosing church leaders. **There are six essentials seen in this passage.**

**1. Essential 1:** to obey Jesus. The disciples had just witnessed the ascension on the mount of Olives. They now obeyed Christ by returning to Jerusalem. And note: their obedience took tremendous courage, for Jerusalem was the very center of opposition against Christ. They were risking their lives to obey Christ. It would have been much easier to go elsewhere and wait upon and serve God there. But Christ had made His will known and the disciples had committed their lives to obeying Him.

**Thought 1.** In choosing church leaders, believers have to be in the will of God; they must do the will of God. They cannot know who God's choice for a leader is unless they are obeying Him. Disobedient and carnal believers end up with disobedient and carnal leaders, that is, with leaders who are fleshy and worldly, knowing little if anything about God and His will and the true spiritual matters of the church and its mission.

**2. Essential 2:** to center around the appointed leaders. Note that all eleven of the apostles were present, and they were even meeting in the upper room where the apostles were staying. The building was large, for there were over 120 disciples gathering there ([Acts 1:15](#)).

**Thought 1.** Leaders appointed by Christ are to be *the leaders* of the church, and believers must be centered around them if they wish God's presence and blessings. Too often however, too many turn to other leaders, leaders less godly, less spiritual and less mission-, evangelistic-, and ministry-minded. The result is a dead, formal, self-centered, or worldly and socially minded church. (Note: there is a huge difference between being ministry-minded and social-minded. The difference is the same as the great gulf between the spirit and the world itself.

- ⇒ Being ministry-minded means reaching out to help people both socially and spiritually, leading people to an evangelistic encounter, to a personal relationship with Christ as well as meeting their physical and social needs.
- ⇒ Being social-minded means reaching out to help people with *little* if any attention given to evangelism. A social gospel seldom stresses the need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The church must *have* and *follow spiritual leaders*, leaders chosen and appointed by God, if the church is to be a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**3. Essential 3:** to continue in one accord. The disciples were in the upper room for one reason: to seek and wait upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

**Thought 1.** Believers must be of one spirit and mind, focusing their thoughts and concentrating as strongly as they can upon the same purpose. They have one purpose in mind, to seek God for the promise of His Spirit and His presence.

**4. Essential 4:** to pray steadfastly (*esan proskarterountes* [PWS: 765](#)). The word is strong. They continued, persevered, endured, persisted, stuck to praying. For what? For the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They would not cease or stop praying. God's very special presence and power, His very own Spirit and power, had been promised to them; and they were not going to stop praying until God baptized them in His Spirit and presence. (What a lesson for us!)

**5. Essential 5:** to have a leader who willingly leads. Peter had failed his Lord and failed Him in a terrible way, tragically denying Him. He had emotionally dropped into the dregs of despair and anguish ([Matthew 26:69-75](#)). He could have easily remained defeated, allowing the glances and criticisms of the believers to keep him down, never serving his Lord again. But note: he had gotten up off the ground of despair and defeatism: He was standing forth, willingly serving Christ *exactly* where Christ had originally appointed him to serve. Peter's sin and the public's criticism were not keeping him away from his Lord, nor from serving his Lord. He had failed and failed miserably, but the Lord in His unbelievable mercy and grace had forgiven him and lifted him up, and now the Lord was ready to use Peter as originally planned.

**Thought 1.** Note that Peter willingly stepped forth. He did not step forth by constraint nor out of fear. Compare what he later said to the leaders of the church.

**"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" ([1 Peter 5:1-3](#)).**

**6. Essential 6:** to heed what the leader says. All 120 believers listened and gave heed to Peter's leadership. No leader could lead unless the people were *willing* to follow. God's presence and blessings depended upon the believers following the leader God had given them.

**2. ([Acts 1:16-20](#)) Leaders, Church:** the need for church leaders—Judas' fate and empty office. The church had an empty office because one of its leaders had died a tragic death. And note, Judas had been a leader; he had held one of the highest positions, that of being treasurer for the Lord Himself.

**Peter briefly covered why the office in the church was to be filled.**

**1. Judas had betrayed Christ, had actually become the *guide* for Jesus' enemies** ([Matthew 26:47f](#); [Luke 22:47](#); [John 18:2f](#)). He should have guided people to receive Christ; instead, he had guided them to reject and deny Him and to remove Christ from the scene.

**2. Judas had been called by Christ to serve in the ministry.** He had been given a part in the ministry. He had been *numbered* and counted by all as being an apostle and a leader among God's people. Yet, he had somehow refused God's grace—the grace that truly *saved* and *sanctified*, that caused a person to diligently believe and seek God, to truly follow and live for Him.

**Thought 1.** Unless a person is truly saved and sanctified, he is not acceptable to God. It is not enough...

- to claim and profess God.
- to hold an official office in the church, even the highest of offices.
- to be a minister or leader.
- to be an associate with other believers.
- to be a faithful church member.
- to be active in ministering.

**3. Judas had given his heart over to greed, selling Christ for thirty pieces of silver.** ([Matthew 26:15](#).)

**4. Judas had died a terrible death: he had hanged himself in despair.** (The rope had broken and he had fallen head first. His body had just burst open. The picture is given in descriptive terms to match the terrible deed of betraying Christ.)

**5. Judas' legacy is tragic.** Everyone, even the reader, knows the terrible legacy of Judas' life, the legacy of betrayal. Betraying Christ is the most terrible legacy a man can ever have. (This stands as a warning that must be heeded by all.)

**6. Judas' terrible fate was an eternal loss.** This verse is a quote from [Psalm 69:25](#); [Psalm 109:8](#) (cp. [Psalm 41:9](#); [Zech. 11:12](#)). **Note two things.**

- a. The phrase "**his habitation**" (*hē epaulis autou* <sup>PWS: 1837</sup>) is descriptive. It means a farm house or a place for sheep such as a pasture or sheep yard. The idea is that Judas would never again be allowed to be the farmer (husbandman) or shepherd for God.
- b. The word "**bishoprick**" (*episkopēn* <sup>PWS: 382</sup>) means over-seership. It is the word from which the office of bishop is taken. The idea is that Judas' office of *overseeing* the flock of God was to be filled by another person. Judas had lost his ministry completely.

**Thought 1.** What happened to Judas serves as a warning to every Christian leader. Judas had every opportunity imaginable, even that of brushing shoulders with the Lord Jesus day by day, yet he deserted Christ.

**"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" ([1 Tim. 1:19](#)).**

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" ([1 Tim. 4:1](#)).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" ([Hebrews 3:12](#)).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" ([2 Peter 3:17](#)).

**3. ([Acts 1:21-26](#)) Leaders:** the choosing of church leaders—the replacement for Judas.

**1. Leaders must be associates; they must be in fellowship with other believers over a long period of time.** Peter definitely said they must not be novices; they must not be new believers not yet grounded in the faith. People must not be chosen to be leaders until they are mature in the Lord and have proven to be genuine.

"Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" ([1 Tim. 3:6](#)).

**2. Leaders must know the Lord Jesus personally.** They must have personal knowledge of Jesus Christ—be a witness of His resurrection power. A leader...

- must not only know about Jesus, but know Jesus.
- must not only profess Jesus, but possess Jesus.
- must not only believe Jesus lived, but know Jesus lives.
- must not only read the story of Jesus, but live the life of Jesus.
- must not only walk after a religion of Jesus, but follow Jesus, the risen Lord Himself.
- must not only be willing to lead others, but be leading others already (no matter how few).
- must not only talk about witnessing, but witness.
- must not only want the resurrected power of God, but already know the power of God.

Note the two names put forth and nominated. They were men highly esteemed by the earliest believers. Nothing else is known about them.

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" ([Isaiah 43:10](#)).

"And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" ([Mark 3:14](#)).

**3. Leaders must be appointed through prayer.** God must be sought for two very clear, but often neglected reasons.

- a. God alone knows the human heart. A person's heart cannot be truly known by others. Only God can see within. Men can be fooled; and the fact was perfectly clear, for Judas had deceived the early believers, drastically so. It was perfectly

clear they could choose a counterfeit, a carnal believer. They had to seek God, for He alone knew what was in the heart of man ([John 2:24-25](#)).

- b. God alone had the right to choose. The church, the office, the mission was His. God alone knew whom He wanted to fill the office. They had to ask in order to find out God's will.

**"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" ([John 15:16](#)).**

**"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" ([Acts 9:15](#)).**

**"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" ([Acts 13:2-3](#)).**

**Thought 1.** Note the strong lesson on prayer in this fact. God's will cannot be known apart from seeking to know His will.

**"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" ([Mark 11:24](#)).**

**"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" ([1 John 3:22](#)).**

**"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" ([Jeremiah 29:13](#)).**

**4. Leaders are to be appointed by the congregation, not by the leaders themselves.** It was not just the eleven apostles who chose the twelfth apostle. What Peter and the 120 disciples did is clear. Peter called for nominations ([Acts 1:21](#)), the whole group cast their lots and voted for whom they thought God wanted. It was a congregational or democratic process.



# To obey and submit to—respect and follow. § Hebrews 13:17

## Obeying and Praying for Leaders and Being Perfected in Good Works, Hebrews 13:17-25

(Hebrews 13:17-25) Introduction: What are the supreme marks of Christian conduct? A key mark is obeying and praying for the leaders and being perfected in good works.

1. Mark 1: obeying leaders (v.17).
2. Mark 2: praying for one another (v.18-19).
3. Mark 3: being perfected by God and Christ (v.20-21).
4. The concluding remarks (v.22-25).

**1. (Hebrews 3:17) Leaders—Obedience:** there is the mark of obeying leaders. **Verse seven** tells us the kind of leader that is to be obeyed: leaders who have proclaimed the Word of God (Hebrews 13:7). It is their faith, their visionary ministry and leadership that is to be obeyed. Men who are just in the ministry as a means of livelihood or to serve mankind and who do not proclaim the Word of God are not to be followed and obeyed. They are not men who have been called to the ministry by God. Their service and deeds to mankind may be very commendable, good and helpful. But such men belong in the social services of a community, not in the pulpits of a community.

The church and its pulpit do exist to reach and minister to the social needs of the world, but they do not exist *solely* for social ministry. The church and its pulpit exist first and foremost to **proclaim** the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Then, after preaching redemption, the church exists to carry the message and ministry of redemption to a lost and needful world. The minister who has been truly called by God exalts Christ and the redemption that is in Him. That minister is to be obeyed. Three reasons are given for obeying him.

- 1. God called leaders to watch over our souls.** They are concerned about our welfare, growth, holiness, purity, knowledge, faith, love—about our trials and temptations—about our sicknesses and diseases and suffering. Therefore, we should listen to them and obey their counsel and exhortation.
- 2. God called leaders to know their accountability.** This keeps the leader from abusing us. The leader knows that he is accountable to God and will stand before God to give an account as to how he led. Therefore, we can rest assured that if a leader is God-called, he will not mislead us. He is accountable to God and he knows it.
- 3. God-called leaders can be grieved and hurt.** If we follow them, they are filled with joy because the work of Christ goes forth. The world is reached for Christ and people are ministered to. But if we fail to follow our leaders, they are hurt and grieved, for the work of Christ is hampered and we are not growing in Christ like we should.

When we oppose our leaders, we stymie our growth. We stop growing and begin to cause hurt and pain and division in the body of Christ. We become tools of destruction instead of instruments of love and care and nourishment.

And note: our disobedience and rebellion affects us. It does not profit us. We lose out on the contribution and growth the leader could have contributed to our lives.

**Thought 1.** How often leaders are rejected and not followed! How often some people refuse to accept the leadership of a minister or some church leader. The people are the greater losers for it. They miss out on the contribution the minister's particular gifts could have made to their lives.

**"That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth" (1 Cor. 16:16).**

**"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephes. 5:21).**

**"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).**

**"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder [leader], Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).**

**"And they that have believing masters [leaders], let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort" (1 Tim. 6:2).**

**"Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken" (Jeremiah 6:17).**

**2. (Hebrews 13:18-19) Prayer:** there is the mark of praying for one's minister and his ministry. Note: the author says that he has a clear conscience and that he desires to live an honest and upright life. This fact should stir the people to pray for him, His ministry is genuine. He is not a false minister; neither is he living a dishonest and impure life. Therefore, the people should be stirred to pray for him. He also wants to continue his ministry with them; therefore, he requests them to pray to that end as well. He wants to be restored to them soon, and he needs God's help to do it. Apparently some obstacle was keeping him away from the church.

**Thought 1.** Believers should pray for all ministers who are living for Christ, whether they are present or absent, ministering to us or ministering somewhere else in the world.

**"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Romans 15:30).**

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel" ([Ephes. 6:18-19](#)).

"Brethren, pray for us" ([1 Thes. 5:25](#)).

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you" ([2 Thes. 3:1](#)).

"Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly" ([Hebrews 13:18](#)).

**3. ([Hebrews 13:20-21](#)) Perfection— Growth— Maturity:** there is the mark of being perfected in every good work. This is a prayer of the writer for the Hebrew believers. It gives us a most meaningful picture of God and of Christ.

**1. God is the God of peace.** This means that God is the *Source of peace*. A person needs to be *perfected in peace*; he needs to have peace, to experience peace day by day as he plows through life with all its trials and temptations. But note: no person can have peace apart from God, for God is the Source of peace. But if a person will turn to God, he can experience peace no matter how much trouble and stress are swirling around him. Regardless of the circumstances and situation, the God of peace can bring peace to his soul. What man has to do is turn his life over to God. Once man turns himself over to God, God plants the seed of peace within his soul and the peace just grows and grows. In fact, the more a man waters and nourishes his relationship with God, the more the seed of God's peace takes over the man's life. The point is this: God is the God of peace; therefore, man's only hope for peace is to come to God. God and God alone can give man perfect peace within his heart.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" ([Romans 5:1](#)).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" ([John 14:27](#)).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" ([John 16:33](#)).

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" ([Romans 8:6](#)).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" ([Romans 14:17](#)).

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" ([Romans 16:20](#)).

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" ([Ephes. 2:14](#)).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" ([Col. 1:20](#)).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" ([Phil. 4:6-7](#)).

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" ([Phil. 4:9](#)).

"Now the God of peace be with you all" ([Romans 15:33](#)).

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" ([2 Cor. 13:11](#)).

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([1 Thes. 5:23](#)).

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" ([Hebrews 13:20](#)).

**2. God is the God of resurrection and of life.** He raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. He had the power to raise up Christ and to give Christ a new life, a life of exaltation and glory and that lasts forever. The point is glorious: God is the God of resurrection and life. Therefore, if we turn to Him, He will raise us up and give us a new life, a life of exaltation and glory forever and ever. And if there is anything that man needs, it is life—a life that will never end—a life that is eternal and that gives us the privilege of living with God forever and ever.

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" ([Romans 4:25](#)).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" ([Romans 10:9](#)).

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" ([1 Cor. 15:1-4](#)).

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" ([Ephes. 1:19-20](#)).

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word

of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" ([1 Thes. 4:14-18](#)).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" ([1 Peter 1:3](#)).

**3. Jesus Christ is the great shepherd of the sheep.** He is the One who shepherds the people of God. He is the One who guides, provides, and protects God's people. But the Lord Jesus Christ has one trait that rises far, far above the traits of all other shepherds. Jesus Christ sacrificed His life for the sheep; He died for the sheep of God, and He did it willingly. Therefore, the sheep of God were saved. Their lives were saved and they were given the glorious privilege of living forever in the eternal pasture of God. Man needs guidance, provision, and protection; and Jesus Christ can give him all three. But man also needs deliverance from the ravaging wovles of sin and death and judgment to come. Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd, has sacrificed His own life in order to provide this deliverance for man as well.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters" ([Psalm 23:1-2](#)).

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" ([Isaiah 40:11](#)).

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" ([John 10:11](#)).

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" ([Hebrews 13:20](#)).

"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" ([1 Peter 2:25](#)).

**4. Jesus Christ is the One who has established the everlasting covenant between God and man.** A covenant is an agreement between two persons. The new agreement between God and man has been worked out by Jesus Christ. He has provided the way for us to approach God. What is that covenant? How can we now approach God? The covenant is the blood of Jesus Christ and the blood of Christ is the way we approach God. What does this mean? It means that Jesus Christ took our sins upon Himself and bore the guilt and judgment for our sins. When He died, He died as the Ideal and Perfect Sacrifice. He was able to do this because He was the Ideal and Perfect Man. Therefore, whatever He did was acceptable to God. He established a new and living way into God's presence; by His death Jesus Christ has established a new covenant, a new agreement between God and man. It is now the will of God for man to approach Him through the blood of Christ;

the everlasting covenant. In fact, a man is acceptable to God only if he approaches God through the blood of Christ.

**"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" ([Matthew 26:28](#)).**

**"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" ([Hebrews 8:10](#)).**

**"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" ([Hebrews 12:24](#)).**

**"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" ([Acts 20:28](#)).**

**"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" ([Romans 5:9](#)).**

**"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" ([Hebrews 9:14](#)).**

**"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" ([1 Peter 1:18-19](#)).**

**"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1 John 1:7](#)).**

**"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the firstbegotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" ([Rev. 1:5](#)).**

**5. God perfects us in every good work.** God has a will for every one of us, but there is only one way it can be perfected in us. Note two facts:

- ⇒ The will of God is not perfected in us by our own works and efforts. We can try and try to work up the energy to do God's will, but we will only fail. We may show initiative and a lot of activity, but our own human efforts and work will only fail. No matter what we do, we can never perfect ourselves. Our works and efforts will eventually cease and pass away.
- ⇒ The will of God can only be perfected in us by God Himself. God Himself must work within us, stirring and energizing us to do what is well-pleasing in His sight. The word *work* has the idea of energizing. We can do God's will only as He works within us and energizes us to do it. What determines the energy and power of God in our lives? One thing: our walk and fellowship with God. If we walk in fellowship with God—in His Word and prayer, trusting and depending upon Him—then He will stir and energize us and give us the knowledge, wisdom, ideas, and visions of what He wants done.



Remember: all this is a prayer. The writer to the Hebrews prays that God's people will be perfected in every good work. Note the prayer as a whole, how meaningful and power-packed it is:

**"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" ([Hebrews 13:20-21](#)).**

**"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" ([2 Cor. 4:16](#)).**

**"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" ([Ephes. 3:20](#)).**

**"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" ([Phil. 1:6](#)).**

**"For it is God which worketh [energizes] in you both to will and to do his good pleasure" ([Phil. 2:13](#)).**

**"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" ([2 Thes. 3:3](#)).**

**"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" ([2 Tim. 1:12](#)).**

**"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" ([1 Peter 1:5](#)).**

**4. ([Hebrews 13:22-25](#)) Conclusion:** this is the conclusion of the letter to the Hebrews. **Four important lessons can be gleaned from these remarks.**

**1. Believers are to be open to exhortation.** The writer to the Hebrews pleads for the believer to receive his word of exhortation. He had written the letter to build them up in Christ and to warn them. He had written so much in so short a space; nevertheless what he had written needed to be received and heeded.

**2. Believers are to be informed and aware of the conditions of saints.** He informs them of Timothy's welfare. Timothy had been released from prison.

**Thought 1.** Believers must keep up with each other. It is the only way we can look after and help each other and grow and develop each other.

**3. Believers are to greet each other.** The writer to the Hebrew believers illustrates this for us. There is no place for snobbishness in the church, no place for unfriendliness, no place for passing by each other. The church is the assembly of God's family, a family that loves and fellowships with God and with each other.

**4. Believers are to receive and bestow God's grace upon each other.** Grace means the favor and blessings of God, favor and blessings that we do not deserve, but that God showers upon us. We need the favor and blessings of God; therefore, we are to pray for them, that God will bestow them both upon ourselves and others.



# To remember leaders and follow them. § Hebrews 13:7

(Hebrews 13:7) **Leaders:** there is the remembering of leaders. "Remember" (*Mnēmoneuete* <sup>PWS: 3240</sup>) means to be mindful; to keep in mind. The idea is continuous remembrance. Leaders are never to be forgotten. But note who the leaders are that are to be remembered: those who have proclaimed the Word of God. If a person has been faithful in proclaiming and teaching God's Word, we are to remember them and never forget them. Note why: *so that we can follow their faith*. A leader who faithfully proclaims God's Word is a leader to follow. As the Amplified New Testament says:

*"Remember your leaders and superiors in authority, [for it was they] who brought to you the Word of God. Observe attentively and consider their manner of living—the outcome of their well-spent lives—and imitate their faith [that is, their conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things, the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ; and their leaning of the entire human personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom and goodness]."*

This is a power-packed verse. Note what it says when it is broken down in outline form: follow your leaders...

- in their conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things.
- in their conviction that God is the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ.
- in the leaning of their entire personality on God.
- in their absolute trust and confidence in God's power, wisdom, and goodness.

Note that both living and dead leaders are to be followed, those who have ended their work on earth as well as those who are now laboring. Matthew Henry says:

*"Remember them—their preaching, their praying, their private counsel, their example.*

*"Follow their faith; be steadfast in the profession of the faith they preached to you, and labour after the grace of faith by which they lived and died so well. Consider the end of their conversation [behavior], how quickly, how comfortably, how joyfully, they finished their course!" (Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol. 6, p.963.)*

**"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (1 Cor. 4:16).**

**"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:9).**

**"And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia" (1 Thes. 1:6-7).**

**"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" ([Hebrews 6:12](#)).**

**"And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better" ([Hebrews 7:7](#)).**

**"For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" ([Hebrews 7:17](#)).**

**"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience" ([James 5:10](#)).**

# • Gift of Leaders . Discussed.

## § Romans 12:6-8

2. **(Romans 12:6-8) Gifts, Spiritual:** the believer is to use the gifts God has given him. The word "gift" (*charisma* <sup>PWS:1674</sup>) means the very special ability given to the believer by God. Note that the gift is from God; it is not a natural talent. The believer could not have attained nor secured the ability himself. It is a spiritual gift; that is, it is given by the Spirit of God for spiritual purposes. It is given to the believer so that he can fulfill his task on earth.

Note also that the gifts are said to be given "according to the grace that is given to us." This means that the gifts are given after we come to know the *grace* of God. This is part of our *heritage in Christ*, the glorious privilege...

- of being given a very special task upon earth.
- of being given purpose and meaning and significance in life.
- of being given a very special gift or gifts to fulfill our task on earth.

1. **There is the gift of prophecy.** In the Old Testament the gift of prophecy was the gift to proclaim and explain the will of God. The proclamation dealt with past, present, and future events. However, in the New Testament, the gift of prophecy changes dramatically. The prophet is seldom seen predicting the future. Instead, he is seen proclaiming what has taken place in the Lord Jesus Christ and what has been *revealed by Christ* concerning future events. His function is to edify, exhort, and comfort. The Scripture is clear about this.

**"He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).**

The prophet is the man who proclaims and explains the Word of God...

- the living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.
- the written Word, the Holy Scripture.

Having said this, it should be noted that prophecy is the gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit. It includes both prediction and proclamation, and neither one should be minimized despite the abuse of the gift.

There is no question, the gift to predict events has been abused to the point of the ridiculous. However, the abuse of a gift does not eliminate the gift: the Spirit of God does sometimes give believers a glimpse into coming events in order to prepare and strengthen them to face the events.

However, the major function of prophecy is clearly stated by Scripture, and the fact should be learned by all believers:

**"He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort" ([1 Cor. 14:3](#)).**

**Thought 1.** Note a crucial point. A prophet of the Lord Jesus Christ must first know Jesus Christ before he can proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ. How can a man tell the world about Someone when he does not know the person himself?

**2. There is the gift of ministry (*diakonia* [PWS: 2603](#)).** The word is often used of a servant or of a person who serves and ministers to others in the most practical ways. Therefore, the meaning would be the very special ability to serve, minister, aid, help and assist others—to assist them in such a way that they are *built up* and truly helped. It is the most practical of gifts. Most of us know a few people who are always willing and who are unusually gifted to help others when help is needed. All of us can help, and all of us can develop our willingness and ability to help, but there are some believers who are unusually gifted with the very special gift of ministry.

**"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" ([Matthew 10:42](#)).**

**"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" ([Galatians 6:10](#)).**

**"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" ([Phil. 2:5-7](#)).**

**"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" ([James 1:27](#)).**

**3. There is the gift of teaching (*didaskon*).** Teaching is the ability to explain, root, and ground people in the truth. The Word of God not only needs to be proclaimed by the prophet, but it must also be explained by the teacher. People must be guided and rooted in all the truths of the Word day by day, week by week, and year by year. This is the teacher's task.

**Thought 1.** How desperately the church needs good, solid teaching. People are walking out the back door of the church almost as fast as they are coming in the front door, all because they are not rooted and grounded in Christ.

**"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" ([1 Cor. 12:28](#)).**

**"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" ([Ephes. 4:11](#)).**

**"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" ([Matthew 28:20](#)).**

**4. There is the gift of exhortation (*paraklēsei*<sup>PWS: 1390</sup>).** This is the very special ability to excite, motivate, advise, encourage, comfort, and warn people. The dominant factor would be the motivation and encouragement of people, the ability to stir people to make a decision for Christ and to grow in Him. It is the gift that arouses people to get up and get busy fulfilling their task for the Lord.

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).**

**"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" ([Titus 1:9](#)).**

**"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" ([Titus 2:11-15](#)).**

**5. There is the gift of giving (*metadidōmi*<sup>PWS: 1687</sup>).** This simply means the giving of one's earthly possessions such as money, clothing, and food. Note that in listing this particular gift, Scripture adds a point: it tells how the person is to give. He is to give with "**simplicity**" (*en haplotēti*<sup>PWS: 3568</sup>). The word has several ideas. It means...

- to give with sincerity and in simplicity.
- to give with singleness of heart and without show.
- to give liberally and generously.

The point is this: God gives some persons the special gift to make money in order to have plenty to help others and to spread the gospel around the world. These persons...

- must give and give generously. God gave them the gift of making money in order to have enough to fulfill the will of God for the world. Therefore, they must give liberally.
- must not hoard and bank and misuse their gift of wealth.
- must not give grudgingly and complainingly about having to give.
- must not give to attract attention or to heap honor upon themselves.
- must not give to boost their own egos and pride.

**"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" ([Matthew 6:3](#)).**

**"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" ([1 Cor. 16:2](#)).**

**"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 [Cor. 9:7](#)).**

**6. There is the gift of ruling (*proistēmi* <sup>PWS: 3352</sup>).** This means the ability of leadership, authority, administration, government. Note that this person is to lead with diligence (*en spoudē* <sup>PWS: 1037</sup>): with haste, zeal, desire, and concentrated attention. There is no room for laziness, complacency, and irresponsibility in the Kingdom of God and His church. The leaders are the ones who are to blaze the path for the flock of God, and they are to do it with zeal, hard work, and iron determination.

**"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" ([Romans 12:11](#)).**

**"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" ([1 Peter 5:2-3](#)).**

**7. There is the gift of mercy (*eleōn* <sup>PWS: 3545</sup>).** This is a person who is full of forgiveness and compassion, pity and kindness toward others. Note that the merciful person is to show mercy with a cheerful (*hilarotēs* <sup>PWS: 560</sup>) heart. The word means kind, cheerful, joyful. The person with the gift of mercy...

- is not to forgive grudgingly.
- is not to hesitate in forgiving others.
- is not to show mercy in an annoyed spirit.
- is not to show mercy in a spirit of criticism and rebuke toward the person who needs help. (This often happens when the person is down and out because of unemployment, lack of education, or some other unfortunate circumstance.)

The believer who has the spirit of mercy is to show mercy with a cheerful and joyful heart, doing all he can to lift up the person needing mercy.

**"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" ([Matthew 5:7](#)).**

**"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" ([Luke 6:36](#)).**

**"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" ([Hosea 12:6](#)).**

**"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" ([Micah 6:8](#)).**

# How to lead. Discussed. §1 Peter 5:1-4

## The Duties of the Elder or Minister, 1 Peter 5:1-4

**(1 Peter 5:1-4) Introduction:** this is a critical passage. It is a personal message from Peter to the elders and ministers of the church. Never is the church in need of leadership any more than when it is being attacked and persecuted. At such times, the ministers must stand forth and be more vigilant than ever.

**1. Peter stresses his right to be heard (v.1).**

**2. The charge: feed the flock of God (v.2-3).**

**3. The result: a crown of glory (v.4).**

**1. (1 Peter 5:1) Peter: Peter stresses his right to be heard and the importance of listening to him.** Peter was deeply concerned for the believers of God's church. They were being persecuted and savagely attacked by the wolves of this world. They were just like sheep under attack, sheep who needed the pastoral care of the shepherd. This is the reason Peter writes this exhortation to the leaders of the church. The top leader was the elder or minister; he was the person most responsible for the church. He was the person who needed to take the lead in facing the persecution. He was the one who needed to feed the flock of God and to lead them to stand fast for Christ. But how? How could Peter stir the elders to take the lead and do their duty? How could he arouse them to stand in the forefront against such savage persecution? By stressing his right to be heard and the importance of listening to him. Note that Peter stresses three things that should arouse all ministers to heed his exhortation.

**1. Peter himself was an elder, a man called by God to be a minister to the flock of God.** Therefore, Peter held the very same calling and office as all other elders. He was one with them; he could identify with them. He knew what they felt and experienced, for he faced and went through the same experiences they did. He was the elder sharing with the elders. He was one who had been where they now were and who wanted to help them. Therefore, they needed to listen and hear what he had to say.

**Thought 1.** Think about this fact for a moment: we hold the very same calling and office that Peter the great apostle did, the calling of being an elder, a minister of God's flock. Just think: these words are a special message to us—all elders and ministers—from Peter himself.

**2. Peter was an eye-witness to the sufferings of Christ.** He actually saw...

- the ridicule, mockery, and cursing of Christ.
- the questioning and doubting of Christ.
- the unbelief and rejection of Christ.
- the denial and rebellion against the claims of Christ.
- the accusation and charges against Christ.
- the sufferings of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane.



- the beatings and abuse Christ bore in His trials.
- the mockery and death of Christ upon the cross.

Peter knew that the sufferings of Christ were real: that Jesus Christ actually did suffer for man. He knew that man could now be saved by the sufferings of the cross if man would only believe and endure to the end. Therefore, the elders—all ministers of the gospel—need to listen and hear the exhortation of Peter.

**3. Peter was to be a partaker of Jesus' glory.** Remember: Peter had witnessed the transfiguration of Christ. He had seen and experienced a little taste of the glory that is to come. While writing this his heart must have beat a little faster, for he was recalling the promise of the Lord to return. And the Lord gave the promise often, always sharing that His followers would share in the glory of the resurrection and of life eternal with Him ([Matthew 5:11-12](#); [Matthew 13:43](#); [Matthew 19:28-29](#); [Matthew 25:23](#); [Luke 6:35](#); [Luke 13:29](#); [John 5:24-26](#); [John 5:28-29](#); [John 6:40](#); [John 8:51](#); [John 11:25-26](#); [John 12:26](#); [John 14:2-3](#); [John 17:24](#)).

This was the reason Peter was willing to serve Christ as a minister: he had witnessed and tasted a little of the glory of heaven. He knew what lay ahead. He knew that Christ was truly the Savior of the world and that His promise of eternal glory was true. Therefore, Peter was willing to serve and bear anything, no matter how severe the suffering. He knew that the glory of heaven was worth bearing anything, no matter how terrible.

**Thought 1.** These three reasons state clearly why all elders—all ministers of the Lord—must listen and heed Peter's exhortation.

- ⇒ Peter was an elder himself, one who could identify with us, one who experienced just what we experience.
- ⇒ Peter was an eyewitness of the Lord's sufferings. He actually saw Christ die; therefore, he knows that the claims of Christ are true. Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, the Savior who died for our salvation.
- ⇒ Peter was a partaker of the glory that we are all to share. In the transfiguration of Christ he actually witnessed and tasted a little of the glory that is to be revealed and brought to us when Christ returns. He knew that heaven and the glory of life eternal are real.

## **2. (1 Peter 5:2-3) Minister, Duty— Church: the exhortation to ministers is direct and forceful, but as clear as it can be.**

"Feed the flock of God." The word "feed" (*poimane* <sup>PWS: 1464</sup>) is an all inclusive word that covers all the duties of the minister. It means not only to preach and teach the Word of God, but to tend and shepherd the flock. It means to act like a shepherd, to carry out the duties of a shepherd. The duties of the shepherd are severalfold:

- ⇒ to feed the sheep even if he has to gather them in his arms and carry them to the pasture.
- ⇒ to guide the sheep to the pasture and away from the rough places and precipices.
- ⇒ to seek and save the sheep who get lost.

- ⇒ to protect the sheep. He is even willing to sacrifice his life for the sheep.
- ⇒ to restore the sheep who go astray and return.
- ⇒ to reward the sheep for obedience and faithfulness.
- ⇒ to keep the sheep separate from the goats.

But note this: in all the duties of tending and looking after the flock of God, we must never forget what the great Greek scholar W.E. Vine stresses:

*"In the spiritual care of God's children, the feeding of the flock from the Word of God is the constant and regular necessity; it is to have the foremost place. The tending (which includes this) consists of other acts, of discipline, authority, restoration, material assistance of individuals, but they are incidental in comparison with the feeding" (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words).*

Note another significant fact: the flock is *the flock of God*; it is not the flock of the minister. Ministers are only undershepherds to God. But they are to be undershepherds: they are to tend the flock of God, to look after and care for the flock. The fact that God is the Chief Shepherd does not mean that the minister can leave the care of the flock up to God as though He was going to automatically care for the flock. God looks after the flock through the undershepherds whom He chooses. This is the way He shepherds. Therefore, every minister is important; every minister is to feed and tend and shepherd the flock of God. And Scripture pulls no punches about the fact: Scripture lays down exactly how the minister is to go about feeding the flock.

**1. The elder or minister is to take the oversight of the flock willingly, not by force.** This does not mean that a person is not to feel the constraint of God and His love in the ministry. He is. All ministers are to sense the constraint of God. Paul forcefully declared the fact:

**"Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).**

**"For the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5:14).**

The person should not have to be forced and coerced to minister. He should willingly feed the flock of God. The minister must willingly do the will of God. He should never have to be constrained or coerced to minister to God's people.

**Thought 1.** The great tragedy is this: many have been called by God into the ministry, called to feed His flock, but they refused. Why?

- ⇒ Some felt unworthy and inadequate.
- ⇒ Some felt it would cost them too much.
- ⇒ Some felt it required too much sacrifice.
- ⇒ Some did not want to bear the reproach of the ministry.
- ⇒ Some felt the demands and duties and expectations were too much to bear.

On and on the list could go, but Scripture is clear. If we have been called into the ministry by God, we must not reject His call. We must not have to be

constrained and coerced to do God's will. We must willingly minister and feed the flock of God.

**"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" ([Matthew 7:21](#)).**

**For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" ([Matthew 12:50](#)).**

**"He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" ([Matthew 25:22-23](#)).**

**"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" ([John 4:34](#)).**

**"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" ([John 15:16](#)).**

**"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" ([Acts 20:24](#)).**

**"So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us" ([1 Thes. 2:8](#)).**

**"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" ([2 Tim. 4:7-8](#)).**

**"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" ([Rev. 22:14](#)).**

**2. The elder or minister must take the oversight of the flock not for personal profit and gain, but of a ready mind.** The Greek says that no person is to enter the ministry for "**filthy lucre**" (*mēde aischrokerdōs* <sup>PWS: 1498</sup>), that is, for base gain, or for some soiled and dirty advantage. No person should ever enter the ministry...

- as a profession.
- as a means of livelihood.
- as a means to serve mankind.
- because people say he has the gifts for it.
- because people say he would make a good minister.
- because family and friends encourage him to enter the ministry.

All of these reasons usually surround a person's entrance into the ministry. But they must never be *the reasons* why a person enters the ministry and cares for God's people. The ministry is a *call from God*, and no person dare enter the ministry without a personal call to the ministry. But note: when the call comes, the person is to have a ready mind. He is to minister to God's people; he is to readily feed the flock of God.

"Jesus said unto him, **If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me**" ([Matthew 19:21](#)).

"Then Peter began to say unto him, **Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee**" ([Mark 10:28](#)).

"And he said to them all, **If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me**" ([Luke 9:23](#)).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" ([Luke 14:26-27](#)).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" ([Luke 14:33](#)).

"And he said unto them, **Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting**" ([Luke 18:29-30](#)).

"I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel" ([Acts 20:33](#)).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" ([Romans 8:13](#)).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" ([Romans 15:1](#)).

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" ([1 Cor. 10:24](#)).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" ([Galatians 5:24](#)).

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" ([Phil. 2:4](#)).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" ([Phil. 3:8](#)).

**3. The elder or minister is to take the oversight of the flock not as a lord, but by being an example.** Note: the flock of God is called God's heritage (*klērōn* <sup>PWS:1942</sup>). This is the word that was used of Israel in the Old Testament. It means that the Jews were the people who were set apart and allotted and assigned to God. They were His very special allotment and assignment, the people charged to His care and oversight. This is the picture painted of the elder or minister and the flock of God. God has given the minister a very special heritage or allotment and assignment: the minister has been assigned to feed the heritage of God, the very flock that belongs to God Himself.

Now note how the minister is to lead God's flock. He is not to lord it over them, but he is to lead by example. The minister...

- is not to be a dictator but an example.
- is not to preach one thing and do something else.

The minister is to lead people by living for Christ. He is to preach and teach Christ, but he is to first of all live a pure and righteous life just like Christ lived. The minister is to live exactly what he preaches. He is to be a pattern and model for Christ, a pattern and model of just what God wants His people to be.

**"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" ([Matthew 5:13](#)).**

**"But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" ([Mark 10:42-44](#)).**

**"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" ([John 13:15](#)).**

**"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" ([1 Tim. 4:12](#)).**

**"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" ([Titus 2:7](#)).**

**"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience" ([James 5:10](#)).**

**"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" ([1 Peter 2:21](#)).**

### **3. ([1 Peter 5:4](#)) Minister— Reward: the reward for elders or ministers is glorious. It is a crown of glory that never fades away. Note two things.**

**1. Jesus Christ is the Chief Shepherd and He is going to appear, that is, return, to earth.** The idea is that nothing will stop His return; He is going to appear and reward His ministers.

Note the title of Christ, the Chief Shepherd (*archipoimenos* <sup>PWS: 3521</sup>). Alan Stibbs says that it is the "Archshepherd" or "Archbishop" who is over all and to whom we shall all give an account (*The First Epistle General of Peter*. "The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.168).

The work of Jesus as the Shepherd is fourfold.

- a. Jesus Christ is the *Good Shepherd*. He is called *good* because He risks and sacrifices His life for the sheep ([John 10:11, 15](#); cp. [Psalm 22](#)).
- b. Jesus Christ is the *Great Shepherd*. He is called *great* because He arose from the dead and He perfects the sheep ([Hebrews 13:20-21](#)).
- c. Jesus Christ is the *Shepherd and Bishop* of our souls. He is called the *shepherd and bishop* because He welcomes those who wandered off and went astray ([1 Peter 2:25](#)).

d. Jesus Christ is the *Chief Shepherd*. He is called *chief* because He is to appear and return to earth with great glory and reward the faithful ([1 Peter 5:4](#)).

2. **The reward for elders is glorious: it is to be a crown of glory.** What does this mean? It means that the faithful minister shall share in the glory of heaven and be crowned with a very special portion of glory. By crown is meant rule and reign, the assignment of heavenly service for Christ. (See [1 Peter 1:4](#) for a list of all rewards.)

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" ([Matthew 10:42](#)).

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" ([Matthew 25:23](#)).

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" ([John 14:2](#)).

"Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" ([Ephes. 6:8](#)).

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" ([1 Peter 5:4](#)).

"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" ([Rev. 3:11](#)).

# Message to. Last words of Paul to leaders. Acts 20:28-38

## The Last Words to Church Leaders, Acts 20:28-38

(Acts 20:28-38) Introduction: these words are the last words of Paul to church leaders that are recorded. It is a critical message, a message that needs to be studied time and again by every church leader.

1. Guard yourselves and the church (v.28).
2. Feed the church of God (v.28-31).
3. Live for God and for God's Word (v.32).
4. Labor and give, not coveting worldly wealth (v.33-35).
5. Conclusion: pastor and people departed (v.36-38).

### 1. (Acts 20:28) Minister, Duty— Sheep: the first duty is to guard yourselves and the church. This is a strong charge.

1. The minister must look after his own life, his character and conduct, before he can look after the flock of God. He must "take heed" (*prosechete*<sup>PWS: 3882</sup>), that is, give attention, concentrate upon, focus upon, attend to, watch after, and guard his life. There are specific areas he must guard.

#### a. He must guard against false teaching.

"In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven [false teaching] of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1).

#### b. He must guard against an unforgiving spirit.

"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:3-4).

#### c. He must guard against self-indulgence, drunkenness, and the possessions of this life.

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

#### d. He must guard against the fables, myths, speculations, ideas, and false doctrines of men, and the genealogies (roots, heritage, ancestry—useless knowledge) of men.

"Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do" (1 Tim. 1:4).



e. **He must watch and give himself to reading, exhortation and doctrine.**  
"...give attendance [heed] to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine"  
([1 Tim. 4:13](#)).

f. **He must especially give himself to *the doctrine (te didaskalia)*, the teaching of Scripture.**

"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"  
([1 Tim. 4:16](#)).

2. **The minister must look after "all the flock."** There are three reasons stressed in Scripture.

a. **Sheep can wander about and get lost.**

"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"  
([Isaiah 53:6](#)).

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead" ([Proverbs 21:16](#)).

"As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place" ([Proverbs 27:8](#)).

"Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting" ([Jeremiah 15:6](#)).

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" ([Matthew 24:12](#)).

"If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him"  
([Hebrews 10:38](#)).

"Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness" ([2 Peter 2:15](#)).

b. **Sheep can be seized by the beasts (false teachers) of the world and within the church.**

"All ye beasts [false shepherds] of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" ([Isaiah 56:9-11](#)).

"Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD" ([Jeremiah 23:1-2](#); cp. [Jeremiah 25:34-38](#)).

"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting-place" ([Jeremiah 50:6](#)).

"Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" ([Ezekiel 34:2-6](#); cp. [Ezekiel 34:7-31](#)).

**c. Sheep without a shepherd are in a pathetic condition.**

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" ([Matthew 9:36](#)).

"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" ([1 Peter 2:25](#)).

**2. ([Acts 20:28-31](#)) Minister— Church: the second duty is to feed the church of God.** The word "feed" (*poimainein*) is shepherd, to act as a shepherd.

Church leaders are to shepherd the church of God. There are four reasons why the church leader is to feed the church of God.

**1. The church must be fed because God has purchased the church and paid the supreme price for it with His own blood.** Note three all-important points.

**a. Jesus is unequivocally said to be God.** He is the One who shed His blood to purchase the church. He is very God, very Man.

**b. Jesus "purchased" (*periepoiēsato* <sup>PWS: 3093</sup>) the church.** Therefore, it is His; He owns it and He has all say-so concerning everything about the church. As Purchaser, His Word about the care of His church is to be carried out explicitly, just as He dictates. There is to be no deviation whatsoever. Leaders are but overseers appointed by Him to shepherd His church as He says.

**c. Jesus paid the supreme price for the church—His own blood.**

**2. The church must be fed because it is the duty of church leaders to feed it.**

Church leaders are called overseers (*episkopous* <sup>PWS: 2815</sup>) or elders (Jewish name) or bishops (Greek name) or *presbyter* or *episkopate* (overseer). Note the terms are used interchangeably: elder ([Acts 20:17](#)), bishop ([Acts 20:28](#)), overseer or episkopate ([Acts 20:28](#)), and shepherd (feed, [Acts 20:28](#)).

"The elders which are among you I exhort...Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" ([1 Peter 5:1-4](#)).

**3. The church must be fed because false teachers will come in among believers and seduce them.**

**4. The church must be fed because of Paul's supreme example of faithfulness.** Paul sets a dynamic example for all leaders of the church. He was a mere man as every leader is, yet he was able to please God immensely, able to feed the church exactly as God wished. He demonstrated perfectly that the man chosen by God to be an overseer can shepherd the church as it should be done.

a. He "warned" (*nouthetōn* [PWS: 4254](#)): admonished. The word means both to give advice and to warn.

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" ([Col. 1:27](#)).

b. He warned everyone, not neglecting any or favoring any. He gave attention to all, saw to it that they were fully fed and shepherded.

c. He warned day and night: every day, every night, all the time, constantly and consistently, never missing an opportunity.

d. He warned them "with tears," full of compassion and concern, being touched by the misery and fate of the lost, the needs of the saved, and the glorious mercy of God.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" ([John 21:17](#)).

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" ([1 Peter 5:2](#)).

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" ([Jeremiah 3:15](#)).

"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" ([Jeremiah 23:4](#)).

**3. ([Acts 20:32](#)) Believer, Duty: the third duty is to live for God and for God's Word.**

The "Word of God's grace" is the Word of God's favor, of His glorious salvation in its fulness, of His truth, of His will. Therefore, the "Word of God's grace" is His revealed Word, both the Living Word (Christ Himself) and the written Word (the Holy Bible). Now note the point: the church leader is to be commended (*paratithemai* [PWS: 649](#)) to God's Word; that is, he is to place, commit, entrust, fix, lay, and deposit his life with God and His Word. Very simply, the church leader is to totally entrust his life to God and His Word, laying himself completely upon both. There are two reasons for trusting God and His Word so completely.

**1. God and His Word will build up and edify the believer.**

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how

he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward" ([1 Cor. 3:10-14](#)).

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" ([2 Cor. 5:1](#)).

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" ([Ephes. 2:20](#)).

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:12](#)).

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" ([2 Tim. 3:15](#)).

**2. God and His Word will give an inheritance to believers.** The inheritance (*klēronomian* <sup>PWS: 2147</sup>) is both...

- present, in the here and now.

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" ([Acts 26:18](#)).

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" ([Col. 1:12](#)).

- future, in the new heavens and earth.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" ([Romans 8:16-17](#)).

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" ([Hebrews 9:15](#)).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" ([1 Peter 1:3-4](#)).

**4. ([Acts 20:33-35](#)) Ministers— Financial Support: the fourth duty is to labor and give, not coveting worldly wealth.** Note two striking points.

**1. Paul did not covet worldly wealth.** He did not covet silver or gold or clothing. In the ancient world rich clothing was a sign of wealth. Many in the church had plenty and some were rich. They had...

- money
- property
- stylish clothes
- transportation

But Paul did not covet what they had. His mind and thoughts were not focused upon worldly things. Money, property, clothing, and the latest in transportation held no appeal for him. He craved something far more important:

- ⇒ the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.
- ⇒ meeting the desperate needs of the world.
- ⇒ delivering men out of the slavery of sin.
- ⇒ sharing the gospel of life everlasting.

**Thought 1.** The ministers and teachers of the gospel must be totally committed to sharing the gospel. And total commitment involves not only verbal preaching and teaching, but the spread of the gospel through the financial support of others. These two passages need to be studied and applied by every believer, but especially by ministers and teachers of the gospel. Cp. [1 Samuel 12:3-5](#); [1 Thes. 2:5-6](#); [1 Tim. 3:3, 8](#); [1 Tim. 6:10](#).

**2. Paul labored at secular work.** He was a craftsman, a tentmaker (see [Acts 18:3](#)). There are five reasons why Paul labored at secular work, five of which are given here.

- To meet his own necessities ([Acts 20:34](#)).
- To help fellow ministers serving with him ([Acts 20:34](#)).
- To support the weak ([Acts 20:35](#)).
- To be more like Jesus ([Acts 20:35](#)). This is a saying of Jesus that is not recorded in the gospels, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Jesus of course gave to the ultimate...
  - coveting nothing of this world.
  - giving all He had to others.
  - sacrificing His own life for others.

Paul sought to be like His Lord, to be conformed to His image. For that reason, Paul labored at secular work when needed.

- Not to be chargeable to the believers nor to the churches. This reason is not mentioned in this passage, but it is in several others ([2 Cor. 11:9](#); [1 Thes. 2:9](#); [2 Thes. 3:8](#)). Paul meant at least two things by not being "chargeable" to any man, and these two things are powerful lessons for modern ministers of the gospel.

**First**, some unbelievers, and most unfortunately some carnal believers, were accusing Paul...

- of "coveting" a living from the churches.
- of seeking comfort and ease at the expense of believers and the churches.
- of receiving the offerings and stealing from them ([2 Cor. 1:17-18](#); [2 Cor. 8:20-22](#)).

By working at secular work and not accepting money from the churches, Paul was able to combat these charges and prove they were lies. Note: he also had representatives appointed by the churches to carry the church offerings to Jerusalem (see [Acts 20:4-6](#)).

**Second**, Paul wanted to be free and independent of the churches and believers. He did not want the congregation to feel as though he was their man, that he had to do their bidding. He wanted no restraint and no pressure put upon

his right to move about and minister and preach the gospel as he sensed the need.

⇒ He did not want any temptation whatsoever, any sense that he must cater to the desires and whims and fancies of the congregation, not unless they were truly of God.

**Thought 1.** Note four very significant points.

- 1) **Paul received financial support from some churches.** He did not always labor at secular work, not in every situation. He saw the value in being completely free from the burden of financial worries so that he could devote full time to the ministry. (See [Acts 18:3](#))
- 2) **The minister of the gospel has the right to receive his living from the churches.** In fact, Christ taught that the minister was definitely to be supported by the church. (See outline below—' [Matthew 10:9-10](#) and notes—' [Matthew 10:9-10](#) for more discussion and Scripture. This is an important passage, a passage that every minister and church should study, for it is our Lord's teaching.)

**([Matthew 10:9-10](#)) Ministers— Stewardship:** fourth, receive compensation. In financial matters Christ expected two things from His apostles and His people. First, His apostles and servants were not to spend their own money on the ministry; and second, His people were to adequately support His apostles and servants.

**"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" ([1 Cor. 9:14](#)).**

**"Let him that is taught in the word communicate [give] unto him that teacheth in all good things" ([Galatians 6:6](#)).**

**"Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction" ([Phil. 4:14](#)).**

**"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward" ([1 Tim. 5:17-18](#)).**

**Thought 1.** The apostles, God's servants, were forbidden to accumulate estates *through the ministry*. But they were not to spend their own money on the ministry. There were several reasons for this.

- 1) Their minds and hearts were to be centered on preaching the gospel and ministering to people, not on buying and selling and accumulating.
- 2) They were to trust God for their needs and by such example to teach dependence upon God ([Matthew 6:24-34](#)).
- 3) They were to teach and depend upon God's people to provide for them ([1 Cor. 9:13-14](#)).
- 4) They were to allow God's people the privilege of sharing in the ministry through their giving. God's people were to learn more and more trust by depending upon God to help them raise whatever funds they needed to support the ministers.



**Thought 2.** God's servant or laborer is worthy of being financially supported. In fact, Paul taught that God's servant was to be "counted worthy of double honor" (salary, compensation, financial support). (See " [1 Tim. 5:17-18](#); note, pt.2—" [1 Cor. 16:5-9](#); cp. [Luke 10:7](#); [Phil. 4:11-14](#).)

**Thought 3.** God's people were to support the Lord's apostles. The people were to allow the apostles to give their full time to the ministry and not be forced to labor in a secular job.

**3) There are great benefits in following Paul's example when practical.** Being financially free to minister as God directs without the influence of *carnal prejudices and fancies* would provide some clear advantages as pointed out above. However, every minister must always remember: there are some in every true church who walk ever so closely with the Lord, and have been doing so for years. God has given His vision for their church and their community to them. They have lacked only one thing—a Spirit-filled minister to help them. The minister needs to listen to these dear believers even if he is self-supporting.

**4) Every minister should be *laboring* so he can support the weak ([Acts 20:35](#)).** No matter where his income is coming from, he is to set the example for all others in giving to meet the needs of the desperate.

**"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" ([Acts 20:35](#)).**

**"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" ([Romans 15:1](#)).**

**"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" ([1 Thes. 5:14](#)).**

**5. ([Acts 20:36-38](#)) Conclusion: the conclusion of Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian elders is a touching scene, the kind of affection being expressed that every minister and teacher of the gospel would covet.**

Note: Paul was so gripped with emotion he fell to his knees and began to pray for these dear men of God. (The scene was most unusual, for it was the custom of Jews to stand when praying in public.)

The elders...

- wept deeply.
- fell on Paul's neck, embracing and kissing him repeatedly (Greek).
- were gripped with sorrow.
- accompanied him to the ship.



## • Names - Titles within the church.

### ▪ 1 Cor. 12:28

(1 Cor. 12:27-30) Church: each believer is a member of the body of Christ and has his own place in it. This point is forceful and emphatic.

- ⇒ "Ye are the body of Christ": collectively, we have the supreme privilege. We are the members of Christ, of His body, of the body of God's Son Himself.
- ⇒ "Members in particular": individually, each one of us is a member of Christ's body. Not a single believer is excluded, and no person is more a member than any other believer.

Paul illustrates the point by listing some of the gifts. He says two significant things.

**1.** God has set and gifted each member in the church. For example, consider these eight gifts.

- a.** **First**, God has set apostles in the church (see Deeper Study #1, Apostle—1 Cor. 12:28 for discussion).

#### DEEPER STUDY #1

(1 Cor. 12:28) Apostle (apostolos): to send out. An apostle is a representative, an ambassador, a person who is sent out into one country to represent another country. Three things are true of the apostle.

- ⇒ He belongs to the One who has sent him out.
  - ⇒ He is commissioned to be sent out.
  - ⇒ He possesses all the authority and power of the One who sends him out.
- The word "apostle" has both a narrow and a broad usage in the New Testament.

**1. The narrow sense.** It refers to the twelve apostles and to Paul as an apostle (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1). In this narrow sense there were at least two basic qualifications.

**a.** The apostle was a man chosen directly by the Lord Himself or by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 10:1-2; Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:13; Acts 9:6, 15; Acts 13:2; Acts 22:10, 14-15; Romans 1:1). He was a man who had either seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus.

**b.** The apostle was a man who had been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1).

**2. The broad sense.** The word "apostle" refers to other men who preached the gospel. It is used of two missionaries, Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14, 17) and Silas (1 Thes. 2:6); and two messengers, Titus (2 Cor. 8:23) and Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25). There is also a possibility that James, the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19) and Andronicus and Junia (Romans 16:7) are referred to as apostles.

In the narrow sense, the gift of an apostle was bound to die out because of the unique qualifications to receive the gift. But historically, in the broad sense, there is perhaps a sense in which the qualifications and gift itself are still given and used by the Lord. The Lord's servant of any generation must *see* the Lord and know Him intimately. Similarly the servant must personally *see and experience*

the power of the resurrection. Certainly there are some in every generation who have *seen* the Lord Jesus and who *know* and *experience* the power of the Lord's resurrection. Perhaps the Lord Jesus endues them with the very special gift of an apostle to be used throughout His most precious domain—the church.

**b. Second,** God has set prophets in the church (see note below, **Gifts—["1 Cor. 12:8-10](#) for discussion**).

**[\(1 Cor. 12:8-10\)](#) Gifts, Spiritual:** the list of the different gifts is given to show just how diverse the gifts of the Spirit really are. He can gift a person as He wills, and His gifts are many and varied. This list is only partial; other gifts are mentioned in other passages (see—**"[Romans 12:6-8](#); —"[Ephes. 4:11](#)**).

**1. There is the gift of the *word of wisdom* (*sophias logos* <sup>PWS: 4411</sup>).**

Wisdom means the wisdom of God; this is made clear by [1 Cor. 2:7](#). The wisdom of God is the truth which God has now revealed to man; it is the whole system of truth revealed by God—the truth about God and man and the world. Therefore, the word of wisdom is the gift to share the wisdom and truth of God with men—to share the truth in simple and understandable language.

**"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" ([Romans 11:33](#)).**

**"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" ([James 3:17](#)).**

**"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his" ([Daniel 2:20](#)).**

**2. There is the gift of the *word of knowledge* (*logos gnōseōs* <sup>PWS: 4408</sup>).**

This is practical knowledge. It is knowing what to do in the day-to-day situations that arise. It is knowing how to apply the wisdom that one has to daily living. It is being able to make practical application of truth to life. It does no good to know truth unless a person knows how to use the truth.

The *word of knowledge* is the gift to share with others how they should live; the ability to apply truth to their lives in day-to-day living; the ability to make practical application of truth to life.

**"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" ([John 7:16-17](#)).**

**"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" ([John 8:31-32](#)).**

**"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" ([Proverbs 2:3-5](#)).**

**"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" ([Proverbs 3:13](#)).**

**3. There is the gift of faith.** This is not the usual faith that we mean when we speak about saving faith. It is a very special gift of faith: a mustard seed faith, a strong faith, a powerful faith, a wonder-working faith, a special gift of faith that enables a believer to do great things for God and His people.

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" ([Matthew 17:20](#)).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" ([Mark 9:23](#)).

"And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith" ([Luke 17:5](#)).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" ([John 14:12](#)).

**4. There is the gift of healing.** This is a gift that has been minimized and de-emphasized for generations because of the charlatans and the abuses that too often surrounded it. All kinds of theories and doctrinal positions were held saying that the gift was only for the early church. However, as William Barclay so openly points out, it is a gift that is being rediscovered by the church. It is a gift that is definitely experienced and demonstrated in the lives of multitudes all over the world today (*The Letters to the Corinthians*, p.122f).

"And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" ([Matthew 10:1](#)).

"And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils" ([Mark 3:14-15](#)).

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" ([Mark 16:17-18](#)).

"To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit" ([1 Cor. 12:9](#)).

**5. There is the gift of the working of miracles.** This would refer to miracles other than that of healing which has just been discussed. There are times when circumstances and situations arise, and believers need a miraculous deliverance of some sort. Apparently, this is what the gift is. When it is in God's will for a storm to cease—for an enemy to be temporarily blinded, for a fire to be turned or put out, or for an innumerable number of threats against believers to be altered—God raises up some believer and gifts him to work the needed miracle. Examples of this gift would be Christ stilling the storm; Paul smiting Elymas with blindness ([Acts 13:11](#)); and Paul being delivered from a poisonous snake bite ([Acts 28:5](#)).

**6. There is the gift of prophecy.** This is the gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit. It includes both prediction and proclamation, and neither one should be minimized despite the abuse of the gift.

There is no question, the gift to predict events has been abused to the point of the ridiculous. However, the abuse of a gift does not eliminate the fact that the Spirit of God sometimes gives believers a glimpse into coming events in order to prepare and strengthen them to face the events.

However, the major function of prophecy is clearly stated by Scripture, and the fact should be learned by all believers:

**"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).**

**7. There is the gift of *discerning of spirits*.** This is a gift that is desperately needed by believers in every generation, for there are always false prophets and teachers in their midst. In reality, some measure of the gift is needed by every believer in order to keep from being led astray.

**"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).**

**"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. 11:13-15).**

**"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thes. 5:20-21).**

**"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:1-2).**

**"[Men] having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5).**

**8. There is the gift of *tongues*.** This is the gift of an ecstatic or deeply emotional speech. It has always been greatly coveted by people familiar with the gift because it brings a person into a deep sense of God's presence. What is the language spoken?

- ⇒ Some say it is in no known language.
- ⇒ Others say it is in some foreign language unknown to the speaker.
- ⇒ Still others say it is a heavenly language.

This is an illustration of how the Holy Spirit gifts people differently in order to meet the needs of the person and local situation.

Again, this is a gift that has been abused so drastically and tragically that much of Christendom has shied away from the gift. However, the gift is dramatically sweeping the world just as the gift of healing is. It should be noted that it is the gift that was being so abused and causing so much havoc in the Corinthian church. **(The gift of tongues is covered in detail in 1 Cor. 14. See outline—'1 Cor. 14:1-40 and notes—'1 Cor. 14:1-40 for more discussion.)**

**The Gift of Tongues Contrasted with Prophecy, 14:1-25**

**(1 Cor. 14:1-25) Introduction:** remember that 1 Cor. 12 through 1 Cor. 14 are dealing with the spiritual gifts which God gives to His followers for the

work of the ministry. Believers are gifted to minister and to help people in their desperate need for life, both life abundant and life eternal. However, when men focus upon their gifts and abilities, the problems of pride, arrogance, superiority, and super-spirituality always arise. There are always some people who feel that their gifts and abilities make them better and more favored and privileged than others. This is exactly what happened to the Corinthian church, and it is what has happened to multitudes of believers since that day. The gift of tongues is especially subject to pride and super-spirituality because it involves a static and heavenly utterance as opposed to ordinary human language.

The point is this: the gift of tongues (and all other gifts) is just one of many gifts. Each gift has its place in fulfilling the mission of the Lord and each must be used effectively in reaching the world for Christ and in ministering to the needs of people. The present passage is a contrast of the gift of tongues with prophecy.

- [1. Gifts are to be coveted—especially prophecy \(v.1\).](#)
- [2. The difference between tongues and prophecy \(v.2-5\).](#)
- [3. The problem with tongues \(v.6-14\).](#)
- [4. The gift of tongues and Paul's personal worship \(v.15-20\).](#)
- [5. The purpose of tongues and prophecy \(v.21-25\).](#)

**[1. \(1 Cor. 14:1\) Gifts, Spiritual— Prophecy: gifts are to be coveted, especially prophecy.](#)** Note two points.

**1. Love is to be pursued above all else in life.** Gifts, abilities, and service are important; but they pale into insignificance in comparison with love. Love is the greatest need and the supreme answer to all the needs of men. It is when we love a person that we meet the needs of a person. In fact, if we truly love a person, then we will do all we can to meet all the needs of that person.

⇒ The word "follow" (*diōkete* <sup>PWS: 1543</sup>) means to pursue, to persist, to continue on and on, never giving up until love is possessed.

**2. Spiritual gifts are to be desired.** We are to pursue love first, but this does not mean we are not to seek the spiritual gifts of God. On the contrary, the more we love God and men, the more we covet the gifts of God so that we can minister and help the world of men more effectively.

⇒ The word "desire" (*zēloute* <sup>PWS: 969</sup>) means to covet earnestly; to be zealous and ambitious for.

**[2. \(1 Cor. 14:2-5\) Tongues, Gift of— Prophecy: the difference between tongues and prophecy.](#)** Remember that the gift of tongues is the gift that is so subject to pride and super-spirituality because of its unearthly or heavenly nature. However, its true importance is shown by contrasting it with the gift of prophecy. The differences between tongues and prophecy are immediately said to be threefold.

**1. Tongues are addressed to God, whereas prophecy is addressed to men (1 Cor. 14:2-3).** Very simply stated, Scripture declares that tongues do not edify or benefit men as much as prophecy. There are reasons for this.

**a. Tongues are directed toward God;** they are for God, for communion with Him, for sharing the mysteries (secret things) of God with God.

**b. Tongues are not understood by men.** Scripture is clear: "no man understands," that is, hears, gets the sense, grasps the meaning of what is being said.

**c. The believer who prophesies edifies, exhorts, and comforts men** (see below [Deeper Study #1, Prophecy—1 Cor. 14:3](#)).

**Thought 1.** Note the importance being laid upon proclaiming the message of the gospel in understandable terms. Men can be reached and helped only as they can understand the message of believers. The point is clear: the primary message upon our lips must be the gospel, and it must be understandable to all men.

**2. Tongues edify self, whereas prophecy edifies the church (1 Cor. 14:4).** The point is clear: tongues are useful; they edify self. But prophecy is of much more benefit. The believer who prophesies edifies the *whole* church; he builds up far more people. Note something else as well: the gift of tongues is focused upon self-edification, but the gift of prophecy is focused upon the ministry, upon the edification of others. Self-edification is, of course, important; but the ministry of edifying others is far more important.

**3. Tongues are commendable, but prophecy is more commendable.** This is a verse that needs to be given close attention both by those who emphasize and by those who minimize and deny tongues.

⇒ Paul would like for all to speak with tongues.

⇒ But it is far more important for all to prophecy and proclaim the gospel.

⇒ The prophet is far more important than the man who speaks in tongues unless the tongues are interpreted.

Again, note that the stress is edification. The purpose for the believer speaking in worship must be to edify the church. (See below [Deeper Study #1, Prophecy—1 Cor. 14:3](#) for verses on edification.)

**3. (1 Cor. 14:6-14) Tongues, Gift of: the problem with tongues.** There are two specific problems with tongues that are discussed in these nine verses.

**1. The first problem:** tongues do not communicate in the church, not apart from some other gift (interpretation, 1 Cor. 14:13). Paul illustrated the fact with several illustrations.

**a. Paul himself, if he were to visit the church, would not speak with tongues.** Why? Because his speaking in a tongue would not profit us. We would not be able to understand what he was saying. His visit and proclamation would do us no good. The only way his visit and words would help us would be if he shared...

- some revelation.
- some knowledge.
- some prophesying.
- some teaching.



**b. Musical instruments also illustrate the fact.** Pipes (Greek, [aulos](#) <sup>PWS: 2939</sup>, wind instruments) and harps (Greek, [kithara](#) <sup>PWS: 1873</sup>, string instruments) must have a distinctive sound or else their sound is meaningless, confused, and nonsense—just not understood. Musical instruments must communicate or else the music is unknown and fails to inspire the listeners.

**c. A military trumpet illustrates the point.** When the soldier blows the trumpet, he must communicate or else the army is unprepared for the battle.

**d.** A person's own speech is a fourth illustration. A person must speak words that are understood or else the listeners do not know what he is saying. He is doing nothing more than speaking into the air.

**e. Different foreign languages are a fifth illustration.** Very simply, there are many different voices (languages) in the world, and each language has its own distinct speech. If a foreigner speaks to men and I do not understand what he is saying...

- I am as a barbarian, that is, as a dumb and senseless man to him.
- he is as a barbarian, that is, as a dumb and senseless man to me.

He is of no use to me, not in sharing and communicating the gospel. What he has to say is meaningless, unintelligible, unprofitable, and of no value. It does not reach or edify, strengthen or comfort me.

**f.** The point is striking: the believer who is zealous of spiritual gifts is to seek for the gifts that edify the church. Note: a believer's zeal is not to be dampened even if he has been misinformed and emphasizes the wrong gift. He is to straighten out his emphasis, keep his zeal, and direct his energy to edifying the church. The important gifts are those that build up people for Christ.

**"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor. 9:24).**

**"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12:31).**

**"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy" (1 Cor. 14:1).**

**"Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" (1 Cor. 14:12).**

**"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).**

**"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6).**

**"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev. 3:19).**

**2. The second problem:** tongues do not communicate even in prayer, not apart from some other gift (interpretation). Paul definitely says one can pray in a tongue. The idea seems to be a tongue of "ecstasy" ([1 Cor. 14:2](#), Williams) or of some "strange language" ([1 Cor. 14:2](#), Beck).

The speaking in tongues in Acts seems to be the speaking of foreign languages. But the speaking in tongues in [1 Cor. 14](#) is an ecstatic utterance. An



objective and thorough study of [1 Cor. 12-14](#) shows this. Some of the passages have to be really strained to make them apply to foreign languages (or to a learned and conditioned reflex as claimed by some interpreters). Several examples are as follows.

**"Tongues speaketh not unto men, but unto God...in the spirit he speaketh mysteries" ([1 Cor. 14:2](#)).**

**"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself" ([1 Cor. 14:4](#)).**

**"If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth...." ([1 Cor. 14:14](#)).**

**Paul says, "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all: yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding" ([1 Cor. 14:18-19](#)).**

The point is an eye-opener: even if a believer prays in an unknown tongue, it is unfruitful unless he has the gift of interpretation. He has no idea what he is praying unless there is the gift of interpretation. His prayer is unfruitful and meaningless.

**[4. \(1 Cor. 14:15-20\) Tongues, Gift of— Paul: Paul's own personal worship and use of tongues is covered in these six verses.](#)** He says three distinct things.

**1. Paul worships by praying and singing both with the spirit and with the understanding ([1 Cor. 14:15-17](#)).** Note a crucial point throughout this passage: Paul is not denying or forbidding the exercise of the gift of tongues. He is *insisting* on the proper use of the gifts. He says that he himself will do it "with the understanding also."

The stress is that he does not pray or sing without understanding what he is praying and singing. He gives two reasons for this.

**a. He wishes others to understand** and to confirm what he prays and sings ([1 Cor. 14:16](#)). The illustration is pointed. If you bless God with the spirit (that is, with a tongue), how shall the unlearned (those who do not understand tongues) say "Amen," that is, confirm what you say? Agreeing and sharing in your prayer and praise is impossible, for no one understands what you are saying.

**b. He wishes others to be edified ([1 Cor. 14:17](#)).** The giving of thanks and prayer are not wrong; in fact, they are good. But if they are done in a tongue, others are not edified.

**2. Paul speaks in tongues often, but in the church he always uses another gift ([1 Cor. 14:18-19](#)).** Nothing could be any clearer about Paul's practice of tongues than this verse:

⇒ Paul had the gift of tongues and used the gift more than "ye all."

⇒ However, in church, he would rather speak five clearly understood words than ten thousand words in a tongue. To the honest and open reader, Paul's point is clear: in the church, he used other gifts to worship and proclaim the gospel. He used his gift of tongues in private worship.

**3. Paul urges one thing: understanding and edification.** This is a strong imperative, a forceful statement: "Be not children in understanding:

howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." It seems as though "tongues" had so divided the Corinthian church that bitterness and malice had become quite a problem between some. Some of the believers just did not understand the gifts, their importance and purpose. Therefore, they were acting like children, stricken with the different, emotional, and spectacular experience. They desperately needed to understand the gifts and their proper place in the believer's life. One thing was certain: there was to be no place for divisiveness over the gifts. There was to be only love and mature understanding. Believers are to be as mature men and women, not as children.

**"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor. 3:1-2).**

**"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor. 13:11).**

**"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men" (1 Cor. 14:20).**

**"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: 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" (Ephes. 4:13-14).**

**"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat....But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:12, 14).**

**"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).**

**"I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14).**

## **5. (1 Cor. 14:21-25) Tongues, Gift of— Prophecy: the purpose of tongues and prophecy.** Three points are discussed.

**1. Tongues are a sign to warn unbelievers; prophecy is a gift to edify believers.** The Old Testament passage quoted is **Isaiah 28:11-12**. The meaning seems to be a promise that God will bear witness to unbelieving Israel through many tongues (languages), yet they will still not hear Him.

Paul seems to be saying several things here.

**a. Tongues are foreign languages,** although they are often experienced in an ecstatic moment and may not be understood by the speaker himself.

**b. Tongues are a sign to warn unbelievers.** How can this verse be reconciled with the fact that tongues are said to be primarily for personal edification ([1 Cor. 14:2, 4, 17](#)) and prophecy is said to be primarily for public edification and witness ([1 Cor. 14:24-25](#))? The answer is probably twofold.

⇒ Unbelievers clearly see the hand of God when a foreign believer is suddenly and miraculously given the ability to witness to them in their own native language. Such was definitely the case at Pentecost ([Acts 2:6-13](#)).

⇒ The believer who speaks in tongues has an exciting and exhilarating experience while in his prayer closet. This exciting experience enables him to become the kind of witness he ought to be for the Lord Jesus Christ. His gift of tongues edifies him personally, and he is quickened with a new fervor to warn the unbeliever of pending judgment. [1 Cor. 14:21, 23](#), and the whole context point toward this meaning. One thing is certain: God knows what every child of His needs to make that child the witness he ought to be. He knows what experience and what gifts are needed—and He always provides these experiences and gifts.

Prophecy is primarily for believers, for their edification, strengthening, and comfort (see below [Deeper Study #1, Prophecy—1 Cor. 14:3](#) for more discussion).

**2. Tongues within the church confuse and harden unbelievers.** The point is clearly seen: tongues without interpretation cause a person to appear insane. The tongue speaker seems to be babbling just like an insane person does. Tongues (the ecstatic gift) are not to be used to reach people within the church.

**3. Prophecy within the church convicts unbelievers.** This is a great passage on the effect of preaching upon unbelievers. Note that although prophecy is primarily for believers and their edification, it is used by God to reach the lost as well. (See below [Deeper Study #1, Prophecy—1 Cor. 14:3](#) for discussion.)

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" ([Acts 2:37](#)).

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" ([Acts 24:25](#)).

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" ([Isaiah 66:2](#)).

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" ([Luke 12:2](#)).

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" ([Eccles. 12:14](#)).

### [DEEPER STUDY #1 \(1 Cor. 14:3\) Prophecy](#)

#### DEEPER STUDY #1

[\(1 Cor. 14:3\) Prophecy](#) (*prophēteuōn*<sup>PWS: 3062</sup>): this is the gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit. In the Bible it includes both

*prediction and proclamation*, and neither one should be minimized despite the abuse of the gift. There is no question...

- the gift to predict events has been abused to the point of the ridiculous. However, the abuse of the gift does not eliminate the fact that the Spirit of God does sometimes give believers a glimpse into coming events in order to prepare and strengthen them to face the events.

- the gift to proclaim the gospel has been abused to the point that most people's understanding of the gospel is tragically warped. However, the abuse of the gospel by both the false and immature prophets (ministers) does not eliminate the fact that God does call some men to proclaim His Word.

The New Testament clearly states the purpose of prophecy in this verse: "he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" ([1 Cor. 14:3](#)).

**1. Edification (*oikodomēn* <sup>PWS: 1229</sup>)** means to build up. It is a construction word referring to constructing some building. The first purpose of prophecy is to build up people.

**"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" ([Romans 14:19](#)).**

**"Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification" ([Romans 15:2](#)).**

**"...knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth" ([1 Cor. 8:1](#)).**

**"...let all things be done unto edifying" ([1 Cor. 14:26](#)).**

**"Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying" ([2 Cor. 12:19](#)).**

**"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:11-12](#)).**

**"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" ([Ephes. 4:29](#)).**

**2. Exhortation (*parakiesin*)** means to strengthen, to encourage, to call to the side of. The second purpose of prophecy is to strengthen and encourage people by calling them to the side of God.

**"And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people" ([Luke 3:18](#)).**

**"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" ([Acts 2:40](#)).**

**"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" ([Acts 11:23](#)).**

**"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" ([Acts 14:22](#)).**

"And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them" ([Acts 15:32](#)).

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" ([1 Thes. 5:14](#)).

"Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" ([2 Thes. 3:12](#)).

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men" ([1 Tim. 2:1](#)).

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" ([1 Tim. 4:13](#)).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" ([Titus 1:9](#)).

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" ([Titus 2:15](#)).

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" ([Hebrews 3:13](#)).

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

"And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words" ([Hebrews 13:22](#)).

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" ([1 Peter 5:1](#)).

**3. Comfort (paramuthian <sup>PWS: 631</sup>)** means to give strength and hope to, to ease the grief or trouble of someone. It has the idea of comforting through the most severe experiences of life, for example, through death (cp. [John 11:19, 31](#)). The third purpose of prophecy is to comfort people as they walk through life.

"So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" ([2 Cor. 2:7](#)).

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do" ([1 Thes. 5:11](#)).

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" ([1 Thes. 5:14](#)).

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God" ([Isaiah 40:1](#)).

9. **There is the gift of the *interpretation of tongues*.** This is simply what it says: the Spirit of God gifts some believers to interpret the tongue.

- c. **Third**, God has set teachers in the church. The gift of teaching is the gift to instruct believers in the truth of God and His Word. It is the gift to root and ground people in doctrine, reproof, correction, and righteousness.
- d. **There** was also the gift of miracles (see note above—"[1 Cor. 12:8-10](#) for discussion).
- e. **There** was the gift of healing (see note above—"[1 Cor. 12:8-10](#) for discussion).
- f. **There** was the gift of helps. This is the gift that does just what it says: helps people. We all know some persons who are always ready to jump to help people—always available and ready to offer a helping hand. These are particularly directed to help the needy, for example, the widows or widowers, orphans, disabled, shut-ins, and poor.
- g. **There** was the gift of governments or administration. The Greek word is descriptive (*kubernēseis* <sup>PWS: 1770</sup>). It refers to the pilot of a ship, the person who steers the ship through the dangerous channels of the oceans. The church, of course, needs such persons who can give it direction as it moves along on its journey to reach the destination God has appointed for it.
- h. **There** was the gift of different tongues (see note above—"[1 Cor. 12:8-10](#) for discussion).

2. The point to note is that all members do not have the same gift.

- ⇒ Are all apostles?
- ⇒ Are all prophets?
- ⇒ Are all teachers?
- ⇒ Are all workers of miracles?
- ⇒ Do all have the gifts of healing?
- ⇒ Do all speak with tongues?
- ⇒ Do all interpret tongues?

The answer is obvious. No! God has not gifted all believers with the same gift.

**"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey" ([Matthew 25:15](#)).**

**"But all these [gifts] worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" ([1 Cor. 12:11](#)).**

**"[Gifts are given] for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:12](#)).**

## • **Apostle.** § **Ephesians 4:11**

**(Ephesians 4:11) Gifts, Spiritual:** every believer's gift is Christ-centered. Note the words, "**He gave.**" It is Christ and Christ alone who gives spiritual gifts to men. Men cannot work up the gifts, nor give the gifts to other men. Christ alone possesses the spiritual gifts to give to men. Five gifts are mentioned here.

**1. The gift of an *apostle*.** The word "**apostle**" (*apostolos*) means to send out. An apostle is a representative, an ambassador, a person who is sent out into one country to represent another country. Three things are true of the apostle.

- ⇒ He belongs to the One who has sent him out.
- ⇒ He is commissioned to be sent out.
- ⇒ He possesses all the authority and power of the One who sends him out.

The word "apostle" has both a narrow and a broad usage in the New Testament.

**a. The narrow sense.** It refers to the twelve apostles and to Paul as an apostle (**Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1**). In this narrow sense there were at least two basic qualifications.

- 1) The apostle was a man chosen directly by the Lord Himself or by the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 10:1-2; Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:13; Acts 9:6, 15; Acts 13:2; Acts 22:10, 14-15; Romans 1:1**). He was a man who had either seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus.
- 2) The apostle was a man who had been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord (**Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1**).

**b. The broad sense.** The word "apostle" refers to other men who preached the gospel. It is used of two missionaries, Barnabas (**Acts 14:4, 14, 17**) and Silas (**1 Thes. 2:6**); and two messengers, Titus (**2 Cor. 8:23**) and Epaphroditus (**Phil. 2:25**). There is also a possibility that James, the Lord's brother (**Galatians 1:19**) and Andronicus and Junia (**Romans 16:7**) are referred to as apostles.

In the narrow sense, the gift of an apostle was bound to die out because of the unique qualifications to receive the gift. But historically, in the broad sense, there is perhaps a sense in which the qualifications and gift itself are still given and used by the Lord. The Lord's servant of any generation must *see* the Lord and know Him intimately. Similarly, the servant must personally *see and experience* the power of the resurrection. Certainly there are some in every generation who have *seen* the Lord Jesus and who *know and experience* the power of the Lord's resurrection. Perhaps the Lord Jesus endues them with the very special gift of an apostle to be used throughout His most precious domain—the church.



# Bishop.

## 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

### The Overseers of the Church, 1 Tim. 3:1-7

(1 Tim. 3:1-7) Introduction: the office of *bishop* is probably the same office as elder or presbyter or minister in the New Testament. All three words refer to the same person, to the minister of the gospel and of the church (see below Deeper Study #1, Elder—Titus 1:5-9 for discussion). What are the qualifications of the minister? Who should be preaching the gospel and filling the pulpits of the Lord's church? Who should be considering the ministry—what kind of person? The importance of this passage cannot be overstressed when it comes to the building and protection of God's church and people.

1. The office of minister or bishop (v.1).
2. Personal qualifications (v.2-3).
3. Family qualifications: the minister or bishop must rule his own home (v.4-5).
4. Spiritual qualifications (v.6).
5. Community qualifications (v.7).

### DEEPER STUDY #1

(Titus 1:5-9) Elder— Bishop: note the term elder (*presbuteros* <sup>PWS: 1236</sup>) and bishop (*episkopos*) are used interchangeably in this passage (Titus 1:5, 7). (See outline below—' 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and notes—' 1 Tim. 3:1-7 for more discussion.) The elder or bishop was probably the same office as the pastor-teacher or minister of a church. The gift of pastor-teacher refers to only one gift which is given to the same person (Ephes. 4:11). The focus of the gift is to *pastor*, *oversee*, and *shepherd* believers in the local church. William Barclay points out that elder was more of a Jewish name and bishop was more of a Greek name, each referring to the same *office* (**The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.80-81**). The word *elder* was used to refer to the man, to his standing, to his years of faithfulness and service. The word *bishop* (*episkopos—overseer*) and the gift *pastor-teacher* were used to refer to the man's duties and his work of overseeing and supervising the church. In comparison, a man today is often called minister, pastor, preacher, or reverend. Usually reverend is used to refer to the man personally and minister, pastor, or preacher is used to refer to the man's functions.

The pastoral gift is the gift that is directly ascribed to the Lord Jesus. He called Himself the Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14). Others called Him the Great Shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 13:20), the Shepherd of men's souls (1 Peter 2:25), and the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). The pastoral gift is an ordained office; the elder is the basic office of the church.

- Elders are called and set apart by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28; Acts 13:2).
- Elders are ordained officers (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).
- Elders shepherd and oversee the flock of God (Acts 20:28-29; 1 Peter 5:2-3).

4. Elders are to guard and preach the Word ([Titus 1:9](#)).
5. Elders have a healing ministry through prayers and the anointing with oil ([James 5:14](#)).
6. Elders took a leading part in the decisions of the Jerusalem Council. They are identified along with the apostles as the chief authorities of the church ([Acts 15:2](#); [Acts 16:4](#)).
7. Elders are the ones to whom Paul reports when returning from his third missionary journey, and they are the ones who advise him how to combat the Judaizers ([Acts 21:18-25](#)).
8. Elders are the ones to whom Paul delivers the offering that had been taken for the Jerusalem Church during the great famine ([Acts 11:30](#)).

**1. (1 Tim. 3:1) Minister— Bishop— Elder: the office of minister or bishop is a "good work."** The word "good" (*kalou* <sup>PWS:1743</sup>) means honorable, excellent, beneficial, productive. Note that the position of the ministry is not what is stressed, but the work of the ministry. The emphasis is not the esteem and honor of the profession. The emphasis is upon the work of the ministry. It is the work that is honorable, excellent, beneficial, and productive. The work of the ministry is a "good work."

**Note another fact:** the office of minister or bishop is to be desired. The word "desire" means to seek after with a strong desire; to set one's heart upon. God stirs some hearts to seek the ministry and to dedicate their lives to the work of the ministry.

**Thought 1.** When a person is stirred to commit his life to the ministry, he must say "yes" to the Spirit of God. To say "no" to God's call is to reject God and to miss one's calling and life. It is to miss one's very purpose for being on earth.

**"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" ([John 15:16](#)).**

**"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way" ([1 Cor. 12:31](#)).**

**"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy [proclaim the Word of God]" ([1 Cor. 14:1](#)).**

**"Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" ([1 Cor. 14:12](#)).**

**"And he gave [called and appointed] some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:11-12](#)).**

**2. (1 Tim. 3:2-3) Minister— Bishop— Elder: the minister or bishop of God must be qualified; he must meet some personal qualifications; he must be a person of great Christian character.**

1. The minister or bishop must be "blameless" (*anepilēmpton* <sup>PWS: 390</sup>): above reproach; not open to attack; not able to be criticized by the enemy at all (*The Pulpit Commentary*, Vol.21, p.50). He must be completely blameless.

2. The minister or bishop must be "the husband of one wife." From the earliest times of church history, this qualification has been interpreted differently. Some have held...

- that the bishop or minister must have a wife; he must be married to be a minister.
- that the bishop or minister must never have more than one wife; he must never marry again, even if his wife died. This position holds that second marriages are completely forbidden.
- that the bishop must not have more than one wife at a time. (Remember: polygamy was the common practice of society when the church was first born).
- that a bishop must live a life of strict morality; he "must be a loyal husband, preserving marriage in all its purity" (**William Barclay, The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.87**).

**Thought 1.** Every minister, believer, and church must go before the Lord and seek the meaning of this qualification for him or herself. But we must be honest and open to hear the Lord and then beg of Him the courage and discipline to do what He says. This is an absolute essential for all who are believers, for nothing is any more traumatic than the loss of a spouse through death or separation and divorce. And if there is ever a time that we must reach out and minister to our brothers and sisters, it is when they lose their spouses.

The point is this: should a minister or bishop be allowed to serve as a minister if he has had more than one wife, either through death or divorce? The Pulpit Commentary has an excellent comment on this point:

*"If we consider the general laxity in regard to marriage, and the facility of divorce, which prevailed among Jews and Romans at this time, it must have been a common thing for a man to have more than one woman living who had been his wife. And this [was] a distinct breach of the primeval law (Genesis ii.24), [and] would properly be a bar to any one being called to the 'office of a bishop'....It is utterly unsupported by any single passage in Scripture that a second marriage should disqualify a man for the sacred ministry. As regards the opinion of the early Church, it was not at all uniform, and amongst those who held that this passage absolutely prohibits second marriages in the case of a [bishop], it was merely a part of the asceticism of the day" (Vol.21, p.51).*

A.T. Robertson very simply says, "Of one wife [*mias gunaikos*]. One at a time, clearly" (**Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol.4, p.572**).

William Barclay says, "In its context here we can be quite certain that this means that the Christian leader must be a loyal husband, preserving marriage in all its purity" (**The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.87**).

Thompson Chain Reference Bible, in listing its subjects, simply says "Polygamy Forbidden."

"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" ([Matthew 19:4-6](#)).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).

"If any be blameless, the husband of one wife" ([Titus 1:6](#)).

"Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" ([Deut. 17:17](#)).

**3. The minister or bishop must be vigilant (*nēphalion* <sup>PWS: 4220</sup>):** temperate, self-controlled, and watchful. He must be vigilant, watch over, and control his own life and the lives of his dear people.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" ([Matthew 26:41](#)).

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" ([Acts 20:31](#)).

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" ([1 Cor. 10:12](#)).

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" ([1 Cor. 16:13](#)).

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" ([1 Peter 5:8](#)).

**4. The minister or bishop must be "sober" (*sōphrona* <sup>PWS: 3633</sup>):** be sober-minded, that is, to have a mind that is sound, sensible, controlled, disciplined, and chaste—a mind that has complete control over all sensual desires. Note: if the mind is controlled, a person's whole life—his body and behavior—is controlled. He lives a sober life.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the

breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" ([1 Thes. 5:6-8](#)).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).

"Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" ([1 Tim. 3:11](#)).

"[A bishop must be] a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" ([Titus 1:8](#)).

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience....To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" ([Titus 2:2, 5](#)).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" ([Titus 2:11-13](#)).

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" ([1 Peter 4:7](#)).

**5. The minister or bishop must be of "good behavior" (*kosmion* <sup>PWS: 1747</sup>):** well-behaved, orderly, composed, solid, and honest. It is a person who has good conduct, whose character and behavior stands as the ideal and pattern for others.

"[Love] doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil" ([1 Cor. 13:5](#)).

"That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" ([Phil. 1:10](#)).

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you" ([2 Thes. 3:6-7](#)).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).

"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things" ([Titus 2:3](#)).

**6. The minister or bishop must be given to "hospitality" (*philoxenon* <sup>PWS: 2016</sup>):** to have an open heart and home; "showing love or being a friend to the believers, especially strangers or foreigners" (Amplified New Testament). The minister helps and entertains as much as he can. He does not open his heart, home, time, or money to the things of the world; but he uses what resources he has to help and minister to people.

**"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" ([Romans 12:13](#)).**

**"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).**

**"Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work" ([1 Tim. 5:10](#)).**

**"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" ([Titus 1:8](#)).**

**"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" ([Hebrews 13:2](#)).**

**"Use hospitality one to another without grudging" ([1 Peter 4:9](#)).**

**7. The minister or bishop must be "apt to teach":** able, capable, skillful, and qualified to teach. William Barclay has such an excellent comment on this point that he must be quoted:

*"It has been said that the duty of the Christian leader is 'to preach to the unconverted and to teach the converted.' There are two things to be said about this. It is one of the disasters of modern times that the teaching ministry of the Church has not been exercised as it should be. There is any amount of topical preaching; there is any amount of exhortation; but there is little use in exhorting a man to be a Christian when he does not know what being a Christian means. Instruction is a primary duty of the Christian preacher and leader. But the second thing is this. The finest and the most effective teaching is not done by speaking, but by being. Our ultimate duty is not to talk to men about Christ, but to show men Christ. Even the man with no gift of words can teach by living in such a way that in him men see the reflection of the Master. A saint has been defined as someone 'in whom Christ lives again'" (**The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.95**).*

Matthew Henry also has an excellent comment:

*"This is a preaching bishop whom Paul describes, one who is both able and willing to communicate to others the knowledge which God has given him, one who is fit to teach and ready to take all opportunities of giving instruction, who is himself well instructed in the things of the kingdom of heaven, and is communicative of what he knows to others" (**Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol.5, p.815**).*

**"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" ([Matthew 28:20](#)).**

**"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).**



"These things command and teach" ([1 Tim. 4:11](#)).

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" ([2 Tim. 2:25](#)).

**Thought 1.** Note: the minister must be rooted and grounded in the Word of God in order to teach.

**8. The minister or bishop must not be given to wine:** not be a drunkard; not sit around drinking all the time. In order to justify their right to drink, some argue that drinking wine was a common practice in the ancient world even among true Christian believers. However, we must always remember what William Barclay so forcefully points out about the ancient world:

- ⇒ **First**, the water supply was often inadequate and dangerous.
- ⇒ **Second**, "although the ancient world used wine as the commonest of all drinks it used it most abstemiously. When wine was drunk, it was drunk in the proportion of two parts of wine to three parts of water. A man who was drunken would be disgraced in ordinary heathen society, let alone in the Church" (**The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.91**).
- ⇒ Oliver B. Greene pointedly says:

*"All believers should abstain from strong drink in any form, but especially should a bishop observe this admonition. Concerning wine, Paul's instruction to a bishop is very clear. He is not to participate in such practice. Greek scholars tell us that the word used here implies 'sitting over wine,' habitually drinking wine, as the people did in that day—even those who professed to be very religious. Not only for his own sake should a bishop abstain from the use of wine, but also for the sake of other believers"* (**The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy and Titus. Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, 1964, p.114**).

"For he [John the Baptist] shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" ([Luke 1:15](#)).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" ([Romans 14:21](#)).

"Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations" ([Leviticus 10:9](#)).

"He [the Nazirite] shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried" ([Numbers 6:3](#)).

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright" ([Proverbs 23:31](#)).

"It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink" ([Proverbs 31:4](#)).



"But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever" ([Jeremiah 35:6](#)).

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" ([Daniel 1:8](#)).

**9. The minister or bishop must not be a "striker"** (*mē plēktēn* <sup>PWS: 2671</sup>): not combative or violent, not contentious or quarrelsome, not a person who strikes out and contends with another person. The minister must not be a person who strikes other people or who becomes easily upset, irritated, or aggravated with others. He uses neither hand nor tongue against anyone. On the contrary he is kind, gentle, and longsuffering with others.

**Thought 1.** Note: the tongue can be used to strike out at a person as easily as the hand or fist. Many a person has been hurt and damaged by the poisonous venom of a striking tongue.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" ([Phil. 2:3-4](#)).

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" ([2 Tim. 2:14](#)).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" ([2 Tim. 2:24](#)).

"Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm" ([Proverbs 3:30](#)).

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with" ([Proverbs 17:14](#)).

"It is an honor for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling" ([Proverbs 20:3](#)).

**10. The minister or bishop must not be a lover of worldly gain or possessions.** (This is the meaning of filthy lucre.) The minister must be a person who has given all he is and has (money) to minister to people. He must not be a person who has entered the ministry as a profession or as a livelihood. He *must be supported* and given a livelihood by the church *but he is not* to be in the ministry in order to get a livelihood. He must not be a person who is *out to get*, but a person who is *committed to giving*. He must live of the gospel—God's people must support him so that he can preach the gospel—but he must be dead to the *love of money* and material possessions. He must give all that he is and has to the cause of Christ—to meet the dire needs of the desperate and dying men, women, and children of this earth. Remember: the following warnings were written to professing Christians.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" ([1 Tim. 6:10](#)).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust [storing, banking] of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" ([James 5:3](#)).

**11. The minister or bishop must be "patient" (*epieikē*<sup>PWS: 2852</sup>):** gracious, kind, gentle, forbearing, reasonable, soft, and tender. The word goes beyond treating someone with justice: it treats a person graciously and tenderly. It reaches beyond justice and touches the person with a gentle hand. (See note below, Gentleness—" [Phil. 4:5](#) for more discussion.)

"But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children" ([1 Thes. 2:7](#)).

"Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous" ([1 Tim. 3:3](#)).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" ([2 Tim. 2:24](#)).

"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" ([Titus 3:2](#)).

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" ([James 3:17](#)).

#### DEEPER STUDY Gentleness—" [Phil. 4:5](#)

(Phil. 4:5) Moderation—Gentleness: the fourth step to peace is a strong gentleness. The word "moderation" (*epieikēs*) is a difficult word to translate into English. It is translated by others as gentleness, forbearance, reasonableness, consideration, agreeableness, courtesy, patience, and softness. There is a tendency to say that either forbearance or gentleness is the better translation. Barclay says that the word has the idea of justice in it, but that the meaning goes beyond and claims that there is *something better than justice*—a gracious gentleness.

**1.** Believers are to be gentle and forbearing in dealing with unbelievers. Note the phrase, "all men." The exhortation not only deals with believers within the church, but with unbelievers. Barclay makes an excellent exposition of this point:

*"The Christian, as Paul sees it, is the man who knows that for him there is something beyond justice. When the woman taken in adultery was brought before Him, Jesus could have applied the letter of the Law, and she should, according to it, have been stoned; but He went beyond justice. As far as justice goes, there is not one of us who deserves anything but the condemnation of God, but God goes far beyond justice. Paul lays it down that the mark of a Christian in his personal relationships with his fellow-men must be that he knows when, and when not, to*

*insist on justice, and that he always remembers that there is something which is beyond justice, and which makes a man like God" (The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, p.94.)*

**Thought 1.** The point is well-taken: we must be gentle and forbearing in dealing with unbelievers. The last thing we must do is criticize, condemn, censor, neglect, and ignore unbelievers. We must reach out to the world with the gospel and treat them with a *loving gentleness*. We must be gentle, having absolutely nothing to do with harshness. Too many of us are harsh and critical or neglectful and withdrawn. Too many of us are wrapped in the cloak of religion having nothing to do with reaching out to the lost. The desperate need of the hour is for us to reach out with the gospel in a spirit of *love* and *gentleness*.

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" ([Ephes. 4:2](#)).

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" ([Col. 3:13](#)).

"But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children" ([1 Thes. 2:7](#)).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" ([2 Tim. 2:24](#)).

"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" ([Titus 3:2](#)).

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" ([James 3:17](#)).

2. The reason we must be gentle to men is because the Lord is at hand. He is ready to come, and His coming is near. This simply means that when He comes, everyone of us will need Him to treat us with gentleness. We are sinners—men and women, boys and girls—who sin too often. The Lord will have every right to be critical and condemning of us. Our only hope is that He will be gentle with us. Therefore, we must be gentle with all other men. Only if we are forgiving toward them will the Lord be forgiving toward us.

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" ([Ephes. 4:32](#)).

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" ([Matthew 6:12](#)).

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" ([Matthew 6:14-15](#)).

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" ([Mark 11:25](#)).

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with

the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" ([Luke 6:38](#)).

"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" ([Luke 17:4](#)).

**12. The minister or bishop must not be a brawler (*amachon* <sup>PWS: 435</sup>):** not contentious or a fighter. He must be a man of peace, a mild-mannered person, always under control. Again, this refers to the tongue as well as to the hands. He must be a man who is deeply touched when there is unrest, controversy, or disturbance in the church or among believers. He must be a person who is so touched that he will work and seek for peace.

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" ([1 Cor. 14:33](#)).

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" ([2 Cor. 13:11](#)).

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" ([Ephes. 4:1-3](#)).

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" ([2 Tim. 2:22](#)).

"Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it" ([1 Peter 3:11](#)).

"Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" ([Psalm 34:14](#)).

**13. The minister or bishop must not be covetous (*aphilarguros*):** not a lover of money.

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" ([Luke 12:15](#)).

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" ([Ephes. 5:3](#)).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" ([Col. 3:5](#)).

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" ([Hebrews 13:5](#)).

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's" ([Exodus 20:17](#)).

"For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely" ([Jeremiah 6:13](#)).

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" ([Ezekiel 33:31](#)).

"And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage" ([Micah 2:2](#)).

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!" ([Habakkuk 2:9](#)).

**3. [\(1 Tim. 3:4-5\) Minister— Bishop— Elder: the minister or bishop must meet one very significant family qualification.](#)** The minister or bishop must rule his own household and rule it well. The home is a miniature of the church; the home is the proving ground for leadership in the church. The husband is the head of the home. This does not mean that he is the dictator, tyrant, or bully of the home. It means that he is the leader of the wife and children. He leads them all...

- in the building of a loving, joyful, and peaceful home.
- in the fulfillment of their life calling and task upon earth.

It means that the man is not bossed about or dominated by his wife; that he does not allow his children to disobey, rebel, or talk back to him or their mother; that he takes the lead in controlling his home for Christ and His kingdom.

Note the word "gravity" (*semnotēs* <sup>PWS:1780</sup>). It means dignity. The minister must rule his home with dignity, respect, and love. As the Amplified New Testament says: "With true dignity, commanding their respect in every way and keeping them respectful."

As Scripture says, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" ([1 Tim. 3:5](#)).

**4. [\(1 Tim. 3:6\) Proven— Novice— Minister— Bishop— Elder: the minister or bishop of God must be spiritually qualified.](#)** He must not be a novice (*mē neophuton* <sup>PWS:2696</sup>), that is, a new convert or a new church member. He must have been a convert or church member for a long time...

- long enough to have become rooted and grounded in the Lord and His Word.
- long enough to have become spiritually mature.
- long enough to have proven his testimony for Christ.
- long enough to be well known and respected by other believers.
- long enough to be able to minister to others and to teach them to minister.

Note why a novice must not be given a position of leadership in the church: lest he become prideful and "fall into the condemnation of the devil." Satan was expelled from heaven because of pride. It was pride that caused his fall and brought condemnation upon him. When a person is given a great responsibility before he has become rooted and

grounded in the faith, he is most likely going to fall and be condemned just as Satan fell and was condemned. We must always remember what Matthew Henry points out: "Pride...is a sin that turned angels into devils" (**Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol.6, p.815**). We must guard against pride. We must guard against putting a person in a position of leadership that will tempt him to feel more important than he is.

**"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" ([Matthew 23:12](#)).**

**"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" ([Phil. 2:3-4](#)).**

**"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom" ([Proverbs 11:2](#)).**

**"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" ([Proverbs 16:18](#)).**

**"It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory" ([Proverbs 25:27](#)).**

**"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" ([Isaiah 14:13-14](#)).**

**"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and one else beside me" ([Isaiah 47:10](#)).**

**"Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God" ([Ezekiel 28:2](#)).**

**"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" ([Obadiah 4](#)).**

**5. ([1 Tim. 3:7](#)) Minister— Bishop— Elder: the minister or bishop must meet one very important community qualification.** He must have a "good report of them that are without"; that is, he must have a good testimony before the world. Of course, there are some in the world who will criticize and slander any person who has failed and run with the world. Many in the world do not recognize conversion nor repentance and forgiveness—the simple fact that Christ can forgive and change a person. But when a person enters the ministry, he must have experienced such a significant change that it is clearly evident that he is *now following Christ*. The change in his life must be radical: a radical turning away from the world and self to Christ. The change must be so radical that even the unbelievers can see it. Then and only then can he ever hope to reach the unbelieving world for Christ.

Note why the minister must have a good testimony before the world: lest he fall into reproach. The unbelievers of the world will reproach, ridicule, and mock him; and he will fall into the snare of the devil. That is, he will hesitate to bear testimony for Christ and to

fulfill his duties as a minister. He will tend to withdraw and keep silent and to remain unseen as much as possible. The power of his ministry and testimony will be drastically weakened.

**"[Timothy] which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek" ([Acts 16:2-3](#)).**

**"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" ([Romans 1:8](#)).**

**"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" ([1 Peter 3:15](#)).**

**Thought 1.** A testimony before the world is essential. The world is not to choose or even have a voice in selecting church leaders. But church leaders must be respected by their day to day acquaintances. The point is *profession* verses *possession*. Those *outside* are the first to notice wrong behavior in a Christian. The Christian believer must behave like a Christian believer before he can serve as an overseer in God's church.



# • Deacon.

## ▪ 1 Tim. 3:8-13

### The Deacons of the Church, 1 Tim. 3:8-13

(1 Tim. 3:8-13) Introduction: this passage discusses the second officer of the church, the deacon. **The office of deacon is so important that the qualifications required are just as high as those demanded of a minister or bishop.** In this day and time, when worldliness, immorality, and lawlessness are running so rampant, the qualifications for deacons need to be studied, heeded, and guarded ever so diligently.

1. Personal qualifications (v.8).
2. Spiritual qualifications (v.9-10).
3. Family qualifications (v.11-12).
4. Results: reward reaped (v.13).

### DEEPER STUDY #1 (1 Tim. 3:8-13) Deacons

#### DEEPER STUDY #1

(1 Tim. 3:8-13) Deacons: the word deacon (*Diakonous* <sup>PWS: 885</sup>) means servant, minister. The first reference to deacons is in Acts (Acts 6:1-7). Deacons were appointed to help in the ministerial and administrative duties of the church (Acts 6:2). Their function was to relieve ministers so that ministers could give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4). In particular they were chosen to minister to the day-to-day needs of believers and to the needs of widows and widowers and the poor and sick of a church. They were to relieve ministers so the ministers could *concentrate on prayer and preaching*.

**"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:3-4).**

However, note a significant fact: this does not mean that ministers are never to meet day-to-day needs of believers nor that deacons should never share or preach the Word. In the early church both ministers and deacons served in both areas, but each *concentrated* upon their primary call and mission.

⇒ Preachers were sometimes called deacons, that is, servants.

**"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers [diakonoi] by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" (1 Cor. 3:5).**

**"Who also hath made us able ministers [*diakonous*] of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6).**

⇒ The first deacons preached as well as ministered to the needy of the church.

**"And Stephen [a deacon], full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people" (Acts 6:8).**

**"Then Philip [a deacon] went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" ([Acts 8:5](#)).**

⇒ Deacons are closely linked to bishops.

**"Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" ([Phil. 1:1](#)).**

⇒ Deacons are to be spiritually equipped for their task.

**"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" ([Acts 6:3](#); cp. [1 Tim. 3:8-13](#)).**

⇒ The office of the deacon was an early development in the church.

**"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" ([Acts 6:1-4](#)).**

## **1. ([1 Tim. 3:8](#)) Deacons— Church, Officer of: deacons must be qualified; they must meet some personal qualifications.**

**1. Deacons must be "grave" (*semnous* <sup>PWS: 1779</sup>):** serious, honorable, worthy, revered, highly respected, noble. It is being serious-minded, the very opposite...

- of being flippant.
- of dishonoring oneself.
- of being shallow by being over-talkative.
- of having little respect because one is not grave or serious enough.
- of having a surface religion only.

However, note that this does not mean that the deacon is to walk around with a long face, never smiling, joking, or having fun. It simply means that he is serious-minded and committed to Christ and to the mission of the church: the mission of reaching the lost and meeting the needs of the desperate of the world.

**"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" ([1 Thes. 5:6-8](#)).**

**"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).**

**"Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" ([1 Tim. 3:11](#)).**

**"[A bishop must be] a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" ([Titus 1:8](#)).**

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience....To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" ([Titus 2:2, 5](#)).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" ([Titus 2:11-13](#)).

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" ([1 Peter 4:7](#)).

**2. Deacons must not be doubletongued (*mē dilogous* <sup>PWS: 2683</sup>):** bearing tales, gossiping, saying "one thing to one person and something different to another [person]" (Donald Guthrie. *The Pastoral Epistles*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, p.84); saying one thing to a person's face and something else behind his back. No more descriptive word could be chosen than "doubletongued."

The quality of *not being double-tongued* is important. As a deacon ministers through visitation (going from house to house) he is often tempted to gossip or say one thing to one person and something else to another person. He is also tempted to evade or smooth talk issues. Therefore, he must be a man of integrity, a man who speaks the straight truth—a man who is as honest as the day is long.

"And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" ([1 Tim. 5:13](#)).

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" ([James 1:18](#)).

"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" ([1 Peter 4:15](#)).

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people" ([Leviticus 19:16](#)).

"A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" ([Proverbs 11:13](#)).

"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" ([Proverbs 18:8](#)).

"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" ([Proverbs 20:19](#)).

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth" ([Proverbs 26:20](#)).

**3. The deacon must not be given to much wine** (see note page # 60, Minister, pt.8—[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

**4. The deacon must not be greedy of worldly gain** (see note page # 61, Minister, pt.10—[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

## **2. (1 Tim. 3:9-10) Deacon— Church, Officer of: deacons must meet three very important spiritual qualifications.**

### **1. Deacons must hold to the mystery of the faith and hold it in good conscience.**

The mystery of the faith is given in **1 Tim. 3:16**:

"And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness:

- ⇒ "God was manifest [revealed] in the flesh
- ⇒ "Justified [vindicated] in the Spirit
- ⇒ "Seen by angels
- ⇒ "Preached [proclaimed] unto the Gentiles
- ⇒ "Believed on in the world
- ⇒ "Received [taken] up into glory."

A deacon must believe in the incarnation, in the glorious gospel that God has come to earth in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ to *preach* the love and salvation of God for man. In fact, note what this verse says: a deacon must hold within his own heart the mystery of the faith. He must possess and cling to it, and he must hold it in good conscience. He must believe the *whole gospel* (mystery) and not deceive the church by being hypocritical about his belief.

There is another point about conscience as well: the deacon must have a good conscience about living and sharing the mystery of the faith. He must not accept the call and office of deacon and then shirk his duties. He must hold the mystery of the gospel of the faith in all good conscience, that is, in sharing it faithfully with both believers and unbelievers.

**"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward" (2 Cor. 1:12).**

**"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. 1:5).**

**"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" (1 Tim. 1:19).**

**"Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ" (1 Peter 3:16).**

**2. Deacons must first be proved or tested before they are called to the office of a deacon** (see note page # 65, **Proven**—"1 Tim. 3:6 same qualifications for discussion).

**3. Deacons must be "blameless"** (see note page # 56, pt.1—"1 Tim. 3:2-3) same qualifications.)

**3. (1 Tim. 3:11-12) Deacons— Church, Officer of: deacons must meet several family qualifications.** The Greek of this verse allows the verse to refer to women in the church who served as deaconesses, and indeed, many translators

and commentators translate it as referring to deaconesses. However, this position seems most unlikely, for all the other verses of this passage deal with the deacons of a church. It is much more likely and logical that Paul is talking about the wives of deacons. The greater weight of the context certainly lies with this position. This is not a good passage for a person to build his case for deaconesses in the church. As a deacon visits and ministers to the women of the church, he needs his wife with him if she is able to accompany him. A strong picture of marital and family love and commitment to Christ are needed. Therefore, the deacon's wife must be as strong in the Lord as he is.

**1. The deacon must have a wife who is as committed to the Lord and to the church as he is.**

- a. The wife of a deacon must be "grave" (*semnos*): serious-minded, honorable, respected, and noble (see note page # 56, pt.1—[1 Tim. 3:8](#) same qualifications for discussion).
- b. The wife of a deacon must not be a "slanderer" (*mē diabolous* <sup>PWS: 2703</sup>): a talebearer, gossip; a person who goes about talking about others, stirring up mischief and disturbance.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" ([Ephes. 4:31](#)).

"For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working [serving] not at all, but are busybodies" ([2 Thes. 3:11](#)).

"And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" ([1 Tim. 5:13](#)).

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" ([James 1:26](#)).

"And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" ([James 3:6](#)).

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge" ([James 4:11](#)).

"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" ([1 Peter 2:1](#)).

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" ([1 Peter 3:10](#)).

"Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer" ([Psalm 101:5](#)).

"A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered" ([Proverbs 11:9](#)).

"A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends" ([Proverbs 16:28](#)).

**"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" ([Proverbs 26:22](#)).**

- c. The wife of a deacon must be sober (see note page # 57, pt.4—"[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).
- d. The wife of a deacon must be faithful in all things: completely trustworthy as a wife and mother and as a believer. She must be faithful to the Lord...
  - in her personal devotion and loyalty to the Lord.
  - in her call as a wife and mother.
  - in her commitment to the church and its services and ministry.
  - in her ministry in serving with her husband.

**"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" ([Luke 9:23](#)).**

**"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" ([1 Cor. 15:58](#)).**

**"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" ([Galatians 6:9](#)).**

**"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).**

**"But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day" ([Joshua 23:8](#)).**

2. **[The deacon must be the husband of one wife](#)** (see note page # 56, pt.2—"[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).
3. **[The deacon must have a controlled family and home](#)** (see note page #65—"[1 Tim. 3:4-5](#) same qualifications for discussion).

#### **[4. \(1 Tim. 3:13\) Deacon— Testimony: the faithful deacon experiences two results.](#)**

1. He gains a good degree or standing and testimony before both God and man.

**"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" ([James 2:17](#)).**

2. He gains great boldness or confidence and security in the faith. He experiences more and more assurance and freedom in the Spirit of God.

**"In whom [Christ] we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith in him" ([Ephes. 3:12](#)).**

**"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" ([Hebrews 4:16](#)).**

**"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus....Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" ([Hebrews 10:19, 22-24](#)).**

**"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" ([1 John 4:17](#)).**

# Elder.

## Titus 1:5-9

### The True Elders or Ministers, Titus 1:5-9

**(Titus 1:5-9) Introduction:** this passage is a strong picture of the office-holder in the church—just what the office-holder should be and do. It spells out in no uncertain terms the qualifications of the elder (bishop or minister, whatever the title is that he is known by).

**1. Two critical needs in the church (v.5).**

**2. His family qualifications (v.6).**

**3. His personal qualifications (v.7-8).**

**4. His preaching qualifications (v.9).**

**1. (Titus 1:5) Church, Needs: two critical needs exist in the church.**

Note: the church in Crete had these two needs. Crete was an island in the Mediterranean Sea, an island with many cities. William Barclay quotes Homer as calling the island, "Crete of the hundred cities" (*The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, p.268). No doubt, Paul had led people to Christ all over the island in city after city, and had established churches in the cities in which the converts lived. However, he had left to carry on the work of evangelism, but he had left Titus behind to root and ground the church in Christ. Paul spells out two critical needs of the churches, two needs that exist in every church.

**1. There was the need to set in order the things that are defective and left undone.**

This refers to all that Paul covers in the letter to Titus:

⇒ How to set up true officials in the church and how to deal with false teachers (**Titus 1:5-16**).

⇒ How men and women in the church are to live and behave (**Titus 2:1-3:11**).

**Thought 1.** No matter the church, there are still some defects and some things to be done. Every church still has a long way to go before it reaches the full stature of what it should be before its Lord. But even more than this, tragically too many churches have two serious defects and flaws: they are not adequately organized for ministry and they have allowed false teaching in their ranks. As a result they are not reaching people for Christ and, in some cases, they are facing terrible division and splits and destruction of their testimony.

The point is this: the very need of a church is to set in order the things that are defective and left undone. A church must be constantly growing in Christ or else it begins to slip back and to lose its message of eternal life for mankind.

**2. There was the need to ordain elders in every city.** The term *elder* refers to the minister of the church. No church, no matter how small, should remain without a minister for too long. This was the concern of Paul for the churches in Crete, and it should be our concern. One of the two critical needs of a church is for committed ministers who love the Lord with all their heart.



**2. (Titus 1:6) Elder— Minister— Bishop: the minister or elder of a church must be qualified.** He must meet some family qualifications.

**1. The minister or elder must be blameless** (see note page # 56, pt.1—"1 Tim. 3:2-3 same qualifications for discussion).

"I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple [harmless] concerning evil" (Romans 16:19).

"That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:10).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim. 4:18).

"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heaven" (Hebrews 7:26).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

**2. The minister or elder must be the husband of one wife** (see note page # 56, pt.2—"1 Tim. 3:2-3 same qualifications for discussion).

"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4-6).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2).

"If any be blameless, the husband of one wife" (Titus 1:6).

"Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" (Deut. 17:17).

**3. The minister or elder must have faithful children.** By faithful is meant believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and remaining faithful to Him. The minister's children are to be above reproach; they are not to be "**loose in morals and conduct or unruly and disorderly**" (Amplified New Testament).

William Barclay gives an excellent description of this point:

*"The family of the elder must not be undisciplined. Nothing can made up for the lack of parental control. The training of children is ultimately in the hands of the parent" (The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.268f).*

Oliver Greene also gives an excellent picture of what Scripture is saying about the minister and his children:

*"What Paul is saying here is that an elder or bishop must have a well-governed family, a family which fully respects him, a family well trained in spiritual matters. If the family of a bishop were insubordinate and opposed to spiritual matters, or if members of the family were unbelievers or scoffers, that man could not be entrusted with the government of the church of the living God.*

*"It is clearly set forth here that an elder or bishop must be a family man, with a wife and children who respect him to the fullest degree. His family must be spiritually minded; they must love the church and the things of God and cooperate with the head of the family in all things. If a man cannot rule his own house and lead his own family concerning spiritual matters, how could he direct the church? If he were a man who did not have the respect of his family, he could not hope to have the respect of the church" (The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy and Titus, p.415).*

**"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" ([1 Thes. 5:6-8](#)).**

**"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).**

**"Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" ([1 Tim. 3:11](#)).**

**"[A bishop must be] a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" ([Titus 1:8](#)).**

**"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience....To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" ([Titus 2:2, 5](#)).**

**"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" ([Titus 2:11-13](#)).**

**"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).**

**"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" ([1 Peter 4:7](#)).**

**3. ([Titus 1:7-8](#)) Elder— Minister: the minister or bishop must measure up personally; there are some personal qualifications that he must meet.** Note the elder is here called bishop. The two words are used interchangeably. Note also the critical importance placed upon his being blameless; he

must live a blameless life. The reason is clearly stated: he is the "steward of God." A *steward* is the person who is placed in charge of the household and estate of the owner. The bishop or minister is the steward of God's church and God's people. He does not own the church, nor does he possess the people of the church. But he is in charge of their provision and education, of their nourishment and growth, of their behavior and duties. He must see that the household of God is cared for and looked after and that their energies and lives are directed to the will of the Master. Above all else, the steward must do the will of the Master, carry out His Word without any deviation whatsoever. This is what is meant by being "blameless as the steward of God." The steward exists solely for the Master—solely to see that the Word of God is done. He must be blameless when it comes to the will of God. (See note, Ministers—' 1 Cor. 4:1-2 for more discussion.)

1. Note: there are some things—very important things—that the minister or steward of God *must not do*.

- a. **He must not be self-willed** (*authadē*<sup>PWS: 3436</sup>): self-pleasing, arrogant, haughty, and self-centered. It is a person who thinks too highly of himself, who looks at his own things and ignores or neglects the things of others. It is a person who is harsh to others; who criticizes, grumbles, and condemns others; who downs others and elevates himself in his own mind.

**"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4).**

**"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Luke 22:26).**

**"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13).**

**"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3).**

**"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).**

**"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).**

**"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Peter 5:5-6).**

- b. **He must not be angry (*orgilon* <sup>PWS: 3653</sup>):** a long-lasting anger; an anger that is deeply rooted and has been held for a long time; an anger against someone that a person just refuses to let go; the person refuses to forgive the other person. The minister must not be quick tempered or hot-headed, nor given over to long-lasting anger.

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca', shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" ([Matthew 5:22](#)).

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" ([Ephes. 4:26](#)).

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" ([Col. 3:8](#)).

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre" ([Titus 1:7](#)).

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" ([James 1:19](#)).

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil" ([Psalm 37:8](#)).

"The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression" ([Proverbs 19:11](#)).

"Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools" ([Eccles. 7:9](#)).

- c. **He must not be given to wine, to drunkenness** (see note page # 60, pt.8—<sup>1</sup>[Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

"For he [John the Baptist] shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" ([Luke 1:15](#)).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" ([Romans 14:21](#)).

"Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations" ([Leviticus 10:9](#)).

"He [the Nazarite] shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried" ([Numbers 6:3](#)).

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright" ([Proverbs 23:31](#)).

"It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink" ([Proverbs 31:4](#)).

"But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever" ([Jeremiah 35:6](#)).

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" ([Daniel 1:8](#)).

- d. **He must not be a striker, a person given over to violence** (see note page # 61, pt.9—"[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" ([Phil. 2:3-4](#)).

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" ([2 Tim. 2:14](#)).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" ([2 Tim. 2:24](#)).

"Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm" ([Proverbs 3:30](#)).

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with" ([Proverbs 17:14](#)).

"It is an honor for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling" ([Proverbs 20:3](#)).

- e. **He must not be given over to the love of money or worldly possessions** (see note page # 61, pt.10—"[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" ([1 Tim. 6:10](#)).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust [storing, banking] of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" ([James 5:3](#)).

2. Note: there are some very important things that the minister or steward of God must be.

- a. **He must be a lover of hospitality** (see note page # 58, pt.6—"[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" ([Romans 12:13](#)).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).

"Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work" ([1 Tim. 5:10](#)).

"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" ([Titus 1:8](#)).

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" ([Hebrews 13:2](#)).

"Use hospitality one to another without grudging" ([1 Peter 4:9](#)).

b. He must be a lover of good men (*philagathos* <sup>PWS: 2446</sup>): the Greek means a lover of good things as well as of good people. The minister of God loves good no matter where he finds it, in people or things. He loves the poor and the homeless, the weak and the suffering, as well as the wealthy and healthy. And the minister loves to do good things for everyone, no matter who they are—good things such as...

- expressing appreciation
- encouraging
- giving gifts
- helping when help is needed
- ministering and serving
- preaching and teaching the truth of God's Word

Very simply stated, a minister loves good men and good things; therefore, he is always ministering. He is always involved in the lives of good people and always involved in doing good things for everyone he can.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" ([John 13:34-35](#)).

"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" ([Romans 12:9](#)).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" ([1 Thes. 3:12](#)).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" ([1 Peter 1:22](#)).

c. He must be sober or sober minded (see note page # 57, pt.4—[1 Tim. 3:2-3](#) same qualifications for discussion).

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" ([1 Thes. 5:6-8](#)).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)).

"Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" ([1 Tim. 3:11](#)).

"[A bishop must be] a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" ([Titus 1:8](#)).

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience....To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" ([Titus 2:2, 5](#)).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" ([Titus 2:11-13](#)).

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" ([1 Peter 4:7](#)).

- d. **He must be just** (*dikaion* <sup>PWS: 2219</sup>): honest, upright, fair, above board in his behavior and dealings with both God and man. There is no deception, lying, cheating, stealing, meanness, misbehavior, or irresponsibility whatsoever in the minister's dealings—none with men or with God.

"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" ([Romans 13:7](#)).

"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" ([Proverbs 21:3](#)).

"Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed" ([Isaiah 56:1](#)).

"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" ([Deut. 16:20](#)).



- e. **He must be holy (*hosion*):** pure, clean, moral, unpolluted from the dirt and filth of sin. The minister must be a person who is clean and pure before the eyes of God.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" ([2 Cor. 7:1](#)).

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" ([Hebrews 12:14](#)).

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" ([1 Peter 1:13-16](#)).

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" ([2 Peter 3:11](#)).

- f. **He is temperate or self-controlled in all things.** He must have power over his body, mind, and life. He must be vigilant and watchful, controlling and guarding his behavior both when alone and when with others. He must control his eyes, ears, tongue, flesh, appetites, thoughts, hands, and feet—watching where he goes, what he does, says, thinks, eats, hears, looks at, and desires.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" ([Matthew 26:41](#)).

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" ([Acts 20:31](#)).

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" ([1 Cor. 10:12](#)).

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" ([1 Cor. 16:13](#)).

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" ([1 Peter 5:8](#)).

#### **4. (Titus 1:9) Minister— Preaching: the minister or bishop must measure up in his preaching; there is a preaching qualification that he must meet.**

**1. The bishop or minister must hold fast the faithful Word.** What Word? Note what the verse says: the "sound doctrine" that he must preach, the "sound doctrine" or teaching of God's Word. The minister of God must take the Word of God and cling to it in the face of all temptation and opposition—no matter what men may say or claim. The minister of God is a minister of God; he is not called to be the minister of anyone else. Therefore, his mission is to cling to the Word of God. He is to hold fast to the pure Word of God; he is to be taught the "sound doctrine" of the Word. He is to be a person who has

studied and studied the Word and is deeply rooted and grounded in the Word of God. His measurement is not how good a speaker he is, how charismatic and appealing; it is how well he has taught the Word of God. How much has he rooted his people in the doctrines of God's Word?

**"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" ([John 20:31](#)).**

**"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" ([Acts 17:11](#)).**

**"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" ([Acts 20:32](#)).**

**"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" ([Romans 15:4](#)).**

**"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" ([2 Tim. 2:15](#)).**

**"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" ([2 Tim. 3:16-17](#)).**

**"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" ([1 Peter 2:2-3](#)).**

**"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" ([1 John 5:13](#)).**

**2. There is a strong reason why the bishop or minister must hold fast to the Word of God:** he must be able to exhort and to convert those who oppose God and Christ.

⇒ People need to be exhorted, that is, encouraged to trust Christ and to follow Him.

⇒ People need to be convicted, especially those who stand opposed to God and curse him and refuse to surrender to Him. The word convict (*elegchein* <sup>PWS: 788</sup>) means "to rebuke a man in such a way that he is compelled to see and to admit the error of his ways. Trench says that it means 'to rebuke another, with such an effectual wielding of the victorious arms of the truth, as to bring him, if not always to a confession, yet at least to a conviction of his sin'....Christian rebuke means far more than 'giving a man a row'...means far more than merely speaking to him in such a way that he sees the error of his ways and accepts the truth. The aim of Christian rebuke is not to humiliate a man, but to enable him to see and recognize and admit the duty and the truth to which he has been either blind or disobedient" (**William Barclay. *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, p.274**).

Note how the minister of God is to exhort and convince people: "by sound doctrine." And note the word "able": he is to be so grounded in God's Word that he is able to exhort and convict people *out of God's Word*.

**"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" ([1 Tim. 5:20](#)).**

**"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" ([Titus 1:9](#)).**

**"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" ([Titus 2:15](#)).**

**"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" ([1 Tim. 5:20](#)).**

# Elder. Continued

## 1 Timothy 5:17-20

### The Elders or Officials, [5:17-20](#)

[\(1 Timothy 5:17-20\)](#) **Introduction:** this is a day in which the minister of God is being attacked not only by the world, but most unfortunately, by those within the church.

The attackers are causing a loss of respect for Christ and a neglect, ignoring, abuse, and persecution of the ministry as has seldom been experienced in civilization. Because of this, ministers are being neglected when it comes to meeting their financial needs and quickly deserted when gossip and rumors swirl about their heads. Whether the rumors are true or not, few people care and are willing to support the minister of God. This passage deals with both subjects—critical subjects for our day.

[1. The honor and pay of an elder \(v.17-18\).](#)

[2. The discipline of an elder \(v.19-20\).](#)

**1. [\(1 Timothy 5:17-18\)](#) Elder— Minister, Financial Support: the church is to honor its minister—esteem, respect, acknowledge, and recognize him.** He is to be held within the heart of the believer and held ever so closely, and he is to be esteemed ever so highly. In fact, note what Scripture says: he is to be "counted worthy of double honor."

But note: there is a condition attached to honoring the minister. The minister to be honored is one who "rules well." The word "rule" (*proistēmi* [PWS: 3349](#)) is a general word meaning to oversee, supervise, and look after. The minister who is worthy of double honor is the minister who labors and labors and works and works. If he is to receive double honor then he must demonstrate a double commitment to Christ and the church.

Note also that the whole ministerial staff is covered by this charge. All the ministers of a church staff are to be counted worthy of double honor. But there is one minister who is singled out: the minister who labors in the Word and doctrine, that is, who preaches and teaches. It is he upon whom so much responsibility lies: he is the minister who takes the lead in edifying and building up the believer and the church. He is the one who has to spend hours on his face before God and in the Word in order to preach and teach—this in addition to taking the lead in all the other duties and ministries of the church. If he is a committed minister, a minister who labors and labors for Christ and works and works for the church, then he is worthy of double honor.

Now, one other significant fact. The word "honor" (*timē* [PWS: 1994](#)) means more than just esteem and respect. It means to pay and bestow what is due. A minister is due an honorarium; he is due compensation, some pay, some wage for his labor. And, if he performs his duty well—labors and labors and works and works—then he is due double honor. Is this to be taken literally? Is the church to pay him a double salary? A.T.

Robertson states that there are "numerous examples of Roman soldiers who received double pay for unusual services" (*Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol.4, p.588*). **One thing is sure: double pay means adequate, ample, sufficient, and generous financial support.**

The oxen used to grind out the corn is an example. In the East, oxen have been used to pull a millstone around and around over grain. The oxen was never muzzled. He was allowed to eat as much grain as he wished, for he was considered to have earned all the grain he wished. So it is to be with the minister of God. He is worthy of his labor. As he grinds and grinds away at the harvest of souls for God and His church, the minister is to be given more than enough financial support.

**Thought 1.** Scripture has already deplored money-grabbing ([1 Tim. 3:3](#)). God equally deplores inadequate compensation. The point is: if God ordained that working oxen should be cared for, how much more has He ordained the church to adequately care for the working minister!

**"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" ([Deut. 25:4](#)).**

**"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat" ([Matthew 10:9-10](#)).**

**"And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you" ([Luke 10:7-8](#)).**

**"For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?" ([1 Cor. 9:9](#)).**

**"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" ([1 Cor. 9:14](#)).**

**"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward" ([1 Tim. 5:17-18](#)).**

**2. ([1 Timothy 5:19-20](#)) Minister— Elder: the discipline of an elder.**  
(When studying church discipline, the instructions of our Lord should always be studied. See outline below—' [Matthew 18:15-20](#) and notes—' [Matthew 18:15-20](#).)  
Matthew Henry gives an excellent exposition of [Matthew 18:19](#), an exposition that every minister should read:

*"Here is the scripture-method of proceeding against an elder, when accused of any crime. Observe [it]. There must be an accusation; it must not be a flying uncertain report, but an accusation, containing a certain charge, [and it] must be drawn up....*

*"This accusation is not to be received unless supported by two or three credible witnesses; and the accusation must be received before them, that is, the accused*

*must have the accusers face to face, because the reputation of a minister is...a tender thing...therefore, before any thing be done in the least to blemish that reputation, great care should be taken [and] the thing alledged against him be well proved" (Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol.6, p.825).*

A very practical and warm exposition is also given by **Oliver Greene**:

*"It is possible for even a godly, separated, God-appointed elder to commit sin...It is possible even for those who live very near to the heart of God to be caught off guard and commit sin that will bring shame and disgrace upon the church. But we are not to accuse an elder unless there are two or more witnesses to testify that the accusation is an accomplished fact. We should never repeat anything we hear about a minister, deacon, steward, elder, Sunday school teacher or any leader in the church. If we hear reports of evil, we should investigate in the right way, through the right people—and certainly we should not discuss the situation with unbelievers. It is very clear in [Matthew 18:19](#) that an elder must not be accused unless there are at least two or three witnesses who can prove the truth of the accusation" (The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy and Titus, p.202).*

The discipline is clearly stated: the elder or minister is to be rebuked. The words "before all" most likely mean before all the elders rather than before the whole church (**A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol.4, p.589***). To go before the whole church would only add fuel to the flame of the immature and carnal believers within the church. It would make a public spectacle before the outside world. Such would naturally damage the church's testimony—even if an attempt was made to balance the damaged image by claiming disciplinary action. Note that the point of the discipline is the correction of the sinning minister and the prevention of other ministers from sinning: that they may fear exposure and embarrassment.

William Barclay has an excellent exposition of this verse that merits being read by all ministers:

*"Those who persist in sin are to be publicly rebuked. That public rebuke had a double value. It sobered the sinner into a consideration of his ways, and wakened him into a sense of shame; and it made others have a care that they did not involve themselves in a like humiliation. The threat of publicity is no bad thing, if it keeps a man in the right way, even from fear. A wise leader will know when there is a time to keep things quiet, and a time for public rebuke. But whatever happens, the Church must never give the world the impression that it is condoning sin" (The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.135).*

In conclusion, charges made against a minister or anyone else is one of the most serious acts that a person can do. Barclay states it as well as it can be stated:

*"This would be a happier world, and the Church would be a happier Church, if people would realize that it is nothing less than a sin to spread and to repeat stories about people of whose truth they are not, and cannot be, sure. Irresponsible, slanderous and malicious talk does infinite damage and causes*

*infinite heartbreak, and such talk will not go unpunished by God...." (The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.135f).*

**"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" ([Matthew 18:15-17](#)).**

**"Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him" ([Luke 17:1-3](#)).**

**"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" ([1 Tim. 5:20](#)).**

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).**

**"This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" ([Titus 1:13](#)).**

**"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" ([Titus 2:15](#)).**

**"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject" ([Titus 3:10](#)).**

### **DEEPER STUDY Matthew 18:15-20**

#### **The Steps to Correcting Offending Brothers, [18:15-20](#)**

**(Matthew 18:15-20) Introduction— Division— Church Discipline:** sinning against a brother is a matter of great concern to God. It is so serious that if the offending brother refuses to rectify the matter, he is to be severely disciplined ([Matthew 18:17](#)). However, when dealing with discipline, two critical points are to be noted.

**1.** The sinning brother *is a brother*, a *genuine* believer. He sins against another brother. The breach is between two genuine believers who are *in the church*.

**2.** The trespass is a personal offense; that is, the wrong and harm are done against another person. A fellow Christian believer is injured, hurt, and damaged in some way.

God has one great concern: He wants peace restored. He wants peace between the brothers, and He wants peace within the church. The disturbance caused by two offending brothers is so damaging that God lays down very specific steps as to how the matter is to be handled; and if the sinning brother



refuses to be reconciled and to rectify the wrong, God says the disturbance is not to be tolerated any longer.

**1. Step 1: attempt reconciliation (v.15-16).**

**2. Step 2: discipline the brother (v.17-18).**

**3. Step 3: the essential step—bathe the matter in prayer (v.19-20).**

**1. (Matthew 18:15-17) Believers, Sin Against—Reconciliation: the first step in correcting an offending brother is to attempt reconciliation** (see below page # 91 **Deeper Study #1—Matthew 18:15**). Note when a brother disturbs or offends us, we do not wait on the *offending brother* to come to us. We are to go immediately to him. There are three specific steps to be taken.

**1. Go to the brother alone and "tell him his fault."** This seems to indicate that he may not know that he has done wrong and offended us. If we do not go to him, he may never know or be able to correct his behavior. If he does know he has offended us and we do not approach him, then the breach remains, and the guilt of the sin continues. The division and damaging effects of the division can only grow and deepen.

Something else can happen: our own heart and mind can brood, be poisoned, become resentful, even bitter and grudging and revengeful. We desperately need to do all we can to resolve the matter.

**a.** He is to be approached alone. We are not to share the matter with anyone else, nor are we to openly rebuke him. This only deepens and hardens the feelings and division, and causes bitterness and hostility.

**b.** The words "between thee and him alone" hint at how he is to be approached:

⇒ humbly; searching our own heart (to see if we did anything to cause the offending behavior—knowing that we too can offend others ever so easily).

⇒ being soft spoken and gentle.

⇒ expressing our desire for understanding and straightening out the matter so that we may be reconciled.

**"Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matthew 5:24).**

**"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. 2:3).**

**"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" (2 Tim. 2:14).**

**"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim. 2:24).**

**Thought 1.** When a brother offends us, our response becomes critical to Christ. There are four responses common to human flesh that we are to guard against with all diligence.

- 1) ***A self-centered response:*** acting babyish, innocent, or as a martyr; brooding, hatching, and pondering the evil and hurt done to us; being consumed with the wrong done; keeping our minds on the personal injury until the whole divisive affair poisons our hearts and minds. Remember: this is common to human flesh, a tendency among us all.
- 2) ***A withdrawing response:*** avoiding the brother; being apprehensive, perhaps even fearing to face or associate with him; showing displeasure or getting back at him by ignoring or neglecting him.
- 3) ***A gossiping response:*** a self-justifying sharing; a self-vindicating sharing; a tendency to share hurt and evil and wrong done, to share with close friends in order to picture ourselves as blameless. The problem with sharing the division with others is that Christ says we are to go to the person first. Then if he does not respond to our appeal, we are to seek loving and wise counsel.
- 4) ***A retaliating response:*** becoming embroiled in the divisiveness and wrongdoing ourselves; reacting and lowering ourselves to the level of the wrongdoer; getting back at the wrongdoer.

**Thought 2.** When a brother offends us, the most important response (after prayer, of course) is to go to the brother alone. There is great wisdom in this instruction, wisdom that teaches both brothers to subject the flesh and to give prominence to the spirit.

- 1) ***Wisdom for the offended brother.*** Human nature tends to react, brood, share the evil, and seek retaliation—whether simply withdrawing or attacking. Christ demands that we conquer the urges of the flesh to react and that we control the situation through the Spirit. We are to keep quiet and pray and then go to the brother and discuss the matter, seeking reconciliation. Simply put, we are to be spiritually minded.
- 2) ***Wisdom for the offending brother.*** Human nature avoids and is slow in admitting wrong. A humble, loving, and caring visit to seek reconciliation is *an encouragement* for a brother to confess, apologize, and be reconciled.

**Thought 3.** Note just how wise the Lord's instruction really is. Just think what enormous lessons and qualities are learned and developed by three brothers sitting down to seek reconciliation, the very qualities of the Spirit's fruit...

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Longsuffering
- Gentleness
- Goodness
- Faith
- Meekness
- Self-control

**Thought 4.** Think what a different world this would be if this step alone was practiced by all: the difference in human relationships personally, nationally, and internationally; the difference in health emotionally and physically (ulcers, blood pressure, heart attacks, etc.).

**Deeper Study #1—Matthew 18:15).**

**DEEPER STUDY #1**

**(Matthew 18:15) Believers, Sin Against— Reconciliation:** how does a Christian brother trespass or offend another brother? There are many ways.

**1. By his behavior and Christian liberty:** doing that which is allowed but is offensive and misunderstood by a weaker brother.

**(Romans 14:1-23; 1 Cor. 8:12.)**

- ⇒ Offending his conscience
- ⇒ Grieving his spirit
- ⇒ Being a stumbling block
- ⇒ Being a bad example

**2. By confronting him face to face.**

- |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| ⇒ Insulting   | ⇒ Showing disrespect |
| ⇒ Abusing     | ⇒ Showing bitterness |
| ⇒ Humiliating | ⇒ Being angry        |
| ⇒ Degrading   | ⇒ Being hostile      |
| ⇒ Arguing     |                      |

**3. By tearing him down behind his back.**

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| ⇒ Talking about | ⇒ Murmuring        |
| ⇒ Lying         | ⇒ Criticizing      |
| ⇒ Gossiping     | ⇒ Spreading rumors |

**4. By encroaching on his rights or property.**

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| ⇒ Deceiving | ⇒ Lying     |
| ⇒ Cheating  | ⇒ Envy      |
| ⇒ Stealing  | ⇒ Bypassing |

**2. Go to the brother with witnesses.** Some Christian brothers are stubborn; others are immature; still others are gripped by selfish and sinful motives and behavior. Therefore an offending brother may not be willing to be reconciled nor willing to admit his wrong. In such cases one or two loving and wise brothers are to be taken with us to the offending brother. This act does several things.

- a. It shows the brother that there is deep concern; a number of people do care and want to help.
- b. It also shows that the offense is known by more than one or two people. At least several know.
- c. It also provides objective and wise counsel between the two differing parties. Agreement and reconciliation are more likely to arise from this.
- d. It helps to prevent bias, selfish reaction, and partial interest.

**Thought 1.** This step should never be taken until the brother has been approached alone. We are not to talk about or share a brother's wrong with anyone else—not ever—not until we have sat down with him personally in the love of Christ.

However, this step *is* to be taken if he persists in his divisiveness. But it is always to be done in a spirit of humility, love, care, and personal unworthiness.

**Thought 2.** There is sometimes a tendency to give up after a divisive brother refuses reconciliation—to let him suffer whatever punishment follows. However, Christ says, "Keep on; stay after him. Don't give up." Note: this is the demand of Christ throughout the whole course of discipline. Christ never gives up reaching out to the sinning brother. Therefore, the church is never to give up (see **Deeper Study #2—Matthew 18:17**). The divisiveness of the Galatian church and its personal attack upon Paul are prime examples of this fact. Paul was constantly reaching out to those who were so imperfect and ever failing (**Galatians 4:19**).

**3. Go before the church** (see below **Deeper Study #2—Matthew 18:17** for discussion).

#### **DEEPER STUDY #2**

**(Matthew 18:17) Discipline, Church:** the outlines and preceding notes of this Scripture should be read before reading this note in order to have a complete picture (**Matthew 18:15-20**).

A brother who has a personal quarrel with another brother is to be disciplined if three things exist.

- If he continues in open rebellion against the Lord.
- If he continues to be gripped by the selfishness, covetousness, and worldliness of this earth.

- If he refuses reconciliation with his brother after three attempts at reconciliation have been made as spelled out by Christ.

What is the discipline? The divisive brother is to be treated just as he is acting: as an outsider—just as a heathen and a publican. The heathen or sinners and publicans were the very people for whom Christ reached out. They were outside the fold, but they were reachable. The divisive brother is acting as an outsider: he will not listen and respond to the humble and loving appeals for reconciliation. Therefore, he is to be left alone and not bothered until he is ready to listen and be reconciled. He is refusing reconciliation and living as an outsider, just as the lost live. Accordingly, the church can do nothing but treat him as an outsider.

1. The offending brother himself made the choice not to be reconciled. He stood at the crossroads of reconciliation on three specific occasions. He is personally responsible for his decision.
2. The church reached and reached out for the dear brother. It made every attempt to lead the brother to stop the divisiveness and to be reconciled.
3. The life the brother has chosen to live is his discipline. It is his decision to be an outsider instead of being reconciled to his brother and his church. It is his decision to live in the world of "sinners and publicans" instead of living in the presence and reconciliation of God's people.

4. The discipline of the brother is a discipline which allows the church to continue to reach out for the backslidden brother. *Sinners and publicans* are the very people to whom Christ went and to whom the church is to go. The discipline of the brother is: "Let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican." Apparently Christ is saying this: the church is to continue seeking after him *as it deems wise*, just as they seek after all outsiders. Realistically, however, the attempts at future reconciliation would probably be much less often. The dear brother's heart will have fewer opportunities to be stirred by those who love and care for him so deeply.

**"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" ([Mark 9:42](#)).**

**"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" ([Romans 14:13](#)).**

**"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" ([Romans 14:15](#)).**

**"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" ([Romans 14:21](#)).**

**"Giving no offence in any thing" ([2 Cor. 6:3](#)).**

**"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" ([1 John 2:10](#)).**

**2. ([Matthew 18:17-18](#)) Church Discipline: the second step in correcting an offending brother is to discipline the brother.**

Christ discusses two points in dealing with the actual disciplining of an offending brother.

- 1.** The earthly discipline. If the offending brother refuses to be reconciled after the appeal by two or three believers, then the matter is to be carried to the church. Why would Christ say that personal offenses are to be taken before the church and made public?
  - a.** The offending brother has already refused two humble and loving appeals: the first appeal of the offended person, and the second appeal by one or two loving and wise witnesses.
  - b.** The offending brother's refusal to be reconciled is a serious threat and danger. If the breach continues unresolved, it will cause more division and harm both within and without the church. Other lives will be seriously affected, both among the saved and the lost. The testimony of the church and of those involved in the division will be weakened, and the interest of the almost saved will be soured and dampened, perhaps extinguished. The tongues of the carnal believers and of the lost will be set aflame. A brother who trespasses against another brother and causes division within the church (and who refuses to be reconciled) commits a serious offense that affects many lives. Because of this, the matter has to be dealt with step by step. It cannot be ignored and left unresolved.

Taking a person's behavior before the church, whether the church as a whole or some official committee of the church, is a very serious matter. It is as serious a matter as can be imagined. But what Christ is after must be kept in mind: Christ wants to keep the sin, division, and devastation from spreading and destroying the lives and testimonies of others.

- c.** Christ wants the two brothers to be reconciled with each other and with God, and He wants the offending brother to be restored into the care and fellowship of the church.
- d.** Christ wants to keep the sin, division, and devastation from spreading and destroying the interest of the *nearly saved*, perhaps causing them to be lost forever.
- e.** Christ wants to prevent giving the world a reason for setting their tongues on fire and spreading rumors that damage the image and work of His church.
- f.** Christ wants the two brothers and their close friends and fellow church members to build a strong witness, not a divisive witness. He is not willing for a single person to perish. He wants the world saved, every person in the world ([2 Peter 3:9](#)), and two things are essential for a

church to reach the maximum number of people which it should be reaching:

- ⇒ Love—brother loving brother in the Lord ([John 13:33-34](#)).
- ⇒ A strong witness and testimony by the brothers of the church.
- g.** Christ wants differences and divisiveness settled among His people, and not by the world's legal system of carnal or godless philosophies and arguments. The atmosphere of law settles nothing; it only produces more trouble and deeper feelings and rifts. Among God's people, disputed relationships and differences are to be settled between the two involved persons *alone*. If that fails, then one or two loving and wise persons are to be called in. Then and only then, if these fail to settle the matter, is the matter to be taken before a number of official representatives from the church. This procedure is clearly the wish of our Lord ([Matthew 18:15-17](#). See outline page #98 —' [1 Cor. 6:1-8](#) and notes—' **DEEPER STUDY 1 Cor. 6:1-8.**)
- h.** Christ wants every member to work and build, not destroy the church. The church exists for worship, fellowship, ministry, and witness. Harmony, peace, love, and purpose build the church; sin and divisiveness destroy the church. For this reason alone divisiveness must not be allowed to prevail within the church. It has to be dealt with if the church is to remain the church and be the Lord's.

What is said above bears repeating. Taking a person's behavior before the church is a very serious matter. It is as serious a matter as can be imagined. Several facts make it extremely serious.

- a.** A person's life is involved. The person can be damaged, turned off and pushed away from the Lord and God's people forever.
- b.** Public discussion of personal behavior is a very, very sensitive subject. It can easily arouse emotions and cause more division. It can even turn some of the spiritually minded away from the church.
- c.** Personal behavior and *juicy news* are what the carnal nature of man enjoys discussing. It is the subject of which rumors are made. It sets aflame the tongues and imaginations of most people. Few are spiritually free of the urge to talk about the faults and rumors surrounding others. The very nature of man enjoys knowing and sharing the faults of others with close friends. Why? It is the downing of others that elevates self and gives some justification (excuse) to sinful behavior and flesh-feeding habits. And most follow and revel in sinful flesh, not in God's Spirit. This is true even among many professing believers.
- d.** Few can keep confidences. Few can keep quiet. Even the most trusted and loving and wise do not keep confidences. A person who will keep confidences is more rare than a rare gem that takes many lifetimes to discover. Therefore, when a matter is shared, it must always be remembered and understood that it will be spread around. What will the effects be as it spreads around? The effects must always be



measured as one considers sharing personal behavior and differences with others, whether with just another individual, or with the church as a whole.

- e. The world—both the public and the lost within and without the local community—will hear about personal behavior being carried before the church. Again, the effect upon the world's thoughts, talk, attitudes, and openness of heart to the gospel must be carefully considered before rushing before the church with matters that concern personal behavior.

Now, when should a personal matter and difference be taken before the church? (Perhaps a more appropriate question would be, when should a personal matter concerning a brother ever be discussed with another individual?)

- a. When we are *absolutely sure* that God does not want us to continue bearing the hurt and injury any longer as a learning experience. When we are absolutely sure there is no more need for us to be...
  - learning more trust
  - learning more patience
  - learning more endurance
  - learning more humility
  - learning more love
  - learning more experience
  - learning more hope
  - learning more conformity to His image (or suffering)
  - learning more glory
- b. When we are *absolutely sure* that the Lord's Spirit is leading us to share the matter of personal behavior.
- c. When we are *ready to acknowledge* our own failures and sinfulness and potential for failing ([Romans 14:4](#); [1 Cor. 10:12](#)).
- d. When we are gripped by a spirit of prayer, softness, tenderness, warmth, love, and humility.
- e. When we are gripped by the spirit of "bearing one another's burdens" ([Galatians 6:1-3](#)).
- f. When we are *absolutely sure* that we have followed the steps spelled out by Christ ([Matthew 18:15-17](#)).

2. The heavenly support of the discipline. Note that heaven's discipline of the divisive brother is the same as the earthly or church discipline. What does it mean to "bind" (*dēsēte* <sup>PWS: 379</sup>) someone on earth? One thing is sure—it cannot mean that any man or any church has the power to forgive or not forgive sins. No man or church has the power to doom or save and set free a person.

What it probably means is this: when a brother chooses sin and refuses to be reconciled after the church reaches and reaches out after him, he is lost to the church. There is no relationship between him and the church. The church

failed to reach him; therefore he is *bound to the earth* and to being treated as an outsider. Thus heaven—God Himself—will reckon him to be bound by sin as an outsider just as the church binds (reckons) him. Similarly, if he is ever reached by the church and "loosed" (*lusēte* <sup>PWS: 2409</sup>) from the bondage of sin, heaven will reckon him loosed. God will receive him back as a redeemed brother, as an insider.

**Thought 1.** In the final analysis, divisiveness and those who cause divisiveness have to be confronted and handled. "**A house divided against itself cannot stand**" ([Matthew 12:25](#)).

Christ insists that a divisive brother be disciplined and treated as an outsider. (But we must *always* remember: this action is to be taken only after reconciliation has been attempted at least three times.) Why must divisiveness and the brother who caused the divisiveness be handled?

- 1) Divisiveness threatens survival. A body, an organization, even the church itself can stand only if it is unified and functioning in peace and harmony.
- 2) Divisiveness threatens purity and character. The church is seen as corrupt and weak if such things as divisiveness and grumbling are allowed.
- 3) Divisiveness threatens order and mission and ministry. Divisiveness can threaten and cause failure of any purpose, mission, or ministry. Disorder assures defeat and failure.

**Thought 2.** This passage is a wonderful thing: Christ Himself, our wonderful Lord, has given us the very procedure (steps) to take in dealing with divisive brothers. How much we need to follow His instructions!

**Thought 3.** Discipline of a divisive brother is necessary in order to preserve the church and all that it stands for.

**3. ([Matthew 18:19-20](#)) Prayer: the third step in correcting an offending brother is the essential step—to bathe the matter in prayer.** The words, "Again, I say unto you," stress the importance of this step. The matter must be *bathed in prayer*, but how we go about praying is critical.

1. We must seek agreement about the matter of correcting a brother ([Matthew 18:19](#)). The matter of correction is an awesome responsibility. It is not to be left in the hands of a single person. There are always to be at least two persons involved.

2. We must seek God's will and approval, making sure correction is His will ([Matthew 18:19](#)). No correction should ever be attempted that is not God's will and is not according to the explicit statement of His Word. Any correction of an offending brother must demonstrate God's love, compassion, and mercy.

3. We must seek unity "in Jesus' name," not just human agreement, not just following human thoughts and rules governing discipline. The unity must be "in His name," brought about by His Spirit and in accordance with the whole counsel of God's Word (not just a section taken out of context or interpreted without considering all of God's teaching about a matter) ([Matthew 18:19](#)).

If these steps are truly pursued, the Lord promises His presence in the decision made and in the correction of an offending brother.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" ([Matthew 7:7](#)).

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" ([Matthew 21:22](#)).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" ([Ephes. 6:18](#)).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" ([1 Chron. 16:11](#)).

## DEEPER STUDY [1 Cor. 6:1-8](#).)

### A Case of Legal Dispute, [6:1-8](#)

[\(1 Cor. 6:1-8\)](#) **Legal Disputes:** this passage deals *only with disputes between Christian brothers*. It says nothing about going to court against unbelievers, the heathen. Note that Paul uses a progressive argument. He progresses from question to question, building reason upon reason until he reaches the great Christian principle itself: the believer ought to suffer wrong rather than run the risk of doing wrong.

**1. Question 1: Do you dare go before the unjust world instead of saints to settle legal matters between Christian brothers (v.1)?**

**2. Question 2: Do you not know your high and exalted authority (v.2-3)?**

**3. Question 3: Do you choose unbelievers as judges who have no standing in the church (v.4)?**

**4. Question 4: Is there not a wise man in the church (v.5-6)?**

**5. Question 5: Why not give in—suffer being cheated rather than running the risk of cheating a brother (v.7-8)?**

**1. (1 Cor. 6:1) Legal Suits— Court— Justice: the first question—do you dare go before the unjust world instead of saints to settle matters between Christian brothers?** The thought in the Greek is forceful: How dare you—you who are the saints of God—go to law before the unjust of the world!

Believers are not to be disputing and arguing over rights and authority nor over the things and possessions of this world. They are to be working and using what they earn for Christ and His cause to reach the masses of humanity who are lost and dying from starvation, disease, poverty, and sin.

This was not the case within the Corinthian church, however. The church was divided, and there were apparently some who had sought legal judgment against some others. Whether the judgment involved rights within the church or actual property, or some dispute over some matter between two or more individuals is not known. There was simply a problem of legal dispute, and the opposing parties had sought secular judgment.

Note that the two conflicting parties were believers; the secular judges were unbelievers. Note also that the secular judges are called "the unjust." This does not mean that the world's judges were legally unjust, that is, that the believers might not get a fair trial. It is only referring to unbelievers as a class of people who are unjust or unjustified before God. It is contrasting the church with the world, the believer with the unbeliever. Believers are to settle their disputes between themselves within their own Christian society and be governed by the life of Christ and the law of God. In God's eyes it is wrong for *believers* to go to law against each other before the world's judges. There are at least three reasons why it is wrong.

**1. Believers who settle differences before the world reproach and damage the name of Christ and the testimony of the church.**

There is no disputing this fact. It happens every time; there is no escape from the terrible tragedy: the name of Christ is always hurt when believers *carry their differences* before the world.

**Thought 1.** The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (trust), meekness, and self-control; and it is the fruit of the Spirit that is so desperately needed by the world. But what the world receives from *disputing Christians* is anything but love and the fruit of God's Spirit. There is a devastating difference between the testimonies of peace and conflict, joy and tension, love and anger. Just picture the scene, the awfulness of the scene as God sees it: two believers, two people who really trust God, *standing before* a judge who rejects and rebels against God. And they are asking him to judge between them instead of asking God or some Christian leader to help them see the matter clearly. Just imagine what God thinks of the two conflicting brothers!

**2. Believers who settle differences before the world fail the Lord and fail Him miserably.** How? They fail to govern their affairs by the *life of Christ and the law of God*. They go before unbelievers who do not govern affairs by the law of Christ nor by the law of God. Believers are to live by Christ and His Word, not by the standards and rules of the world. Believers are to salt and permeate the world, not the other way around. Believers are to be the standard for the world; they are not to accept and live by the standards of the world.

**"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" ([2 Cor. 6:17-18](#)).**

**"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" ([Galatians 6:2](#)).**

**3. Believers have both the Holy Spirit and Christ-centered leaders to help them determine God's wisdom.** Every genuine believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God, and has leaders within his church who can give him spiritual counsel. God has given His Spirit to His people for the very purpose of guiding and teaching them. He has also given spiritual leaders for the same purpose. It is God's will for believers who have conflicts to seek the guidance of His Spirit and church.

**"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" ([James 1:5](#)).**

**"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" ([John 14:16-17](#)).**

**"But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" ([John 14:26](#)).**

**"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his....For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" ([Romans 8:9, 13](#)).**

**"Which thing also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" ([1 Cor. 2:13](#)).**

**"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).**

**"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 John 2:27).**

**Thought 1.** The church and its believers must begin to live as God and His Word instructs. A different life-style must be seen; a Christian life-style of love and purity, care and concern, discipline and godly justice must be held up ever so highly for the world to see. It is the only conceivable way the world can ever see real love and godly justice and have its desperate needs met. In particular the leaders of the church and its believers must surrender their lives and give all they have to live as God instructs. They are especially held accountable to see to it that the love and wisdom of God are ministered to His people.

**"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8-10).**

**2. (1 Cor. 6:2-3) Reward—Believers, Position: the second question—do you not know your high and exalted authority?** These two verses state clearly that believers are to judge *all disputes* between themselves. They are to judge "the smallest matters" (1 Cor. 6:2) and the "things that pertain to this life" (1 Cor. 6:3). There is one supreme reason believers are not to go before the world for judgment:

⇒ Believers are to judge and govern the world. In fact, they are to even judge and govern angels in the next world.

Therefore, conflicting believers lower themselves, lose their dignity as saints, and walk out of their exalted position when they secure a verdict from the world.

**1.** The word "judge" means the right and power to govern, administer affairs, rule, hold authority, supervise, oversee, and judge. This glorious right and power is to be given to the believer when Christ returns to rule and govern the whole universe. Paul is telling

believers that they shall direct and oversee the world and angels. Christ told the apostles that they shall govern and oversee Israel ([Matthew 10:28](#)). The assignment of responsibility, duty, and work is taught throughout Scripture. There is to be *judging*, that is, governing, supervision, and oversight throughout eternity. All this activity and responsibility is, of course, for and under Christ.

For some unknown reason we so often picture *eternal life* as some dreamy sleep or semi-conscious type of existence or some future existence that puts us on a fluffy cloud. Eternal life is often pictured as floating around in an eternal state of inactivity. Why man cannot accept the simple statement of Christ that life is to be eternal is difficult to understand. Eternal life is life that goes on and on. There is, however, one basic difference: life shall be perfected, perfected in body, mind, and spirit. It is life lived in the midst of a new heaven and earth (perfected)—life lived before Christ and responsible to Christ in all that is assigned ([John 3:16](#); [John 5:24](#); [Romans 8:19-23](#); [2 Peter 3:9-18](#); [1 John 5:11-13](#); [Rev. 21:1](#)).

2. The rule and reign of believers is a fact. It is a fact so sure and certain that the Bible speaks of it in the present. The words "the world shall be judged by you" are literally "is being judged." The rule and reign of the believer is an absolute fact.

**"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" ([Matthew 19:28](#). See note—' [Matthew 19:28](#).)**

**"And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" ([Matthew 20:23](#)).**

**"That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" ([Luke 22:30](#)).**

**"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" ([John 5:22](#)).**

**"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" ([Romans 8:17](#)).**

**"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" ([Ephes. 2:6-7](#)).**



"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" ([2 Tim. 2:12](#)).

"For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" ([Hebrews 2:5-9](#)).

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" ([Rev. 2:26-27](#)).

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" ([Rev. 20:4](#)).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" ([Rev. 21:1](#)).

"And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city" ([Isaiah 1:26](#)).

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" ([Isaiah 65:17](#)).

"Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" ([Daniel 7:22](#)).

**3. [\(1 Cor. 6:4\) Church, Problems: the third question—do you choose unbelievers as judges?](#)** In the Greek this sentence is emphatic: the unbelievers are...

- as nothing in the church.
- of no account in judging matters in the church.
- not held in high esteem within the church.
- of no standing in the church.

The unbelievers do not live by the life of Christ nor by the standards of God. How then can they stand before believers and judge matters in *the spirit of Christ and by God's standards*? Just think how

far these Corinthian believers had fallen from their exalted position given them in Christ! Just think how far some believers and churches have fallen in our day from their exalted position in Christ Jesus our Lord!

**4. (1 Cor. 6:5-6) Church, Problems: the fourth question—is there not a wise man in the church?** The need is for shame and embarrassment. Anyone who would walk off from an exalted position and turn away from the wisdom of God in order to secure advice from a person with no standing in God's government needs to be shamed. The question is dramatic and pointed: is there not a single wise man among you? No, not even one that can arbitrate and give a simple judgment when conflicts arise? The thrust is twofold:

- 1. There is no excuse for conflict among brothers, for believers going to law against one another.**
- 2. There is especially no excuse for conflicting brothers going to law before the unbelievers of the world.**

"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" ([1 Cor. 3:3](#)).

"But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers" ([1 Cor. 6:6](#)).

"But now are they many members, yet but one body" ([1 Cor. 12:20](#)).

"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord" ([Phil. 4:2](#)).

**5. (1 Cor. 6:7-8) Church, Problems: the fifth question—why not give in?** Why not suffer being wronged and cheated rather than running the risk of wronging and cheating a brother? Note two points.

- 1. The word "fault" means defeat.** The very fact of engaging in legal disputes is a defeat, clear evidence of hurt and damage. Just think of who is hurt and damaged when believers engage in legal disputes:
  - ⇒ The parties themselves suffer pain, tension, anger, and an innumerable list of other hurtful emotions.
  - ⇒ The church suffers the loss of its testimony for Christ and the pain of being known as hypocritical.
  - ⇒ The unbelievers suffer by being turned off by those who profess love, joy, and peace, and yet who show the very opposite. They suffer having their opportunity to be saved erased even more. How many unbelievers have been doomed because of the irresponsible behavior of believers before the world?

⇒ Christ suffers because His people are not holding high the banner of His witness, but rather are causing it to be distasteful and cursed.  
What an indictment against any believer who causes so much suffering!

**"And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also" ([Luke 6:29](#)).**

**"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men" ([Romans 12:17](#)).**

**"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).**

**"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" ([1 Peter 3:9](#)).**

**"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD" ([Leviticus 19:18](#)).**

**"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee" ([Proverbs 20:22](#)).**

**"Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work" ([Proverbs 24:29](#)).**

## **[2. Some of the Corinthian believers were guilty \(1 Cor. 6:8\).](#)**

They wanted their rights and more. They wanted some of the things which their brothers had; therefore, they went after them. Note: they did not steal them outrightly; they sought them by legal means. They used the legal system of the world to *defraud* their brothers. The world called it legal, but it was cheating and stealing to God. It was sin, a terrible injustice.

**"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess" ([Matthew 23:25](#)).**

**"Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right" ([Proverbs 16:8](#)).**

**"The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death" ([Proverbs 21:6](#)).**

**"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" ([Jeremiah 17:11](#)).**

# Elder. Continued

## Phillipians 1

### The Marks of a Healthy Church, [1:1-2](#)

[\(Phil. 1:1-2\)](#) **Introduction:** this is a most unusual greeting to a church from Paul. He does not refer to himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Why? There was no need for him to defend his call from God. His relationship with the church at Philippi was just what it should be: a relationship founded and rooted in Jesus Christ and in the love and respect for each other. The church held its minister, Paul, ever so closely to its heart; they loved and cared for him as few churches love and care for their ministers. This greeting gives some outstanding distinctive of Christian believers.

- [1. A healthy church discipled young people \(v.1\).](#)
- [2. A healthy church serves Christ \(v.1\).](#)
- [3. A healthy church is full of true saints \(v.1\).](#)
- [4. A healthy church has leaders who lead by example \(v.1\).](#)
- [5. A healthy church experiences grace and peace \(v.2\).](#)

**1. [\(Phil. 1:1\) Discipleship— Young People: a healthy church discipled young people.](#)** In the words "Paul and Timothy" we see *a father and son in the faith*—the adult and the young person together. There was deep affection that bound Paul and Timothy together. That affection found its root and purpose in the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul contributed the wisdom of experience, and Timothy the hope and vibrant energy of youth. It should be noted that the adult, Paul, is mentioned first. The adult always holds the primary responsibility and privilege for taking hold of young people and making disciples of them. This was the command of the Lord's *great commission*; therefore, the believer must always keep his focus upon finding young people and making disciples of them (see note below, **DEEPER STUDY [Discipleship—<sup>\\*</sup> Matthew 28:19-20](#)** for more discussion).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching [making disciples] them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" ([2 Tim. 2:2](#)).

### DEEPER STUDY [Discipleship—<sup>\\*</sup> Matthew 28:19-20](#)

[\(Matthew 28:19-20\) Commission, Great— Disciples, Making:](#) Jesus commissioned His followers. He commissioned not only the eleven apostles, but all who were present, more than five hundred disciples. However, note something of crucial importance: it was impossible for that generation to reach the whole world in its lifetime. Therefore, the

commission given to the first generation of believers extends beyond to all generations of believers. The very same charge given to them is given to us. Our Lord charges us with the very same words, **"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations...."**

**The Lord's commission.**

**He commissions us to "go ye...and make disciples of all nations."** This is one of the crucial verses in the Bible. No verse is more important for genuine believers.

Teaching and baptizing are not enough to reach the world for Christ. Both are important, and Christ commissions both; but He says something else must precede both: discipleship. **"Go ye therefore and 'metheteusate' all nations" ([Matthew 28:19](#)).**

**"*Mathēteusate*"** [PWS: 3898](#), means to make disciples. Thus the verse accurately reads, "Go ye therefore and 'make disciples' of all nations...." Most messages that are preached on this passage stress the objective of our Lord, the reaching of all nations, as though this is what our Lord had in mind. There is no question, the great commission is what Christ had in mind. He has instructed us to go to all nations and evangelize them. But there is the strong conviction that He had more than that objective in mind, more than just an overriding purpose—much more.

Our Lord was not only telling us "to go and evangelize," He was telling us *how* to go and *how* to evangelize. He was not only giving His ultimate *objective* and overriding purpose, He was giving *the method* to use in evangelizing the world.

Think about the word **"*mathēteusate*"** (make disciples). What does our Lord mean by "make disciples"? Does it not mean that we are to do what He did: make disciples and do things with them as He did. Is He not telling us to do exactly as He did?

What *did* He do? Christ **"came to seek and save that which was lost" ([Luke 19:10](#))**. He sought the lost, those who were willing to commit their lives to Him. And when He found such a person, He saved that person. When Christ found a person who was willing to commit his life, Christ attached Himself to that person. Christ began to mold and make that person into His image. The word *attach* is the key word. It is probably the word that best describes discipleship. Christ made disciples of men by attaching Himself to them; and through that personal attachment, they were able to observe His life and conversation; and in seeing and hearing, they began to absorb and assimilate His very character and behavior. They began to follow Him and to serve Him more closely. In simple terms this is what our Lord did. This is the way He made disciples. This was His mission and His method, His obsession: to attach Himself to willing believers.

There is another way to describe what Christ did. Christ envisioned something beyond Himself and beyond His day and time. He envisioned an *extension* of Himself, an *extension* of His very being, and an *extension* of His mission and method. The way He chose to extend Himself was discipleship, attaching Himself to committed persons, and through attachment, the persons absorbed and assimilated the Lord's very character and mission. They in turn attached themselves to others and disciplined them. They, too, expected their disciples to make disciples of others who were willing to commit their

lives to Christ. Thus was the glorious message of Christ to march down through the centuries ([2 Tim. 2:2](#)).

There is no question what our Lord's commission is: we are to go; but more than that, we are to make disciples, to attach ourselves to those persons who will follow our Lord until they in turn can make disciples ([2 Tim. 2:2](#)).

**"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" ([Matthew 10:7](#)).**

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)).**

**"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" ([Mark 16:15](#)).**

**"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" ([John 20:31](#)).**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).**

**"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" ([Acts 5:20](#)).**

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).**

**"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" ([1 Peter 3:15](#)).**

**2. ([Phil. 1:1](#)) Servants— Slaves (*doulos*): a healthy church serves Jesus Christ, really serves Him.** The word "servant" (*doulos*) is the word *bond-slave* in Greek. There is a distinct difference between a servant and a slave. A servant is free to work for whomever he wishes; a slave is bought and purchased—completely and totally owned by a master. A slave is bound by law to his master.

Paul calls himself and Timothy the *slaves of Jesus Christ*. A look at the slave market of Paul's day shows more clearly what Paul meant when he said he was a "slave of Jesus Christ."

**1.** The slave was owned by his master; he was totally possessed by his master. This is what Paul meant. Paul was purchased and possessed by Christ. Christ had looked upon him and had seen his degraded and needful condition. And when Christ looked, the most wonderful thing happened: Christ loved him and bought him. Therefore, he was now the possession of Christ.

**2.** The slave existed for his master and he had no other reason for existence. He had no personal rights whatsoever. The same was true with Paul: he existed only for Christ. His rights were the rights of Christ only.

3. The slave served his master and he existed only for the purpose of service. He was at the master's disposal any hour of the day. So it was with Paul: he lived only to serve Christ—hour by hour and day by day.

4. The slave's will belonged to his master. He was allowed no will and no ambition other than the will and ambition of the master. He was completely subservient to the master and owed total obedience to the will of the master. Paul belonged to Christ. In fact, he even said that he fought and struggled to bring *every thought* into captivity "to the obedience of Christ" ([2 Cor. 10:3-5](#), esp. [2 Cor. 10:5](#)).

5. There is a fifth and most precious thing that Paul meant by his being "a slave of Jesus Christ." He meant that he had the highest and most honored and kingly profession in all the world. Men of God, the greatest men of history, have always been called "the servants of God." It was the highest title of honor. The believer's slavery to Jesus Christ is no cringing, cowardly, or shameful subjection. It is the position of honor—the honor that bestows upon a man the privileges and responsibilities of serving the King of kings and Lord of lords.

- ⇒ Moses was the slave of God ([Deut. 34:5](#); [Psalm 105:26](#); [Malachi 4:4](#)).
- ⇒ Joshua was the slave of God ([Joshua 24:9](#)).
- ⇒ David was the slave of God ([2 Samuel 3:18](#); [Psalm 78:70](#)).
- ⇒ Paul was the slave of Jesus Christ ([Romans 1:1](#); [Phil. 1:1](#); [Titus 1:1](#)).
- ⇒ James was the slave of God ([James 1:1](#)).
- ⇒ Jude was the slave of God ([Jude 1](#)).
- ⇒ The prophets were the slaves of God ([Amos 3:7](#); [Jeremiah 7:25](#)).
- ⇒ Christian believers are said to be the slaves of Jesus Christ ([Acts 2:18](#); [1 Cor. 7:22](#); [Ephes. 6:6](#); [Col. 4:12](#); [2 Tim. 2:24](#)).

**Thought 1.** The great need today is for men and women to become slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must become His slaves and do what He says. Then and only then will the world be reached with the glorious news of eternal life. Then and only then will the desperate needs of the world be met.

**"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" ([John 12:26](#); cp. [Romans 12:1](#); [1 Cor. 15:58](#)).**

**"[Laboring] not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" ([Ephes. 6:6-7](#)).**

**"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" ([Col. 3:23-24](#)).**

**"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" ([Hebrews 12:28](#)).**

**"And ye shall serve the Lord your God" ([Exodus 23:25](#)).**

**"What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" ([Deut. 10:12](#)).**



"Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling" ([Psalm 2:11](#)).

"Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing" ([Psalm 100:2](#)).

**3. [\(Phil. 1:1\) Saints— Sanctified— Holy: a healthy church is full of true saints.](#)** The Bible never uses the word *saint* to refer to a few people in the church who have achieved unusual spiritual maturity. The word saints refers to the sanctified or holy ones. It simply means to be set apart and to be separated. Therefore, every believer who has truly trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior is separated from the world and set apart to live for God. Every true believer is a "saint," a person set apart unto God. **There are three stages of sanctification.**

**1. There is initial or positional sanctification.** When a person believes in Christ, he is immediately set apart for God—once and for all—permanently.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" ([Hebrews 3:1](#)).

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" ([Hebrews 10:10](#)).

**2. There is progressive sanctification.** The true believer makes a determined and disciplined effort to allow the Spirit of God to set him apart day by day. The Spirit of God takes him and conforms him into the image of Christ more and more—for as long as he walks upon this earth.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" ([John 17:17](#)).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" ([2 Cor. 3:18](#)).

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" ([Ephes. 5:25-26](#)).

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" ([1 Thes. 5:23-24](#)).

**3. There is eternal sanctification.** The day is coming when the believer will be perfectly set apart unto God and His service—without any sin or failure whatsoever. That day will be the great and glorious day of the believer's eternal redemption.

"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" ([Ephes. 5:27](#)).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" ([1 John 3:2](#)).

**Thought 1.** We are the property of the Lord Jesus, set apart as His holy possession. Let us, therefore, live as the possession of the Lord. Let us walk as the separated people of God, living holy and righteous and pure lives.

**Thought 2.** Lehman Strauss points out the following (*Devotional Studies in Philippians*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1959, p.32f).

**1) God is a thrice-holy God.**

"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" ([Isaiah 6:3](#)).

"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" ([Rev. 4:8](#)).

**2) The Lord Jesus Christ who saved us is holy.**

"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together" ([Acts 4:27](#)).

"And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus" ([Acts 4:29-30](#)).

**3) The Spirit of God who indwells our bodies is holy.**

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).

**4) The Bible, which is to be the guide of our lives, is called the Holy Scripture.**

"Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures" ([Romans 1:2](#)).

**5) One of the names given to us is that of *holy brothers*.**

"I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren" ([1 Thes. 5:27](#)).

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" ([Hebrews 3:1](#)).

**6) One of the great gifts of God is to make us a *holy priesthood* before God.**

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 2:5](#)).

**7) The great call of God to us is a *holy calling*.**

**"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" ([2 Tim. 1:9](#)).**

**8) The great purpose for the Lord's return is to present us *holy before God*.**

**"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight" ([Col. 1:21-22](#)).**

**9) One of the great inheritances we shall receive when the Lord returns is the *holy city*.**

**"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" ([Rev. 21:2](#)).**

In light of all that God has done for us, how can we do anything less than to live a sanctified, holy life before God? How can we be lethargic and complacent, sleepy-eyed, and unmotivated? How can we allow ourselves to live lives of routine and unconcern? How can we live lives of indulgence, license, selfishness, immorality, perversion, wickedness, and evil?

**"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" ([2 Peter 3:10-12](#)).**

**4. [\(Phil. 1:1\) Bishops—Deacons: a healthy church organizes for ministry and has leaders who lead by example.](#)** Note that both bishops and deacons are mentioned as being in the Philippian church. What Paul is doing is addressing the leaders of the church and setting them apart from the membership whom he addressed as "saints." This is significant, for it means that the leadership or officers of the early church are here named: they were bishops and deacons. A complete discussion of these two offices is given elsewhere. The point to see in this passage is that believers organize for ministry.

**1. The bishops (*episkopois* [PWS: 383](#)) were apparently the same as the elders (*presbuteros*) or ministers of a church. The two words are used interchangeably to refer to the same men ([Acts 20:17, 28](#); [Titus 1:5, 7](#)). The word "bishop" means to oversee, look after, manage. The instructions in the [Epistle of Titus](#) say that his**

duties included primarily exhortation and overseeing the lives of the believers. The bishop was the person whom we call the minister of the church.

- 2. The deacons (*diakonois*)** were spiritually minded men who had dedicated their lives to the Lord to minister to the *saints* of God. They were persons who were chosen to minister to the widows and widowers and to the poor and sick of a church *in order to free the minister to concentrate on prayer and preaching*. But note a significant fact:

⇒ Preachers are sometimes called deacons, that is servants.

**"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers [*diakonoī*] by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" ([1 Cor. 3:5](#)).**

**"Who also hath made us able ministers [*diakonous*] of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" ([2 Cor. 3:6](#)).**

⇒ The first deacons preached as well as ministered to the needy of the church.

**"And Stephen [a deacon], full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people" ([Acts 6:8](#)).**

**"Then Philip [a deacon] went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" ([Acts 8:5](#)).**

**Thought 1.** Two significant points need to be stressed.

- 1)** The church must organize for ministry and must always be careful to ordain only persons who have proven to be spiritually mature in the Lord.
- 2)** The two ordained officers of the church must be diligent in both their duty and in sharing the Word of the Lord. Every believer is needed to bear witness for the Lord Jesus and the *leadership must take the lead*. How can we expect others to be witnessing and ministering if we, the leadership, are not witnessing and ministering?

**"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" ([Mark 10:43-44](#)).**

**"She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying" ([Mark 14:8](#)).**

**"For unto whosoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" ([Luke 12:48](#)).**

**"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" ([John 13:14](#)).**

**"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" ([John 21:16](#)).**

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" ([1 Cor. 3:9](#)).

"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" ([2 Cor. 6:1](#)).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" ([Galatians 6:10](#)).

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" ([Hebrews 12:28](#)).

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever" ([1 Peter 4:11](#)).

**5. [\(Phil. 1:2\) Grace— Peace: a healthy church experiences grace and peace](#) (see note below, [Grace—Galatians 1:3](#); note—[Ephes. 2:8-9](#); note, [Peace—](#)for discussion).**

**[\(Gal. 1:3\) Minister— Grace— Peace](#)**: the minister wishes the very best for other believers. The minister, Paul, wanted the believers of Galatia to experience the grace and peace of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Note again how the deity of Jesus Christ is proclaimed: He is placed side by side with God.)

**1. [Grace \(\*charis\*\) means the undeserved favor and blessings of God.](#)** The word *undeserved* is the key to understanding grace. Man does not deserve God's favor; he cannot earn God's approval and blessings. God is too high and man is too low for man to deserve anything from God. Man is imperfect and God is perfect; therefore, man cannot expect anything from God. Man has reacted against God too much. Man has...

- rejected God
- rebelled against God
- ignored God
- neglected God
- cursed God
- sinned against God
- disobeyed God
- denied God
- questioned God

Man deserves nothing from God except judgment, condemnation, and punishment. But God is love—perfect and absolute love. Therefore, God makes it possible for man to experience His grace, in particular the favor and blessing of salvation which is in His Son, Jesus Christ.

**"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" ([Romans 3:24](#)).**

**"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" ([2 Cor. 8:9](#)).**

**"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace" ([Ephes. 1:7](#)).**

**"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" ([Ephes. 2:7](#)).**

**"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" ([Phil. 4:19](#)).**

**"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" ([1 Tim. 1:14](#)).**

**2. Peace (*eirēnē*<sup>PWS: 2866</sup>) means to be bound, joined, and weaved together with God and with everyone else.** It means to be assured, confident, and secure in the love and care of God. It means to have a sense, a consciousness, a knowledge that God will...

- provide
- guide
- strengthen
- sustain
- encourage
- deliver
- save
- give life, real life both now and forever

A person can experience true peace only as he comes to know Jesus Christ. Only Christ can bring peace to the human heart, the kind of peace that brings deliverance and assurance to the human soul.

**"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" ([John 14:27](#)).**

**"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" ([John 16:33](#)).**

**"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" ([Romans 5:1](#)).**

**"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" ([Romans 8:6](#)).**

**"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).**

**"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord only makest me dwell in safety" ([Psalm 4:8](#)).**

The point is this: not everyone in the church was experiencing the grace and peace of God. Some had fallen from the grace of God, no longer trusting Christ to save them; they depended upon their own works and goodness to make them acceptable to God. As a result they did not have peace of heart. Some had even fallen into all forms of sin and shame ([Galatians 5:19-21](#)). Others had become extremely critical and divisive, standing against Paul and any who supported Paul.

Note: Paul wished the very best for the churches of Galatia—even for the false teachers and critics. He wanted everyone to experience...

- the grace of God by coming to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.
- the peace of God as they walked through life confronting all its struggles and trials.

**Thought 1.** Every minister should wish the very best for all believers, even for his critics and enemies. It might be difficult, but his very call to the ministry is to proclaim the grace and peace of God.

**Thought 2.** Believers must guard against falling from grace, guard against trusting their own works and goodness to save them and to make them acceptable to God.

**1. ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)) Salvation— Grace— Faith:** you are saved by God and by God alone. This is the major stress of this passage.

**1. You are saved by God's grace.** Grace means the favor and kindness of God, but there is a uniqueness about God's favor and kindness. His favor and kindness are given despite the fact that it is undeserved and unmerited. God has done a thing unheard of among men: God has given His grace to men...

- despite their cursing Him.
- despite their rejecting Him.
- despite their rebelling against Him.
- despite their hostility toward Him.
- despite their denial of Him.
- despite their neglect of Him.
- despite their half-hearted commitment to Him.
- despite their worship of religion instead of Him.
- despite their false worship.
- despite their idolatrous worship.
- despite their trespasses.
- despite their sins.

Grace is giving, but it is giving to people who do not deserve the gift. What is the gift that God has given? Jesus Christ. God has given His Son, Jesus Christ, to save men. He did not have to give His Son. God could have wiped man from the face of the earth. Man deserved it, but this is God's grace. God is full of mercy and love and kindness—by His very nature He is full of these glorious qualities. Therefore, God was bound to shower His grace upon man. God was bound to send His Son to save man.

God is not off someplace in the distance, far removed from man, disinterested and unconcerned with man's sufferings and death. God is gracious, full of mercy, love, and kindness for man; therefore, He has reached out through His Son Jesus Christ to help man. How?



⇒ By giving His Son to die *for man*. When Jesus Christ hung upon the cross, He was *taking our sins* upon Himself and bearing the punishment for our sins. We had committed high treason against God: rejected and rebelled against Him. The penalty for high treason is death; we are condemned to die. But Christ took our penalty and condemnation upon Himself. He died for us—in our place, in our stead, as our substitute. This is what Scripture means when it says that Christ died *for us*.

**"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" ([Romans 5:6](#)).**

**"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" ([Romans 5:8](#)).**

**"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" ([Romans 5:10](#)).**

Note that the people for whom Christ died did not deserve His sacrificial love. They were men who were...

- "without strength" ([Romans 5:6](#)).
- "ungodly" ([Romans 5:6](#)).
- "sinners" ([Romans 5:8](#)).
- "enemies" ([Romans 5:10](#)).

This is the grace of God—God's grace that showered itself upon sinful men who were lost and condemned—God's grace that gave the greatest gift possible to men—the gift of His Son to save the world.

**"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" ([Romans 3:24](#)).**

**"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" ([2 Cor. 8:9](#)).**

**"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" ([Ephes. 1:7](#)).**

**"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" ([Ephes. 2:4-5](#)).**

**2. You are saved through faith.** What does it mean to be saved through faith? Simply this: Jesus Christ died *for us*. He bore our sin and punishment upon the cross. When we believe, really believe, that Jesus Christ died for us, God does a wonderful thing. God takes our faith and counts it as the death of Jesus Christ *for us*. That is, when we honor God's dear Son by believing in Him so much that we give all we are and have to Him, God takes the death of Jesus Christ and applies it to us.

The point is this: it is our faith that causes God to look upon us as having been in Christ when He died. It is our faith that causes God to credit us with salvation.

Jesus Christ is God's gift to us. Salvation through Christ has been wrapped up as a gift and God hands it over to us. But note: a gift is not ours until we believe it is ours and we take and receive it. Suppose I hand you my Bible and say, "Here, this is yours. I give it to you as a gift. It is yours; take it." What is necessary for the Bible (the gift) to become yours? You have to believe it is yours and reach out and receive it. You could say, "No thank you..."

- I do not believe you.
- I don't want it.
- I deny its existence.
- I don't have the time to use it."

If this is your attitude, what happens to the gift? It never becomes yours. In my mind I gave it to you, but you never received it. You either did not believe it or did not want it.

This is what is meant by faith. If you believe, really believe that Jesus Christ died *for you*, you will reach out and receive the gift of God's grace.

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)).**

**"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" ([John 5:24](#)).**

**"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" ([John 20:31](#)).**

**"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" ([Romans 10:9-10](#)).**

**3. You are not saved of yourselves.** God is perfect, and to live in His presence, a person must be perfect. This is the great problem of man. Man is not perfect; therefore, he can never live in God's presence—not in and of himself. Even if man could be good enough and do enough good to become perfect (he cannot, but even if he could) he would not be acceptable to God. Why? Because he has already transgressed and become imperfect. He already stands imperfect, corruptible, aging, dying, and decaying. If man is ever to be acceptable to God—if he is ever to be perfected and have his past wiped clean—it will not be by his own hands. He cannot save himself. Salvation is not of man.

**"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" ([2 Cor. 10:12](#)).**

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" ([Galatians 6:3](#)).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:5](#)).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" ([Proverbs 20:6](#)).

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" ([Proverbs 28:26](#)).

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" ([Proverbs 30:12](#)).

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" ([Obadiah 3-4](#)).

**4. You are saved as a gift of God, not of works.** There are at least seven reasons why salvation must be a free gift. (Note: some of these were stirred by thoughts from **William Barclay**, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p.121f.)

- a. Man cannot make God owe him. Man cannot put God in debt for work performed. A man who works puts his employer in debt for his services ([Romans 4:4](#)). God is completely independent. He cannot be put in debt to any man. God cannot be made to owe anything or to be obligated for anything. God does not save man because He is obligated to man or owes man, but because He loves and wills to save man.
- b. Man cannot bring perfection to God. God is perfect, incorruptible, and permanent. Man and everything about man is imperfect, corruptible, and decaying. Man cannot offer and cannot give anything to God that will satisfy His perfection. Any offer or gift from an imperfect man to a perfect God is ever so short and inadequate. God accepts man's offer of himself not because man merits acceptance, but simply because God loves and wills to accept man.
- c. Man cannot make God forgive him. Man is the one who has done wrong, offended and hurt God. It is man who has broken off the friendship and relationship with God ([Romans 3:23](#); [Romans 8:6-8](#)). Therefore, man is the one who is to apologize and ask forgiveness, and God is the One who is to have mercy and do the forgiving. If God chooses to have mercy, it comes from a heart of grace, not because man deserves it.
- d. Man cannot heal God's heart. Man's sin breaks the heart of God ([Romans 5:6](#), [8](#), [10](#)). Therefore, man's offense is primarily against love; it is primarily against God's very nature of love, mercy, and peace. Since man's main offense is breaking the heart of God, he can only cast himself upon the love of God, apologize and ask forgiveness

and trust God to forgive. This is the glorious message of salvation. If man turns to God and asks forgiveness, God forgives and accepts man back into His glorious grace.

- e. Man cannot save himself ([Ephes. 2:8-9](#)). No matter what law or work was chosen to be the channel for salvation, there would be some men who could never keep that particular law or perform that particular work. If salvation were by law and works, man could never be saved. There are always many who are totally unable to work and earn their way: the deformed, the poor, the sick, the weary, the underprivileged, the disadvantaged, the oppressed, and many, many others. However, the needy are always before God's keen eyes, and He counts them precious. Therefore, He has made provision for salvation by grace and by grace alone.
- f. Man cannot make God love him ([Titus 3:4-7](#)). If salvation were by law and works, the love of God could never be known. God would be forced to save and bless us because He owes us, not because He loves us. Our works would forever require Him to pay our wages. He would not be free to do something for us freely simply because He loved us. We would never know what it is to be loved by God. We would know only what it is to be paid by God for work done.
- g. Man cannot set himself free and bring about liberty of conscience. If we were saved by law and works, liberty and freedom of spirit and conscience would never be experienced. We constantly fail and come short. This eats and gnaws away at us. If God does not forgive us simply because He loves us, then what can remove the guilt and aggravation of failure from our hearts? The law? No, for the law only points out our failure, and once we have failed we have failed, and the gnawing away of conscience begins. The only way for the gnawing and guilt of conscience to be removed is for God to forgive us for failing and to convince us of His forgiveness. This He has done by grace—His grace.

**"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" ([Matthew 7:22-23](#)).**

**"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" ([Romans 3:20](#)).**

**"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" ([Galatians 2:16](#)).**

**"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" ([Ephes. 2:8-9](#)).**

**"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according**

to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:4-5](#)).

**5. The reason salvation is by grace and not by works is to prevent men from ever boasting.** God is the Supreme and Majestic Being of the universe. He is the Creator of all that is in heaven and earth. God is the One who dwells in the ultimate of light and holiness and who deserves all the worship and glory of eternity. The honor and glory due His name are not to be shared with anyone. If man was saved by some effort of his own, he would be due some credit, some boast, some honor. This God cannot allow. His very nature forbids it. As God, He is the Supreme glory of the universe, and as the Supreme Being, He is to receive the supreme glory—that is, all glory and praise. His Supremacy—His being God—demands it.

**Thought 1.** How small we are and how glorious God is!

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped [from boasting], and all the world may become guilty before God" ([Romans 3:19](#)).

"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith" ([Romans 3:27](#)).

**2. ([Ephesians 2:10](#)) Salvation— Works, God— New Man: you are God's workmanship (*poiēma* <sup>PWS: 4429</sup>).** Note two points.

**1. We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.** The believer experiences two creations, both a natural birth and a spiritual birth. The spiritual birth is the point of this verse. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, God *creates him in Christ*. What does this mean?

⇒ It means that God *quickens the spirit* of the believer and makes his spirit alive. Whereas the believer's spirit was dead to God, God creates it anew and makes it alive to God.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" ([Ephes. 2:1](#)).

"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" ([Ephes. 2:5](#)).

⇒ It means that God causes the believer to be *born again spiritually*.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God....Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" ([John 3:3, 5-6](#)).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" ([1 Peter 1:23](#)).

**"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 [John 5:1](#)).**

- ⇒ It means that God actually places His *divine nature* into the heart of the believer.  
**"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 [Peter 1:4](#)).**
- ⇒ It means that God actually makes a *new creature* of the believer.  
**"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 [Cor. 5:17](#)).**  
**"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" ([Galatians 6:15](#)).**
- ⇒ It means that God actually creates a *new man* out of the believer.  
**"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" ([Ephes. 4:24](#)).**  
**"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" ([Col. 3:10](#)).**
- ⇒ It means that God *renews the believer* by the Holy Spirit.  
**"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:5](#)).**

**2. We are created to do good works.** God saves man *for good works* not by good works. F.F. Bruce points out that the believer is God's "workmanship" (*poiēma*), God's work of art, God's masterpiece (*The Epistle to the Ephesians*, p.52). God fashions man and creates a masterpiece. God's workmanship is always a work of art. The believer does not create the beauty, the art that shows in the canvas of his life. The believer just shows that he is God's workmanship by the life he lives and displays. Works are an evidence of salvation. Those who walk in trespasses and sins ([Ephes. 2:1-2](#)) show that they are not God's workmanship no matter what profession they make. God's people give ample evidence of the *power of a new life* which operates in them.

Note that God has *ordained* us to walk in good works. Doing good works is not an option for the believer; it is the very nature of the believer. If a man has been created in Christ—if God has truly worked in him—the man does good works. His very nature dictates it. He cannot do otherwise. He is not perfect, and he fails; but he keeps coming back to God and falling upon his knees, believing and asking forgiveness, and getting back up and going forth once again to do all the good he can. As stated, it is his nature. He is a new creature created to do good works. Therefore, he does them. Just like a tree, he bears the fruit of his nature.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" ([Matthew 5:16](#)).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" ([Col. 1:10](#)).

"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" ([1 Tim. 6:18](#)).

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" ([Titus 2:7](#)).

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" ([Titus 3:8](#)).

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" ([Hebrews 10:24](#)).

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" ([James 2:17-18](#)).

"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" ([1 Peter 2:12](#)).

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1 John 1:7](#)).



## • Evangelist.

### ▪ Ephesians 4:11

#### Evangelist

#### Ephesians 4:11

The gift of an *evangelist* (*euaggelistas* [PWS: 1325](#)). This is the gift of carrying the gospel all over the world. It is the gift that specializes in proclaiming the gospel to the lost of the world. It would include both what we call the evangelist and the missionary.

"And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him" ([Acts 21:8](#); cp. [Acts 8:26-40](#)).

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" ([Ephes. 4:11](#)).

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" ([2 Tim. 4:5](#)).

## • Pastor.

# Ephesians 4:11

### Pastor Ephesians 4:11

The gift of a *pastor* (*poimenas* <sup>PWS: 2842</sup>). This word means shepherd. A.T. Robertson points out that the Lord Jesus told Peter to shepherd His sheep ([John 21:16](#)), that Peter told other ministers to shepherd the flock of God ([1 Peter 5:2](#)), and that Paul told the elders (ministers) of Ephesus to shepherd the church of God for which Christ had died ([Acts 20:28](#)) (*Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol.4, p.537.*) The traits of a shepherd can be seen by looking at the references to Christ as the shepherd of believers.

The pastor is an under-shepherd to the Chief Shepherd, Christ Jesus our Lord.

- a. The shepherd knows the sheep;** He knows each one by name. This is said to have been a fact among shepherds and their sheep in Jesus' day. Shepherds actually knew each sheep individually, even in large herds. The fact is certainly true with Christ and His sheep.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" ([John 10:14](#)).

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" ([1 Cor. 8:3](#)).

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" ([2 Tim. 2:19](#)).

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" ([Isaiah 43:1](#)).

- b. The shepherd feeds the sheep even if He has to gather them in His arms and carry them to the feasting pasture.**

"He shall feed the flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" ([Isaiah 40:11](#)).

- c. The shepherd guides the sheep to the pasture and away from the rough places and precipices.**

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" ([Psalm 23:1-4](#)).

**d. The shepherd seeks and saves the sheep who get lost.**

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" ([Matthew 18:11-12](#)).

"I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick" ([Ezekiel 34:16](#)).

**e. The shepherd protects the sheep.** He even sacrifices His life for the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" ([John 10:11](#)).

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" ([Hebrews 13:20](#)).

**f. The shepherd restores the sheep who go astray and return.**

"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" ([1 Peter 2:25](#)).

**g. The shepherd rewards the sheep for obedience and faithfulness.**

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" ([1 Peter 5:4](#)).

**h. The shepherd shall keep the sheep separate from the goats.**

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" ([Matthew 25:32-33](#)).

## • Prophet.

[Romans 12:6-8](#); [1 Cor. 12:8-10](#);

[Ephesians 4:11](#)

### Prophet

[Ephesians 4:11](#)

The gift of a *prophet* (*prophētas* [PWS: 3064](#)). This is the gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit. It includes both prediction and proclamation, and neither one should be minimized despite the abuse of the gift.

There is no question, the gift to predict events has been abused to the point of the ridiculous. However, the abuse of a gift does not eliminate the fact that the Spirit of God sometimes gives believers a glimpse into coming events in order to prepare and strengthen them to face the events.

However, the major function of prophecy is clearly stated by Scripture, and the fact should be heeded by all believers:

**"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" ([1 Cor. 14:3](#)).**

### Prophet

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[Romans 12:6-8](#) **Gifts, Spiritual:** the believer is to use the gifts God has given him. The word "gift" (*charisma* [PWS: 1674](#)) means the very special ability given to the believer by God. Note that the gift is from God; it is not a natural talent. The believer could not have attained nor secured the ability himself. It is a spiritual gift; that is, it is given by the Spirit of God for spiritual purposes. It is given to the believer so that he can fulfill his task on earth.

Note also that the gifts are said to be given **"according to the grace that is given to us."** This means that the gifts are given after we come to know the *grace* of God. This is part of our *heritage in Christ*, the glorious privilege...

- of being given a very special task upon earth.
- of being given purpose and meaning and significance in life.
- of being given a very special gift or gifts to fulfill our task on earth.

**There is the gift of prophecy.** In the Old Testament the gift of prophecy was the gift to proclaim and explain the will of God. The proclamation dealt with past, present, and future events. However, in the New Testament, the gift of prophecy changes dramatically. The prophet is seldom seen predicting the future. Instead, he is seen proclaiming what has taken place in the Lord Jesus Christ and what has been *revealed* by

*Christ* concerning future events. His function is to edify, exhort, and comfort. The Scripture is clear about this.

**"He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).**

The prophet is the man who proclaims and explains the Word of God...

- the living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.
- the written Word, the Holy Scripture.

Having said this, it should be noted that prophecy is the gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit. It includes both prediction and proclamation, and neither one should be minimized despite the abuse of the gift.

There is no question, the gift to predict events has been abused to the point of the ridiculous. However, the abuse of a gift does not eliminate the gift: the Spirit of God does sometimes give believers a glimpse into coming events in order to prepare and strengthen them to face the events.

However, the major function of prophecy is clearly stated by Scripture, and the fact should be learned by all believers:

**"He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).**

**Thought 1.** Note a crucial point. A prophet of the Lord Jesus Christ must first know Jesus Christ before he can proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ. How can a man tell the world about Someone when he does not know the person himself?

### **Prophet Gifts**

#### **1 Cor. 12:8-10**

**(1 Cor. 12:8-10) Gifts, Spiritual:** the list of the different gifts is given to show just how diverse the gifts of the Spirit really are. He can gift a person as He wills, and His gifts are many and varied. This list is only partial; other gifts are mentioned in other passages (see outline—" [Romans 12:6-8](#); outline—" [Ephes. 4:11](#); note—" [Romans 12:6-8](#); and note—" [Ephes. 4:11](#)).

**1. There is the gift of the word of wisdom (*sophias logos* <sup>PWS: 4411</sup>).** Wisdom means the wisdom of God; this is made clear by [1 Cor. 2:7](#). The wisdom of God is the truth which God has now revealed to man; it is the whole system of truth revealed by God—the truth about God and man and the world. Therefore, the word of wisdom is the gift to share the wisdom and truth of God with men—to share the truth in simple and understandable language.

**"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" ([Romans 11:33](#)).**

**"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" ([James 3:17](#)).**

**"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his" ([Daniel 2:20](#)).**

**2. There is the gift of the *word of knowledge* (*logos gnōseōs* <sup>PWS: 4408</sup>).** This is practical knowledge. It is knowing what to do in the day-to-day situations that arise. It is knowing how to apply the wisdom that one has to daily living. It is being able to make practical application of truth to life. It does no good to know truth unless a person knows how to use the truth.

The *word of knowledge* is the gift to share with others how they should live; the ability to apply truth to their lives in day-to-day living; the ability to make practical application of truth to life.

**"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" ([John 7:16-17](#)).**

**"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" ([John 8:31-32](#)).**

**"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" ([Proverbs 2:3-5](#)).**

**"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" ([Proverbs 3:13](#)).**

## • **Teacher.**

### ▪ **1 Cor. 12:28-30**; ▪ **Ephesians 4:11**

#### **Teacher**

#### **Ephesians 4:11**

The gift of a *teacher* (*didaskalous* <sup>PWS: 3908</sup>). Some commentators consider teaching to be part of the gift of the pastor, that is, the pastor is the pastor-teacher. The function of the teacher is the gift to instruct believers in the truth of God and His Word. It is the gift to root and ground people in doctrine, reproof, correction, and righteousness. Teaching is a high calling, one of the greatest of callings. Teaching is ranked second only to the spiritual gifts of apostle and prophet (**Acts 13:1**; **1 Cor. 12:28**; **Ephes. 4:11**). Every apostle and prophet and pastor has the gift of teaching, but every teacher is not an apostle or prophet or pastor. The gift of teaching bears one of the largest responsibilities given by God; therefore, the teacher will be required to give a strict account to God for his faithfulness in using his gift (see note **Page # 131, DEEPER STUDY Teacher**—**James 3:1**).

The spiritual gift of teaching is the gift of understanding and communicating the Word of God, of edifying believers in the truths of God's Word. It involves understanding, interpreting, arranging, and communicating the Word of God. The gift of teaching is given to the believer who commits his life to the Word of God, to sharing its glorious truths with God's people.

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (**Matthew 28:19-20**).**

**"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (**Acts 20:32**).**

**"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (**1 Cor. 12:28**).**

**"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (**Ephes. 4:11**).**

**"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (**2 Tim. 2:15**).**

**"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (**2 Tim. 3:16**).**

**"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (**Acts 17:11**).**



**"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" ([1 Peter 2:2-3](#)).**

### **DEEPER STUDY Teacher**

#### **James 3:1**

**(James 3:1) Teachers:** not many believers should become teachers because teachers shall face a stricter judgment from God. A teacher (*didaskaloi* <sup>PWS: 2544</sup>) is always telling others how to live and correcting them when they come short. In fact, a teacher is responsible for the lives and spiritual growth of those under him. God holds him responsible. Therefore, if the teacher fails to live what he teaches, he shall bear a greater judgment and condemnation. The teacher must live what he preaches and teaches. Note three facts.

1. This verse stresses a pointed truth: a person should commit his life to teach only if he cannot keep from teaching. Teaching is a high calling, one of the greatest of callings. It is ranked second only to the apostles and the prophets ([Acts 13:1](#); [1 Cor. 12:28](#); [Ephes. 4:11](#)). Therefore, it has a large responsibility and is to receive the greater condemnation by God.

2. However, a person is not to fear this responsibility and neglect the gift of teaching. If he is called and gifted to teach, then he must teach. The great responsibility and potential condemnation enhances its great dignity.

3. A teacher's main tool for work is speech or the tongue. Therefore, it is the tongue and its use that will have a great bearing upon the teacher's condemnation. The tongue is where the first great temptation attacks teachers, the temptation to misuse the tongue. There are four things about the tongue that believers must know, but especially teachers.

### **Teacher Gift**

#### **1 Cor. 12:28-30**

Third gift God has set teachers in the church. The gift of teaching is the gift to instruct believers in the truth of God and His Word. It is the gift to root and ground people in doctrine, reproof, correction, and righteousness.

**"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" ([1 Cor. 12:28](#)).**

- **Problem. Shortage of.**
- **Cannot minister to everyone.**
- **Acts 6:1**
- **Causes grumbling and complaining.**
- **Acts 6:1**

**The First Administrative Problem: The First Deacons, [Acts 6:1-7](#)**

**[\(Acts 6:1-7\) Introduction:](#)** this passage is about the birth of the deacons, a whole new level of ministry in the church. Note the office of the deacons was set up to meet a need in the church for day to day ministry. The head ministers had to have help in order to fulfill their preaching mission.

1. A problem arose—some widows were being neglected (v.1).
2. The democratic recommendation (v.2).
3. The required qualifications (v.3).
4. The basic purpose: to relieve ministers (v.4).
5. The chosen deacons (v.5).
6. The official ordination (v.6).
7. The glorious results (v.7).

**1. [\(Acts 6:1\) Division— Grumbling— Criticism: a problem arose in the church. Some widows were being neglected.](#)** Two groups or cliques were seen in the church, and one was complaining and grumbling about the actions of the other. One group felt its needs were not being met; it was not getting a due share of the attention and care it deserved. **There were five reasons for the division.**

**1. The church had grown rapidly.** When any organization grows rapidly, all kinds of problems arise, and most of the problems center around how to handle the growth. The church needed to minister to the new members, but it was having difficulty handling and reaching out to everyone. The head ministers, that is, the apostles, could not get to everyone.

**2. There were different groups or cliques coming into the church.**

- ⇒ There were the Hebrews, the Jews who were born and reared in Palestine. They spoke Aramaic, the language that had come down from their ancient Hebrew language. They rejected all Gentile and Greek culture completely, and used only the Hebrew Bible in its original Hebrew language. The significant point to note is this: the Hebrew or Palestinian Jews were so inclusive and

closely-knit, they despised all Gentiles and Gentile culture. They actually despised and cursed the Gentiles, believing that the Gentiles were cursed eternally by God. This hatred even included the Grecian Jews who had been relocated to other lands by the Romans.

⇒ There were the Grecian Jews who were known as the Hellenists. These were Jews who had been scattered, deported, and dispersed all over the world by the Romans. Many of them would return for the great Feasts of Pentecost and the Passover. Apparently some had been converted on the day of Pentecost or thereafter, and had either delayed their return home or decided to move back to Jerusalem.

The Grecian or Hellenist Jews had adopted Greek culture, spoke the Greek language, and used and read the Greek Bible (the Septuagint). It is probably this that lay at the root of the problem mentioned here. The Hebrew Jews, having always been taught to reject and despise anything Grecian, were probably having difficulty getting rid of all their prejudice. No doubt, God had worked in their hearts to cleanse them of prejudice, but they apparently were still hanging on to some feelings against the Hellenists. Perhaps they felt that the Hellenists or Grecian Jews were not due as much attention or as many rights as they were.

**Thought 1.** People do and will form groups and cliques. But we must always be open and accepting, outgoing and friendly, giving and helping, humble and undeserving before each other, ministering and receiving ministry from all.

**Thought 2.** Cliques and groups are dangerous. There are sins common to cliques that must be guarded against, the sins of...

- being exclusive and shutting others out.
- feeling superior and above others.
- believing one has more rights than others.
- thinking one is due more attention than others.

**3. The leaders of the church did not have enough help to look after every member.** **Note two things** that are essential when this problem arises.

- a. The church must secure more help. It must seek out people who sense the hand of God upon them, calling them to minister and care for others.
- b. The members must be willing to quit demanding so much of the head minister, to accept the ministry of other men who are called to minister to the flock of God.

Now note a critical point: there was division in the church—grumbling and complaining and griping. Why? The lack of enough leaders to meet *all the needs*. The lack of enough leadership, of enough workers will always cause division. Some will always feel they are neglected.

**4. The church was not adequately organized to minister to all.** The leadership centered only upon the apostles. There was the need for another whole level of ministers, ministers who could reach out to every single member.

**5. There was apparently some favoritism being shown.** Most if not all of the food being distributed to the needy was being handled by the Hebrew Jews. The Grecian Jews felt that their needy were being neglected and that favoritism was being shown to those who had need among the Hebrew or Palestinian Jews.

## **2. (Acts 6:2) Church— Leaders: the democratic recommendation.**

**1. The leaders (apostles) called the whole church together.** Note: they did not deny the problem, but they graciously acknowledged that the problem might (or did) exist. The leaders knew how easily people, in particular cliques when they feel neglected, can become suspicious and cause even more problems within the church. The point to see is that the whole church was involved in the decision. The leaders *wisely* sought everyone's...

- thoughts
- advice
- counsel
- understanding
- cooperation
- involvement
- love

**2. The leaders declared their primary call and mission.** They had to concentrate on the Word of God, its study and proclamation. Note:

- ⇒ their unmistakable sense of call and mission.
- ⇒ their unwillingness to be distracted from their primary mission.
- ⇒ the church's understanding and acceptance of their mission. (How desperately this understanding and acceptance is needed by churches today!)

The apostles could have been easily sidetracked, caught up in day to day ministry—the ministry of sitting and listening, serving and meeting the needs of the needy. Such needs must be met; it is the church's duty to minister and meet them. If the church had been smaller, the apostles could have met the needs themselves. But when the church became large, there were just too many people.

**Thought 1.** There is a breaking point at which ministers must put up a guard and protect their primary call to proclaim the Word of God. They *must* above all else have time to *prepare* and *preach* and *teach* the Word.

**"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" ([Matthew 10:27](#)).**

**"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" ([Ephes. 3:7-8](#)).**

**"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" ([2 Tim. 1:11-12](#)).**

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).**

**3. The leaders suggested others be appointed to minister to the needy.** Note: this was a suggestion for a whole new level of ministers. Up to this point, the leaders of the church were the apostles. Now a new office was being created to help in the work of the ministry.

"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest" ([Matthew 9:37-38](#)).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" ([John 4:35-36](#)).

"Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" ([1 Cor. 3:8-9](#)).

**3. ([Acts 6:3](#)) Deacons, Qualifications: the required qualifications.** (See previous outline—" [1 Tim. 3:8-13](#), for more discussion.) Note: the apostles had a recommendation. Very wisely, they had met and discussed the division and complaint among themselves. The committee work among the leaders of the church had taken place. Now the recommendation was ready for the whole congregation to consider. Seven men needed to be appointed to handle this ministry. (As mentioned, a whole new level of ministry was being created in the church.)

The qualifications are listed. **Note: they all center upon spiritual qualities, upon the spiritual maturity of the men.**

**1. An honest report (*martuoumenous* <sup>PWS: 1991</sup>):** well attested; well reported of; bearing a good witness; having a good reputation. The deacon's character was to be proven and beyond reproach. They were to be men of integrity, faithful and trustworthy; moral and upright, men trusted by all.

"And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise [testimony, reputation] is in the gospel throughout all the churches" ([2 Cor. 8:18](#)).

"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" ([1 Tim. 3:8-9](#)).

"A good name is better than precious ointment" ([Eccles. 7:1](#)).

**2. Full of the Holy Spirit.** The deacon was to be conscious of Christ dwelling within him, aware of being filled with the fruit of the Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

"Be filled with all the fulness of God" ([Ephes. 3:19](#)).

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" ([Ephes. 5:18-19](#)).

**3. Full of wisdom:** able to discern, see through, make judgments. This was especially needed now in handling the division that had arisen in the church. Improper handling by unwise men could only add fuel to the fire, causing further friction and tension.

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" ([1 Cor. 2:12-13](#)).

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" ([Col. 1:9](#)).

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" ([James 3:17](#)).

"But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" ([1 John 2:20](#)).

**4. [\(Acts 6:4\) Ministers— Prayer— Word of God: the basic purpose of the deacon is to relieve the head minister\(s\) for prayer and the ministry of the Word.](#)** Note two significant points.

**1. The great ministries of the church are twofold: prayer and the ministry of the Word.** All else, as needful as some of them may be, must be secondary to these two great ministries. Therefore, the head minister must give his life to these two ministries and not be distracted or diverted from them.

⇒ It is in prayer that the believer reaches up and talks to God. Above all others the leader must live on his face before God, sharing with God and pleading with Him in behalf of the dear flock of God.

"What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" ([Matthew 26:40-41](#). See [Deeper Studies #1 next page # 137—Matthew 6:9-13; Ephes. 3:14-21](#) for what and how to pray.)

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" ([Luke 18:1](#)).

"Pray without ceasing" ([1 Thes. 5:17](#)).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" ([Ephes. 6:18](#)).

"For this cause we also...do not cease to pray for you" ([Col. 1:9](#).  
Cp. [Acts 6:9-11](#).)

"Wherefore also we pray always for you" ([2 Thes. 1:11](#). Cp. [Acts 6:11-12](#).)

### DEEPER STUDY #1

[\(Matthew 6:9-13\)](#) **Prayer:** What is prayer?

**1. Prayer is sharing and fellowshiping with God ([Matthew 6:9](#)).** It is not enough for a person to have a knowledge of God as he walks through life. He needs to have times when he can get alone with God and concentrate his thoughts and attention upon God. He needs such times with God just as he needs such times with his family and friends. Man was not made to live in isolation from people nor from God. He must have times when he is in the presence of both man and God and can concentrate his thoughts and attention upon both.

**2. Prayer is surrendering to God ([Matthew 6:9](#)).** The believer surrenders himself and his time to God. There is no such thing as prayer without a person and time. A person must submit himself to God before he wills to pray, and even then he must take the time to pray. A person who has surrendered himself to God and is surrendering or taking his time to talk with God is praying ([Matthew 6:9](#)).

**3. Prayer is requesting and pleading with God ([Matthew 6:10](#)).** It is demonstrating one's need and dependence upon God. It is pouring out one's heart in need and trusting God to meet one's need.

**4. Prayer is acknowledging and praising God ([Matthew 6:9-10, 13](#)).** It is acknowledging God as the Sovereign and Majestic Lord to whom belongs the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever.

⇒ It is in the Word that God speaks to the minister, to the flock, and to the world. The minister must spend hours and days seeking God, finding out what God wants to say to him, the church and the world.

**"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" ([Acts 20:32](#)).**

**"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries [gospel, Word] of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" ([1 Cor. 4:1-2](#)).**

**"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" ([2 Cor. 4:1-2](#)).**

**"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. 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" ([1 Tim. 4:15-16](#)).**



"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" ([2 Tim. 2:15](#)).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" ([2 Tim. 3:16](#)).

**Thought 1.** Imagine what a difference there would be if ministers so lived in prayer and in the Word of God! May the lay believers of the world *allow* and *insist* that the ministers of God get on their faces before God in prayer and in His Word.

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" ([1 Tim. 1:12](#)).

2. Note the word "continually" (*proskarterēsomen* <sup>PWS:1678</sup>). It means to continue stedfastly; to persevere; to continue on and on, sticking to it. The minister is to pray and pray and study and study and share and share, preaching and teaching the Word—*without letting up*. He is to be stedfast, persevering, continuing on and on in both prayer and in the Word.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" ([1 Cor. 15:58](#)).

"[Christ] whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" ([Col. 1:28](#)).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" ([Hebrews 12:1](#)).

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" ([James 5:11](#)).

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" ([2 Peter 3:17](#)).

"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" ([Rev. 3:11](#)).

"But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day" ([Joshua 23:8](#)).

**5. (Acts 6:5) Unity— Love— Humility: the chosen deacons. Note four significant points.**

**1. The church acted in love and humility.** Neither the apostles nor anyone else had ruffled feelings. The apostles and Hebrew believers (thousands of them) responded in love and humility. Everyone of the seven men chosen were *Grecian Jews*. Their names were Greek, not Jewish. The *largest* segment of the church had humbled itself to the minority. What an example!

**2. "The whole multitude" of believers was pleased.** The body had been reunited as one in spirit and purpose, worship and ministry.

**3. The fact that they were all Grecian believers points toward God moving the church out into the whole world.** Christ had commissioned the first disciples to go into the whole world (**Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8**). Now, He was providentially preparing the church for the day that was soon to come, the day of persecution that would scatter the believers all over the world (**Acts 8:1-4**). These seven men, being Grecian ministers, could touch the Gentile world wherever they went—by language, by training, and by culture. God was preparing the church without their knowing it for the day when they were to be scattered all over the world.

**Thought 1.** Believers must be rooted in *love and humility* so that God may use them in His eternal plan to reach the world for His dear Son.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (**Romans 12:5**).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (**Galatians 3:28**).

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (**2 Cor. 13:11**).

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (**Ephes. 4:1-3**).

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (**Phil. 2:2-4**).

**4. The men chosen were unknown except for Stephen and Philip.** The point to note is that they were men who had the qualities given in **Acts 8:3**.

Note the name Nicolas, a Jewish proselyte. He was a Gentile who had been converted to Judaism and then to Christ. Some try to connect him with the Nicolaitians who went off on a doctrinal error and created a sect. There is no basis for this. In fact, the likelihood is

that he was instrumental in starting the church at Antioch, one of the greatest churches of all time ([Acts 11:19-30](#)).

**6. [\(Acts 6:6\) Ordination: the official ordination.](#)** This was a definite service, a specific moment when the newly elected men were set apart for their ministry. Before this moment they were not serving in the capacity with which they were now being charged. Hereafter, after the ordaining service, they were to minister to the flock of God and meet the flock's day to day needs. Note three steps in the service.

1. The church "set" the men apart, set them before the apostles.
2. The church went to prayer; the ministers (apostles) led all in prayer.
3. The ministers (apostles) laid their hands upon the newly appointed deacons. (See

[Deeper Study #2—Acts 6:6](#) for discussion.)

#### **[DEEPER STUDY #2 \(6:6\) Laying On Of Hands](#)**

##### **DEEPER STUDY #2**

**[\(Acts 6:6\) Laying On Of Hands](#)**: this was a significant symbol for blessing ([Matthew 19:13-15](#)); for healing ([Mark 5:23](#); [Mark 6:5](#)); for imparting the Holy Spirit ([Acts 8:17-19](#); [Acts 9:6, 17](#)); and for ordaining and commissioning men to the ministry.

**"Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" ([Acts 6:6](#)).**

**"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" ([Acts 13:2-3](#)).**

**"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" ([1 Tim. 4:14](#)).**

**"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" ([2 Tim. 1:6](#)).**

#### **[7. \(Acts 6:7\) Ministers— Church: the glorious results were threefold.](#)**

1. The Word of God increased as never before. The apostles were freed to concentrate on prayer and the Word. There was a new power in their witnessing and teaching.
2. The church grew. Many more people were reached with the glorious gospel.
3. Some priests, a great number, were being reached for Christ. Note the words, they "were obedient to the faith." They were obedient in both *receiving* Christ and in *following* Christ. They *embraced* the gospel and *lived* the gospel.

**"By whom [Christ] we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name" ([Romans 1:5](#)).**

**"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" ([Col. 2:6](#)).**

**"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" ([1 John 2:6](#)).**

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).**

## • Seeking leadership. Discussed.

### ▪ Acts 11:25

**1. (Acts 11:25-26) Church— Staff:** **the church sought additional staff—to have an adequate teaching staff.** Barnabas is the one who is the focus of attention in this point, but the church was bound to have sensed the need for additional staff and given its approval. The point is this: the need was sensed and the decision was made to seek for help. The only question was who should be secured. A unique person was needed, a person who not only had a Jewish background, but who knew the Greek language and culture and could relate to both Gentile and Jew alike. The person also needed to be fearless and bold in his witness for Christ because of the godless, immoral society of Antioch.

Barnabas knew such a man: Saul of Tarsus. So he set out to find him. The word "seek" (*anazēteō* <sup>PWS: 3412</sup>) means to search for, to search back and forth, up and down; to make a thorough search. Paul had been busy throughout Syria and Cilicia preaching Christ (**Galatians 1:21**). Apparently Barnabas had difficulty finding him. But note: he knew God's will, so he did not give up the search. He kept searching until he found God's choice.

**Thought 1.** What a dynamic lesson for all churches in seeking help and in building a church staff!

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (**Matthew 4:19**).

"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone" (**John 1:41-42**).

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (**John 1:45**).

"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (**Acts 11:25-26**).

**2. (Acts 11:26) Church, Training:** the church—many of the believers—met consistently for intensive training (see below **Deeper Study Preaching, —Acts 11:19-30 for more discussion and verses**). Note three facts that are self-explanatory.

1. The purpose for the church meeting together was to be taught about the Lord...
  - His death according to the Scriptures (**1 Cor. 15:3**).

- His resurrection according to the Scriptures ([1 Cor. 15:4](#)).
  - His teachings, doctrines, and instructions ([Matthew 28:19-20](#); cp. [Acts 17:11](#)).
2. "Many people" were taught, not just a few. The believers hungered to learn the truth.
  3. The church met together consistently for a *whole year*.

### DEEPER STUDY

**(Acts 11:19-30) Preaching— Witnessing— Exhortation— Teaching:** in this passage there are three different Greek words used for witnessing and sharing the Word. They show the ministry of the church, just how believers are to go about sharing Christ.

**1. There is the word "preaching" (*lalountes*, [Acts 11:20](#)).** This word really means *speaking* and should be translated *speaking* (*elaloun* <sup>PWS: 3672</sup>). It is the simple sharing of conversation among people. As the believers scattered and travelled about, they "spoke the Word," shared Christ in ordinary conversation. The picture is that of witnessing one on one, of scattering the *seed* wherever they went. Christ was the topic of their conversation. They were saved and had received life, both abundant and eternal, and were rejoicing in the glory of the greatest hope imaginable. Their salvation, the presence and power of Christ in their lives, was what was upon their mind; therefore, they were talking about Christ and sharing Him, scattering the glorious message of the gospel everywhere they went.

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" ([Acts 8:5](#)).

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" ([Acts 8:35](#)).

"And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" ([Acts 9:20](#)).

"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all)" ([Acts 10:36](#)).

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" ([1 Cor. 1:23](#)).

**2. There is the word "preaching [*euaggelizomenoi* <sup>PWS: 3014</sup>] the Lord Jesus" ([Acts 11:20](#)).** This word means to declare and proclaim the gospel; to preach the glad tidings of Jesus Christ; to proclaim the Word, the truth about Jesus Christ. It means that the believers who went to Antioch actually entered the city preaching and proclaiming the Lord Jesus. The picture is...

- that of their entering the city to *bring* the Lord Jesus to its residents. The believers were set on reaching the city for God, and their method was preaching the Lord Jesus.
- that of facing a person or persons, of standing before people and preaching Christ.

**3. There is the word "exhorted" (*parekalei* <sup>PWS: 1391</sup>, [Acts 11:23](#)).** This word means to admonish, advise, challenge, entreat, call upon, beseech, urge, warn, comfort, and encourage.

- a. Note what the message of exhortation concerns: that people "would cleave unto the Lord." The very focus of exhortation is to challenge, encourage, and warn believers to "cleave unto the Lord."
- b. Note how closely the Greek word is associated with the Greek word for the Holy Spirit (*paraclete*, see " [John 14:16](#) ). The very ministry of the Holy Spirit is exhortation. His very presence and power within the genuine believer is for the purpose of urging, comforting, helping, and warning believers to "cleave unto the Lord" and to bear testimony to His glorious salvation.
- c. Note that the minister's ministry was that of exhortation. Even as the Holy Spirit stood within the church as *Another Helper* to Christ, so Barnabas was to stand as another helper to Christ. Barnabas was to challenge and encourage and warn the people: they must "cleave unto the Lord."

**"And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying" ([Matthew 5:2](#)).**

**"And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" ([Acts 18:26](#)).**

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).**

**"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" ([Titus 1:9](#)).**

**"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" ([Titus 2:11-15](#)).**

## • Sins common to leaders.

### Acts 4:5-10

• (Acts 4:5-10) Jesus Christ, Power: Peter and John credited Christ with the power to heal and to change lives. Note three points.

1. **The Sanhedrin court convened the next morning to put Peter and John on trial.** The term "rulers, elders, and scribes" means the Sanhedrin. It was the ruling body, both the governing council and supreme court of the Jews. (See Deeper Study, Sanhedrin—Acts 4:5-6.)

#### DEEPER STUDY

(Acts 4:5-6) Sanhedrin: the ruling body, both the governing council and supreme court of the Jews. It had seventy-one members and was presided over by the High Priest. Its membership was made up of Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes or lawyers, and elders who were leaders from among the people. A quorum was twenty-three people. The legal power of the Sanhedrin to pass the death sentence was restricted about twenty some years before the trial of Jesus. However, they did retain the right of excommunication (John 9:22). The court met in the great "Hall of Hewn Stone." Its members sat in a semi-circle with the High Priest (or president) sitting at the head.

- a. The term "rulers, and elders, and scribes" is apparently just a term of synonyms, a term used by the people when referring to the Sanhedrin.
- ⇒ Rulers would refer to the whole body.
  - ⇒ Elders would refer to the most esteemed of the nation. The whole Sanhedrin was sometimes simply referred to as the *Elders*.
  - ⇒ Scribes was a definite profession of men, the experts, the *doctors* of Jewish law and tradition.

Annas was apparently recognized as the High Priest by most Jews. He had actually been removed from power by the Romans, but he had been so influential among his peers that he was still recognized as the *power behind the throne*. (Luke 3:1; note—' John 18:12-14.)

- ⇒ Caiaphas was serving as High Priest in the eyes of the Romans.
  - ⇒ John is unknown. All we know is what is mentioned here, that he belonged to the high priestly family.
  - ⇒ Alexander is also unknown, except that he too belonged to the high priestly family.
- b. The question the court asked was straight to the point. "By what power, or by what name have you done this [healed the man]?" The court was doing exactly what God had said to do. God had instructed Israel to try every man who claimed to be a prophet and worked signs and wonders among the people (Deut. 13:1-5). If the man was not a true prophet, he was to be executed.
- But there is more to their questioning than this. They knew Peter was preaching the resurrection through Jesus Christ. They had to stop it or risk



losing the loyalty of the people and their position and livelihood, so they were seeking opportunity to accuse and stop Peter and John. ([Acts 4:2-4](#).)

Their questioning may also involve something else. They were the religious leaders; therefore, they thought the power could not be of God. If God should choose to do some marvelous work, especially in the temple, they thought He would choose to reveal such to them, the traditional religious leaders. Therefore they felt the *name* and the *power* that healed the crippled must be diabolical ([Luke 11:15](#)).

**Thought 1.** Men in leadership, leaders in both state and religion, face some common sins, the seeking of...

- position
- influence
- recognition
- authority
- riches
- being exclusive

The flesh, sinful human nature is the culprit. But bureaucratic, institutional, established positions lend themselves to the sins.

**Thought 2.** Every believer and minister and group must guard against thinking that God can work only through them. God is always bringing new faces and groups into the picture to do His work. He must, for the mission is so enormous and there is still so much to do—so many who have not yet heard and been helped.

**2. God equipped Peter and John with the Holy Spirit.** Note how quickly God came to the rescue: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit." Peter had not even had time to speak, and God was present, filling Peter with the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit was ready to take over and give Peter the words to say.

**Thought 1.** The believer who is ready to proclaim Christ will never be left alone. The Holy Spirit will be present to speak through him.

**"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you"** ([Matthew 10:18-20](#)).

**"But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost"** ([Mark 13:11](#)).

**"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and**

wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" ([Luke 21:12-15](#)).

**3. Peter and John credited Christ with the power to make men whole.** Peter declared three critical points.

- a. It was "the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" that made the man whole. Note that Jesus is called the "Christ" (Messiah). Peter was declaring that men must know that Jesus is the true Messiah, and there must be no doubt which Jesus: it was the Jesus of Nazareth. He is the Messiah, the Savior whom God promised to send to the world.

Note the word "whole" (see [Deeper Study —Acts 4:9-10](#)). The man was made whole in both body and soul. Who did it? Who could heal the man in both body and soul? Peter declared unequivocally:

- ⇒ not himself, not John, nor any other man.
- ⇒ Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Jesus from Nazareth; He alone had made this man whole.

#### **DEEPER STUDY [Whole](#)**

**[\(Acts 4:9-10\) Salvation](#):** the word "whole" (*sesotai*) means to be saved; to be made whole; to be safe and sound; to be healed. It means that a person is made whole and continues to be whole. It means that the man was made whole in both body and soul.

- b. It was Jesus Christ (Messiah) whom ye crucified. Remember Peter was speaking to the top leaders of the nation. He charged them with killing not only a man, but the Messiah. What an indictment! To be charged with killing the Son of God Himself!

**Thought 1.** The indictment is charged against all men. All men are guilty of the death of Jesus Christ.

- c. It was Jesus whom God raised from the dead that made the man whole. Peter was declaring that it was the power of the resurrected and ascended Messiah, the Lord of heaven and earth who had such power.

# • Blind leaders leading the blind.

## • Luke 6:39

### Jesus Teaches His Rules for Discipleship: The Need to Watch, [Luke 6:39-45](#)

[\(Luke 6:39-45\) Introduction](#): man is to watch how he lives. Both the quality and fate of his life depend upon it.

- ⇒ God cares about the quality of a man's life. He wants every man to have the fullest life that he possibly can.
- ⇒ God cares about the destiny of a man, where a man will spend eternity. He wants every man to receive eternal life.

There are four rules, four warnings that must be watched if we are to live life to the fullest and be assured of eternal life.

- [1. Watch blindness: one's leaders and how one leads \(v.39\).](#)
- [2. Watch the Master \(the Lord Himself\) \(v.40\).](#)
- [3. Watch hypocrisy and the criticism of others \(v.41-42\).](#)
- [4. Watch the fruit that a man brings forth \(v.43-45\).](#)

**1. [\(Luke 6:39\) Spiritual Blindness— Darkness: the first rule is to watch blindness; watch one's leaders and how one leads.](#)** "Can the blind lead the blind?" Note several things.

**1. Note who the blind are.** They are the leaders: the preachers, teachers, parents—anyone who has influence or responsibility for anyone else. In fact, any person can be blind and lead someone else down the same path of blindness. But observe a significant fact. Jesus also says that the blind are those who follow: the pupil, learner, listener, seeker, child—anyone who looks up to someone else for guidance.

**2. Note why people are blind.** There are several clear reasons.

- a. A person can be born blind. He can be handicapped, never having had the opportunity to see the *truth* of things, never having been exposed to the light.
- b. A person can be blind because of some injury. He used to be able to see and had every opportunity to see, but now he is blind, blind because...
  - he injured himself by some careless act. (He is guilty of blinding himself to the Light.)
  - he was blinded by someone else, either deliberately or carelessly. (Others led him astray, led him off into the darkness.)
  - he was blinded by nature. (Circumstances, heritage, location kept him from ever having the opportunity to escape the darkness.)
- c. A person can be blind because he wants and chooses to be in the dark. The dark is his choice; he finds the dark is enjoyable and comfortable; therefore, he refuses to come out into the light and to see the truth of things.
- d. A person can be blind because he closes his eyes or turns his head and looks away. He just refuses to see the light, the truth.

Jesus warned against being blind. He said blindness leads to two tragic results.

1. Both walk in darkness, both the leader and the follower. Being a leader does not guarantee that one walks in the light. A leader can be blind, and if the leader is blind, then the follower will remain blind. The leader must see and have his sight if the follower is to ever see. (Note the awesome responsibility upon leaders.)

2. Both stumble and fall "into the ditch." Being a leader does not guarantee that one will not fall. The blind person will stumble and fall no matter who he is, leader or not. And note, a leader will especially stumble about and fall if he is on strange or unfamiliar terrain. The truth of Christ is totally unknown terrain to the blind teacher, no matter his profession.

**"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" ([Matthew 5:19-20](#)).**

**"Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" ([1 Tim. 1:7](#)).**

**"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" ([1 Tim. 6:3-5](#)).**

**"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" ([2 Tim. 4:3-4](#)).**

**"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" ([2 Peter 2:1](#)).**

**"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" ([John 1:5](#)).**

**"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" ([John 3:19](#)).**

**"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?" ([Matthew 6:23](#)).**

**"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel [the truth] of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" ([2 Cor. 4:3-4](#)).**

**"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in vanity of their mind, having the understanding**

darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" ([Ephes. 4:17-18](#)).

**2. [\(Luke 6:40\) Self-Denial— Dedication: the second rule is to watch the life of the Master, of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.](#)** "The disciple is not above his Lord: but...shall be as his Master." Note several points.

1. The word "perfect" (*katērtismenos* <sup>PWS: 2886</sup>) means to complete, render fit, mend. It is a common word often used for mending, repairing, or restoring broken things such as nets ([Matthew 4:21](#)) or men ([Galatians 6:1](#)).

2. The point is forceful: "**the disciple is not above his Master**" ([Matthew 10:24-25](#)). The disciple is not better than his Lord; therefore, he cannot expect to be treated better, nor can he expect to receive more in this world than his Lord. The disciple cannot expect to be better by having more honor, praise, recognition, or esteem. He cannot expect to have more comfort, rest, or pleasure. The Lord suffered, humbled, and denied Himself for the sake of the world and its needs. The disciple, as a follower of the Lord, does the same; he denies himself in order to reach the world for his Lord. .

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" ([John 3:15](#)).

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" ([Phil. 2:5-8](#)).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" ([John 20:21](#)).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).

3. The goal of the disciple is to "be as his Master." The disciple seeks to be like his Master: conformed, mended, repaired, restored (perfected) into His very image.

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, *being made conformable* unto his death" ([Phil. 3:10](#)).

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye *may know and believe me, and understand that I am he*" ([Isaiah 43:10](#)).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are *changed into the same image* from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" ([2 Cor. 3:18](#)).

**3. [\(Luke 6:41-42\) Criticism— Hypocrisy: the third rule is to watch hypocrisy and criticism of others.](#)** Note a crucial fact: Jesus was speaking to everyone seated before Him. No matter how moral, decent, strong, religious, or free of

visible sin, He was speaking to everyone seated in the audience. No one was exempt. Everyone was to watch out for hypocrisy and criticism of others. Why? Because whatever is in a person's eye, even if it is only a speck, is serious. Even a speck causes the eye to water, squint, blink, and close. The speck hinders a person's sight (life, walk) and holds him back from full sight and service. Now note four points about the parable.

1. Both persons, the one being criticized and the criticizer, do have a problem. Both have a need to clean the dirt out of their eyes. Neither one is free of dirt. Not a single person serves in perfect obedience and ministry to the Lord. There is at least a speck in everyone's eye.

2. The criticizer has the biggest problem. This is usually overlooked. Criticism of others is a beam. If one has only a speck in his eye, when he begins to criticize others he immediately catches a beam in his own eye. *Criticism is the tree that strikes the eye and blinds one* to his own need, his need for continued confession and repentance. The criticizer becomes blinded to his constant need for the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

**"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" ([2 Peter 1:9](#)).**

3. The criticizer is a hypocrite. He is but a man who is like all other men, full of ever so many faults and coming ever so short, yet he finds fault with others. He criticizes, grumbles, gripes, condemns, judges, and censors others while he too is guilty of so much in so many other areas. And note: his greatest fault is that he sets himself up as the *Judge*, as the one who has the right to judge men.

4. The disciple must examine himself first. Judging himself first will enable him to *see clearly* just how to help others. Rigid examination is required. Simple honesty and thought say that a man must clean the dirt out of his own eye before he can see clearly enough to help others clean their eyesight.

**"Judge not, that ye be not judged" ([Matthew 7:1](#)).**

**"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" ([Romans 14:4](#)).**

**"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" ([Romans 14:13](#)).**

**"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" ([1 Cor. 4:5](#)).**

**"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" ([James 4:12](#)).**

**4. ([Luke 6:43-45](#)) Fruit-Bearing— Words— Tongue: watch the fruit that a man brings forth.**

1. Every tree is known by its fruit, its nature. A good man is not judged by a bad piece of fruit here and there, but by the good fruit he bears. Every tree produces some bad

fruit, yet the tree is not cast away. A tree is not rejected unless it *leans toward* bad fruit. When testing and examining men, we must observe not single acts here and there; but the tenor, the lean, the whole behavior of their lives. How important!

2. Every tree reproduces after its nature, after its kind. How can we tell if a man is false? There is one revealing mark: the fruit he gathers. A man is known by the fruit he feeds upon and the fruit he feeds to others. If he feeds himself on thorns and thistles and not on grapes and figs, that is one way to tell. If he feeds thorns and thistles to others instead of grapes and figs, that is another way to tell.

Thorns and thistles are false food, worldliness. Grapes and figs are true food. There is only one true food for the soul of man: the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. A man must feed on and feed others the truth of the Lord and His Word. Any other source of food for the human soul is false food: it is thorn and thistle (worldliness). If eaten or served to others, it will choke the life out of the soul ([Matthew 13:7](#); cp. [1 John 2:15-16](#); [2 Cor. 6:17-18](#); [Romans 12:1-2](#)).

3. Every man reproduces what is in his heart. Note that Jesus is dealing with a man's mouth, the *words* a man speaks. A man speaks what is in his heart. His words expose his heart, the kind of man he is. The idea is that words come out of an overflowing heart: "Out of the abundance [overflow] of the heart the mouth speaketh." A man's words expose five things about him.

- ⇒ A man's words expose his true nature: what he is really like beneath the surface.
- ⇒ A man's words expose what he is down deep within his heart: his motives, desires, ambitions, or the lack of initiative.
- ⇒ A man's words expose his true character: good or bad, kind or cruel.
- ⇒ A man's words expose his mind, what he thinks: pure or impure thoughts, dirty or clean thoughts.
- ⇒ A man's words expose his spirit, what he believes and pursues: the legitimate or illegitimate, the intelligent or ignorant, the true or false, the beneficial or wasteful.

**"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" ([Matthew 7:17](#)).**

**"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" ([James 2:17-18](#)).**

**"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" ([1 Peter 2:12](#)).**

**"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the**



**which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:19-23](#)).**

# STATISTICS ABOUT PASTORS

Pastors today are faced with more work, more problems, and more stress than any other time in the history of the church. This is taking a frightening toll on the ministry, shown by the statistics below:

## Pastors:

- Fifteen hundred pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout or contention in their churches.
- Four thousand new churches begin each year, but over seven thousand churches close.
- Fifty percent of pastors' marriages will end in divorce.
- Eighty percent of pastors and eighty-four percent of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastors.
- Fifty percent of pastors are so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could, but have no other way of making a living.
- Eighty percent of seminary and Bible school graduates who enter the ministry will leave the ministry within the first five years. Ninety percent of pastors said their seminary or Bible school training did only a fair to poor job preparing them for ministry.
- Eighty-five percent of pastors said their greatest problem is they are sick and tired of dealing with problem people, such as disgruntled elders, deacons, worship leaders, worship teams, board members, and associate pastors. Ninety percent said the hardest thing about ministry is dealing with uncooperative people.
- Seventy percent of pastors feel grossly underpaid.
- Ninety percent said the ministry was completely different than what they thought it would be before they entered the ministry.
- Seventy percent felt God called them to pastoral ministry before their ministry began, but after three years of ministry, only fifty percent still felt called.

## Pastors' Wives:

- Eighty percent of pastors' spouses feel their spouse is overworked.
- Eighty percent of pastor' wives feel left out and unappreciated by the church members.
- Eighty percent of pastors' spouses wish their spouse would choose another profession.
- Eighty percent of pastors' wives feel pressured to do things and be something in the church that they are really not.
- The majority of pastor's wives surveyed said that the most destructive event that has occurred in their marriage and family was the day they entered the ministry.

### **Pastors' Marriages:**

- **Seventy percent of pastors constantly fight depression.**
- **Almost forty percent polled said they have had an extra-marital affair since beginning their ministry.**

### **Pastors' Children:**

- **Eighty percent of adult children of pastors surveyed have had to seek professional help for depression.**

### **Pastors' Relationship With the Lord:**

- **Seventy percent of pastors do not have a close friend, confidant, or mentor.**
- **Ninety-five percent of pastors do not regularly pray with their spouses.**
- **Eighty percent of pastors surveyed spend less than fifteen minutes a day in prayer.**
- **Seventy percent said the only time they spend studying the Word is when they are preparing their sermons.**

**God's intent isn't that the ministry destroys you, but builds your inner, spiritual man. That way, you can go on to do greater and greater works for Him. Yet, what we are seeing today is droves of pastors leaving the ministry defeated, depressed, and dejected. Why is this happening, and what can we do about it?**

**First of all, let's deal with the question of why. I think that if we look at what the pastors said, we'd have to conclude that the problem is the church people, especially the leadership. Unfortunately, that's a hard one to change.**

**However, if we look at the last section of statistics, the ones that deal with the pastor's relationship with the Lord, we see some interesting clues to the true root of the problem.**

**More than anything, God has called pastors to have an intimate relationship with Him. That must come before the ministry, that must come before the congregation, and that must even come before the family. As you can plainly see from the statistics above, we literally cannot survive in the ministry without taking the time to be with the Lord.**

**If we, as ministers, don't have an intimate relationship with the Lord, how can we expect to have anything to minister to others? Our congregations don't need yesterday's warmed over breadcrumbs. They need the fresh meat and manna for today. But, you know what? We need that too.**

### **What Can You Do?**

**How can you avoid becoming just another one of these statistics? I believe there are certain steps, that we as ministers, can and must do to help ourselves not only survive in the ministry, but excel in it.**

- **Find other pastors who you can enter into covenant with. This should be a mutual, trusting relationship; where you can openly talk and pray for each**

other, without fear that the other pastors will gossip about you. As ministers, many times our lives are very lonely. Finding others whom you can build relationships with will help alleviate the stress and loneliness of being a pastor.

- **Get into relationship with a mentor.** We all need help from time to time, maybe even more so when we're in the ministry. You need someone who has the wisdom, experience, and hopefully the anointing to minister to you as a pastor. God has provided for this need within the five-fold ministry. It is part of the calling of the apostle. Jesus never built an organization, nor did Paul. They built relationships with other ministers whom they could pour their lives into. All of Paul's letters are an example of this. He wrote to the elders and ministers over the churches he had established, giving them help and instruction. Find someone with the same anointing, and get into relationship with them.
- **Fall in love with studying the Word of God.** If the only time you spend studying the Bible is to prepare a message, you've put a muzzle on yourself, as you feed your sheep. They're receiving, but you aren't. You need to be fed as well. Take time to study for yourself. If messages come out of that, that's fine. But the point is to receive. Take time to go to conferences and seminars as well, where you can receive ministry and encouragement.
- **Last, and most important, spend time in the presence of the Lord.** I have noticed very clearly in my own life that the more time I spend in the presence of the Lord, the easier it is to deal with the difficult people in my life. When we pray and worship, we receive from God. We are strengthened, we are lifted up, we are emotionally healed, and the burden is taken off of our shoulders. More than anyone, pastors and ministers need prayer time; they need worship time; they need time alone with the Lord. Not time when they are praying for their congregations, but time when they are just being alone with Jesus. Time to pray for themselves, their families, and to receive strength from the Holy Spirit.

Remember the wisdom of the apostles in Acts chapter six. They found that they weren't able to spend the time they needed in prayer and Bible study, because of the demands of the ministry. So, they asked the people to select deacons from amongst themselves; in order to take some of the burden of the ministry off of the apostles. Why did they do this? So that they could spend their time in prayer and study of the Word. If your leadership isn't taking that load, then they aren't leadership. You need to train them in their duties, and allow them the blessing of truly serving the people of God.

Be encouraged, brother. You don't have to become a negative statistic. God wants you where you are, not so that your church can be a millstone around your neck, but so that you can be a blessing to them. There is victory for you at the foot of the cross. Take your burden there, and allow the Lord to lift you up.