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THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

VOLUME XXIII ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 20, 1999

Pastor or Preacher

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PREACHING AND PASTORING

THE PREACHER

The call to preach is neither vocal nor visual, nor is it sensational or spectacular. The call to preach does not come second-handedly. The call to preach is not "making the choice of a profession." The call to preach does not result from completing a "gifts" test. The call to preach is not a nebulous, vague stirring of emotions, it is not a dynamic, spell-binding infusion of knowledge, it is not a sudden flush of physical ability. The call to preach is not connected with the physical. The call to preach is entirely a spiritual issue.

The Lord of the Harvest (Matthew 9:38, Luke 10:2), *Whose prerogative alone it is both to call and to send*, may use the circumstances of life, the

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events of nature, even the encouragement of fellow believers to provide assurance or direction; but the call to preach is "of the Spirit, by the Spirit and through the Spirit." Natural talents and personal abilities do not measure the call to preach. It may seem unnecessary to put the following sentence in print; however, it is not safe to make any assumptions concerning spiritual truth; therefore, I write it. The call to preach comes to a believer and not to an unbeliever. God may, and does, use unbelievers (John 11:49-52) to deliver His word, but not because they have been called to preach.

The call of God to preach is unique in its style and manner as it comes to each preacher. I would not presume to define that call in terms of absolutes; yet there are some general statements that may be made. The call to preach begins as an inner stirring, a deepening concern for the honor and glory of God and as an inner stirring, a deepening concern for the souls of others. I am convinced that the one concern or stirring is as vital as the other in evaluating the validity of the call. There comes, with this inner stirring and concern, a deepening pressure to declare the word of God. Finally, there comes a compulsion, a necessity, an urgency that cannot be denied utterance. The man called to preach finds that as the Bible speaks to his own heart, he must preach. He cannot do otherwise; he is compelled to preach. He becomes a preacher not by choice but by constraint.

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to minister to families in their dark hours, to encourage the struggling believer to "keep on keeping on," to rejoice at weddings and births, to observe children become adults, to see himself as a part of the lives of his people. No pastor would willingly do anything except pastor.

Pastoring is a work that begins with a call to preach from the Lord God of Heaven, continues with a call from a particular local church to be her shepherd and finally ends before the Throne with an answering to the Chief Shepherd (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

What a joy to be both a preacher and a pastor.

Pastor Manley

THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

(428-290)

is published monthly by
THE HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH
of PENSACOLA,
2200 West Michigan Avenue,
Pensacola, Florida 32526-2379.
PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID
AT PENSACOLA, FLORIDA.

THE BAPTIST HERITAGE is sent without charge to the members of the church and to interested friends of this church.

There are no subscription charges and no paid advertisements are accepted.

This is VOLUME XXIII and ISSUE
NUMBER 9 for SEPTEMBER 20, 1999.



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duction of the vineyard in general and each vine in particular.

It is no wonder that the pastorate produces a genuine weariness of body, soul, and spirit. It is as tiring as any task on this earth. It has broken strong men, exhausted powerful men and defeated brave men. Though the "type of work" might seem to be the similar to that of any secular educator, administrator or business man, the pastorate is not at all the same. In modern America, the concept of what constitutes a church has become so distorted that to all appearances, the pastor is considered the CEO of an organization. However, in all the terms used in Scripture to describe the pastor or the pastorate, not one refers to a commercial businessman. One will find shepherds, farmers, builders, soldiers, but not executives. The work is on a different level and of a different nature even though it may appear similar. The work of the pastorate does take a physical and a mental toll of the pastor, but it is principally a spiritual work. The results, as well as the labors are measured in eternal terms.

Having written so strongly regarding the labor required in the pastorate, I hasten to add a brief word concerning the joys of being a pastor. The pastor has the privilege of seeing lambs grow into mature sheep, providing not only their own wool, but also producing more lambs. Only another shepherd knows what a joy that is. It is the pastor who receives the opportunity to comfort the dying saint,

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"Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in" (Jeremiah 6:11).

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jeremiah 20:9).

"My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue" (Psalms 39:3).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Therefore seeing we have this ministry . . . Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men . . . For the love of Christ constraineth us . . . Now then we are ambassadors for Christ . . . We then, as workers together with him . . . Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed (2 Corinthians 4-6).

Some profess to believe that a man may be

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called to preach and, refusing to surrender to that call, live his life in disobedience, without facing a severe penalty. I do not accept that premise. It is my belief that Jonah attempted to chart exactly that course for his life when he set sail from Tarshish; however, the Lord had the means of *insisting* that Jonah preach. I have on occasion told certain men claiming to know that they have been called of God to preach and who refuse to yield to that call that I hope their own whale will have very bad breath. I firmly believe that one who tries to evade the call to preach will find his life plagued with chastisement. Where this does not occur, I suggest that the person making the claim was never actually called by God.

A man may disqualify himself for the public or pulpit ministry and we will discuss this later; however, even that man when he repents will find an opportunity to preach. His ministry may become a life of preaching the Gospel to people one by one; but he will preach. Some, disqualified to fill a public ministry, have developed ways to get the Gospel to others in quiet, unassuming and anonymous, yet effective, ways.

Make no mistake. A preacher will preach, because he must preach; however, no one should preach unless and until he has been called by God to preach. If a man can, with spiritual contentment and peace, avoid preaching, then he should, by all means, avoid preaching. The man called by God to preach cannot be comfortable doing anything but

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Sometimes he is on the offense and sometimes he is on the defense; but he is always using his weapon or else he is dead. We will not dwell on each of the pieces of the armour mentioned by Paul, but rather focus on the weapons used in both offense and defense, that is, (1) the shield of faith, (2) the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and (3) praying always. Above everything else, the pastor, **MUST** know the word of God and he must know how to use it. First, his faith comes from the hearing of the word of God. Second, his "sword" is the word of God. Third, his prayers must be based upon and should contain the word of God. If the preacher does not know and does not use the Scriptures, then he is a failure regardless how "successful" his ministry might seem to be. A soldier is not a politician, not a diplomat, not a negotiator; he is a warrior. Soldiers are trained to fight.

The pastor is a husbandman, a farmer. Rising early and working late, the husbandman lives a life of responsibility. The husbandman prepares the ground and plants the seed or vine. He cultivates, fertilizes and waters the seeds and plants and he pulls the weeds. He prunes and stakes and trains the vine. He removes the suckers and trims the unproductive limbs. He cares for the entire vineyard generally and each individual vine particularly. The husbandman also must take responsibility to make decisions as to the care of each vine because he is responsible to the owner of the vineyard for the pro-

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are not solitary hermits; they are gregarious, social animals who delight in company of other sheep. Goats enjoy the rocks and caves and may be solitary; sheep prefer pastures, still water and dwelling together in flocks. The primary work of the shepherd is to gather his sheep in a flock and care for them as individual sheep who are part of that flock. His chief occupations, as a shepherd, are to protect that flock and to feed and care for that flock. As a shepherd, nothing else is to interfere with shepherding the sheep.

The only food that a shepherd has for his sheep is the word of God. Consider the full implications of that statement. He is not to feed them on politics, current events, social criteria, psychology, philosophy, sociology or anything else other than the word of God. He is to feed, not entertain. He is to feed, not motivate. He is to feed, not badger. If he is to properly feed his flock, then he must study to show himself approved unto God. He must know how to rightly divide the word of God while shunning profane and vain babblings. Part of "rightly dividing" is to know when and to whom to give "the sincere milk of the word" and when and to whom to give the "meat."

The pastor is also a soldier on a battlefield. He is responsible to "put on the whole armour of God" (Ephesians 6:10-18) and "to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 2:3). On a battlefield, one is either a victor or a victim.

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preaching. This is not to suggest that only a "full-time" position of preaching will suffice, but simply to state that a man called of God to preach will find that God provides outlets for preaching. The outlet may not be the pastorate or even a church pulpit, but an outlet will be provided.

As far as recognition of the call to preach is concerned, no man ought to be licensed by a church to preach until he has shown evidence of that call. A mere claim of a call is insufficient; there must be clear indications discernible to others that he has been called. Certainly, no man ought to be ordained by a church until he has a specific, definite ministry to which he has been called and a place where he is, or will be, serving. A man may be a preacher without ever seeking either license or ordination from a church--but that is a very unwise, as well as an unscriptural, attitude to adopt. Make no mistake: that course is a result of a wrong heart attitude. It is the willful, deliberate failure to follow the pattern of Scripture. Bluntly stated, it is a course of life not to be condoned or recognized, but to be condemned and rebuked. The call to preach does not equate with inspiration and "independence." Every preacher must be under the authority of some local church; if he is not, then he is not a preacher after the New Testament pattern. Instead he is a preacher who is either ignorant or rebellious, or both. Such a preacher ought never to be permitted to preach in any Baptist pulpit.

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A preacher who believes that he is not required to answer to anyone for his preaching is a danger in the pulpit and a peril to his hearers. Such a man believes, whether he verbalizes it or not, that he is "the voice of God," a reasoning that is not the fruit of a sound, spiritual, scripturally anchored mind. He certainly is ignorant of Scripture and does not follow the pattern provided by the Twelve as recorded in Mark 6:30, by Barnabas and Paul in Acts 14:26-27, by Paul recorded in Galatians 2:2. In terms of the world, such a preacher is a "loose cannon." He is lacking in humility, having been "lifted up in pride" and he will be dominated by the world, the flesh or the devil. I have watched such men as they gravitate toward infidelity, both spiritual and physical. The true New Testament preacher is under the watchcare of a true New Testament Church and loves to have it so.

The call to preach is as apparent to the called preacher as is his own identity. The called preacher *lives* to preach; all else is "tolerated" in view of the time when he may preach. Nothing in this life can be compared with the joy or the responsibility of being called to preach. The apostle Paul cites the words of Isaiah to demonstrate the joy of preaching, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:15) The joy of representing God to humanity and of announcing to those who will hear a free and full pardon from sin and salva-

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men striving for masteries. Pastors are ministers, servants. Pastors are under-shepherds who shall answer to the Chief Shepherd.

The pastor may properly be defined as having a full-time job, whether he is said to be bi-vocational or not. He punches no time clock on his job because the pastor is never "off-duty." He clocked in the day he accepted the call to the church and he will not clock out until he leaves or dies. He is never anything except a pastor. Even when he is a husband or a father or a son or a brother, he is first and foremost a pastor. His first responsibility and his first duty is that of pastor. Every hour of every day of every week of every year of his life from the day he accepts the call to pastor, until that pastorate is terminated, he is on the job. And, the pastor will one day stand before the Lord of the Harvest, the Great Shepherd of the sheep and provide a full accounting for all who were placed in his care.

This word "pastor" simply means "shepherd." Interestingly, the word "shepherd" is both a noun and a verb. It describes the person as well as the work. A shepherd leads, guides, directs, cares for, looks after, guards, feeds and tends to the needs of the sheep. A shepherd shepherds the sheep. A shepherd lives and, as need be, dies for the sheep. As a shepherd, the sheep are his one charge, his one care, his one concern in life. Perhaps the primary observation concerning a shepherd is that the shepherd gathers and keeps his sheep in a flock. Sheep

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with darkness? {15} And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? {16} And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. {17} Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, {18} And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

It should be understood by all that "the office of a bishop" is "a good work." All that the word "work" can possibly convey is to be understood in the office of a bishop. This work is a labor more spiritual than physical, though, strangely, more physical than mental. The pastorate is place of service, not privilege. In one chapter alone (2 Timothy 2), Paul describes the work of the pastor as that of a soldier (v.3-4) going to war, a contestant striving for masteries (v.5), a husbandman laboring in the fields (v.6), a workman facing inspection (v.15), and the servant of the Lord answerable to the his Lord (v.24). All of those terms describe labor intensive work. Words such as effort, struggle, exertion, conflict, strain and pain are all required to define the work of the pastor. Pastoring is not a profession; it is an occupation. The pastorate is not a playground; it is a battlefield. The pastorate is not a picnic ground; it is a field for farming. Pastors are work-

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tion through the grace of the merciful God of Heaven is "a joy unspeakable and full of glory." However, "knowing therefore the terror of the Lord," Paul stated that he labored "night and day with tears" to be "accepted of him." (1 Corinthians 5:8-12, Acts 20:31)) In so doing, he recognized himself as being an ambassador of the Lord God of Heaven. (Ephesians 6:20) As one under authority, Paul declares that his ministry must be "found faithful" and that "he that judgeth me is the Lord." (1 Corinthians 4:1-4) Preaching is therefore to the preacher a two-edged sword, with frightening responsibility and extraordinary joy.

THE PASTOR

The call to preach is not the same calling as a call to the pastorate. Not all preachers are pastors, not should they be. The distinction is clear. The preacher is called to a purpose; the pastor is called to a place. A man is called by God to preach; he is called by a particular church to be her pastor. It is therefore true that a man may be called to preach and never be called to be a pastor and, even so, not be "out of the will of God." At the same time, a man may be in the pastorate and be "out of the will of God." Preaching and pastoring are not the same calling. Yet, let it be clear that no man is fit for the pastorate who has not been called to preach. Not every

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preacher ought "to desire the office of a bishop." There are good spiritual reasons for some men not to seek the pastorate. There are also men who are not scripturally approved to be pastors. It is my belief, based on Scripture, experience, and observation, that there are other men who are pastoring that ought not to be pastoring, and, *not a few of these that ought not even to be in any ministry.*

This latter "judgment" on my part refers specifically to those preaching false doctrine, teaching erroneous practices, failing in personal moral character, practicing a sinful lifestyle, abusing the flock, and neglecting their own families. While I do have actual names in mind and all are Baptist preachers or pastors, there is no gain in being specific when the principle is general. There are some who have "departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," and there are "certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness," and there are some who "through covetousness . . . with feigned words make merchandise of" the flock. There are particular men who have made a career out of splitting churches. Others have used one church as a stepping stone to the next and leave the first to pay the debt for the extravagance of the ambition of her former pastor. There are men in the pastorate who have a history of sexual misconduct and who are moved from one church to the next by

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hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Chapter 6 {1} We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. {2} (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) {3} Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: {4} But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, {5} In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; {6} By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, {7} By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, {8} By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; {9} As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; {10} As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. {11} O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. {12} Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. {13} Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged. {14} Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light

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or absent, we may be accepted of him. {10} For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. {11} Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. {12} For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. {13} For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. {14} For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: {15} And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. {16} Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. {17} Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. {18} And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; {19} 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. {20} 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. {21} For he

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their "mentors" or because the injured church does not wish "to judge," or because the church or her "protectors" simply desire to be rid of the problem and have absolutely no concern for any one else who will be hurt.

As I am writing this section, I recall the wife of a Baptist pastor. A friend of her family requested that I give her advice and counsel. Her pastor-husband had seduced teenage girls (plural) in the church and she was receiving pressure from the deacons of the church, other local pastors, and her husband to remain, as she quoted them, "quiet so as not to injure the church or hurt her husband's ministry." At my inquiry, she admitted that this was not the first church where the *Reverend* had done this. She had complied with the pressure in a previous ministry and, even now, was afraid to do anything that could "injure the ministry"; yet she was miserably uncomfortable at the thought of what further heartaches lay ahead for her and her children and fearful for what might happen to others through his ministry. While it might seem impossible to imagine, the deacons of this Baptist Church and certain area preachers were insisting that she must submit to their pressure or she would be judged for hurting "the work of Christ." Their use of Scripture made her terrified not to "go along" for fear that God would judge her; yet, her heart and her conscience could not be stilled in their sense of guilt if she did "go along." She was a women in agony.

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My response was (1) that her husband had no testimony to respect and no ministry to protect, (2) that he did not did not deserve either respect or protection, (3) that, in fact, any attempt at "protection" for him was direct, personal, guilty involvement in the guaranteed, future seduction of yet more innocent girls, (4) that neither he nor those so pressuring her were doing "the work of Christ," and finally (5) that she did not have to listen to anyone advising her to protect a perverted reprobate.

I advised her to find an expensive attorney and proceed, at his advice, (1) to protect herself and her children by taking every advantage the laws of this state would allow her "to clean his clock" financially, (2) to sue her husband for divorce on the grounds of adultery (hopefully, effectively forcing him from the ministry), (3) to report him to the legal authorities as a child abuser, and (4) to sue the deacons, if the attorney could figure a way to do so, and, at the very least, report them for not reporting a known child abuser.

It is safe to say that, as she listened, she was stunned, if not shocked. She expressed that she had felt what I said was what she wanted to do, but that she had been convinced by those Baptist deacons and preachers that she would commit an unforgivable sin if she did so. There was a noticeable change in her voice and attitude as she agreed, at least, to talk with the attorney. I gladly report that indeed

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and therefore speak; {14} Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. {15} For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. {16} For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. {17} For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; {18} While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Chapter 5 {1} 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} For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: {3} If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. {4} For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. {5} Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. {6} Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: {7} (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) {8} We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. {9} Wherefore we labour, that, whether present

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note of the words I have chosen to emphasize.

Chapter 4 {1} Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; {2} 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. {3} But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: {4} In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. {5} For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. {6} For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. {7} But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. {8} We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; {9} Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; {10} Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. {11} For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. {12} So then death worketh in us, but life in you. {13} We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe,

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her husband's "clock was cleaned." He is, I understand, no longer in the ministry. Those deacons and preachers had, shall I say, "a learning experience." At my last contact, she was active in her new church and finally enjoying (her term) being a child of God. I would give the same advice again.

Though I personally doubt it, the man in question may be saved and may have even been called to preach. I can not discern the thoughts and intents of the heart; I can only observe the life. His conduct disqualified him; and he is no longer "fit" to be a pastor. His failure to repent is, in my view, solid evidence that he is a predator and not a God-called preacher or pastor. Men such as this degenerate have no business in any pulpit—even in the prison chapel. The call to preach or to pastor demands an exemplary life of purity, righteousness, and holiness. The pastor is fully accountable for his life; he is to be blameless. Some are not morally fit for the office.

There are other reasons, reasons without connection to sin or guilt, that suggest that some men ought not "to desire the office of a bishop." A preacher, honestly called of God, can be made to feel less than in the will of God, if he is not in the pastorate. Yet, that "lack" in and of itself is not sufficient grounds to declare a man "out of the will of God." The call to preach is not the same as a call to pastor a church. A preacher may be used by the Lord of the Harvest in many facets of ministry other than as the pastor, such as serving as a member of a

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church staff, or by preaching in nursing homes, convalescent centers, jails, prisons, rescue missions, and by teaching in Bible classes or Sunday School classes, fellowship groups and many other areas, including teaching in or overseeing seminaries and colleges. As in the case of Timothy, one may serve in a ministry for years before becoming a pastor. Changes in health have caused some good men into a forced removal from the pastorate. In this consideration is to be included not only the health of the preacher but also that of his wife or family. Sudden, unexpected family events have also compelled some preachers to step aside from the pastorate.

Without question, it is also possible that a man may be called to preach and yet be unqualified (according to the standards of Scripture) to be a pastor of a church. He may have been called before certain events of life disqualified him or he may have a background prior to his salvation that, even though he is regenerated and transformed, make his past a hindrance to pastoring. There are positions available other than the pastorate when one called to preach may exercise his ministry. Not all preachers are called to be pastors, nor should they be.

It is possible for a man to be called to preach and yet not have the "temperament" to be a pastor. A man may be an excellent preacher but, even so, might make a miserable pastor. Some preachers have a marvelous ability to exhort, to encourage, to motivate, to challenge believers as a group, but sim-

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hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. {29} For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. {30} Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. {31} Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. {32} 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. {33} I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. {34} Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. {35} 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. {36} And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. {37} And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, {38} Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship. It is impossible to read this passage and not "feel" the heartbeat of a pastor for his former congregation; it is not possible to miss the truth that the pastorate is a burden. Exactly how much of a burden is conveyed in 2 Corinthians. Here Paul describes his pastorate in Corinth. Again, please take

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{16} For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. {17} And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. {18} And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, {19} Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: {20} And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, {21} Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. {22} And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: {23} Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. {24} 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. {25} And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. {26} Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. {27} For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. {28} Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost

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ply cannot effectively deal with individuals. Others have the talent of evangelizing an area, collecting a group of believers and preparing them for a pastor, but cannot endure the work of the pastorate. Others have an amazing ability to preach the word of God in such a teaching manner that the simplest believer can grasp the most difficult doctrine and yet not have the "personality" to work with people on a daily basis.

Named examples easily could be provided of men, both living and dead, who were unquestionably called of God to preach but who were never pastors or who left the pastorate though continuing to preach. The call to preach is not the same as the call to pastor. Preaching is not the same as pastoring and pastoring involves far more than just preaching. Preaching is the proclamation of the word of God. Preaching is speaking in a public forum to "share" what one has studied in order to persuade others to believe or to practice the truth of the word of God. Pastoring is "taking the oversight" of the flock of God.

THE PASTORATE

It is important to understand that in the New Testament the terms "bishop," "elder," and "pastor" all describe the same office. A bishop is an elder, an elder is a pastor, a pastor is a bishop. In recent

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years it has become popular in certain "Baptist" circles to separate "elders" from "pastors;" this is a position that cannot be supported by any scripture passage. This practice arose, not from a searching of the Scriptures "to see whether these things be so," but from a desire to "be like the other nations." The tendency to copy "big names" and to do as these "experts" suggest because "it works" is dangerous because it establishes an authority other than the word of God and builds upon standards other than those revealed in the Scriptures. New carts copied after the Philistines will not carry the Ark of the covenant with the blessing of God, and new twistings of the Scriptures to fit the modern design of a church will not receive the blessing of God. It is asserted that the New Testament shows that churches sometimes had more than one elder. This is granted without the necessity of separating the office of pastor and elder. A plurality of elders in a church, in New Testament practice, would simply be a pastor assisted by other associate or assistant pastors in the work of a church.

While I strongly contend that the greatest privilege on earth is that of being a biblical pastor, I acknowledge that the pastorate is not a place of privilege. The pastor is not the lord over God's heritage (1 Peter 5:3). He is a minister, a servant, and not the master. In every sense of the terms involved, the pastor is to give his life for his sheep. The Apostle Paul describes the pastorate in Acts

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20:16-38, 1 Corinthians 9:3-27, 2 Corinthians 4:5-6:18, and, primarily, of course, in those epistles written to pastors, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Any man "desiring the office of a bishop" ought to earnestly study these passages, the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul and the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ from the view that He was indeed the first Pastor of the first church.

In writing what I do next, I am not attempting to be flippant. The Lord Jesus Christ was "about thirty years of age" (Luke 3:23) when He began His work as Pastor. The next time, near the close of His ministry, (John 8:57) His age is mentioned, He is described as "not yet fifty years old." I assume that the choice of "fifty years" as the age comparison was based upon His appearance. Perhaps the passage in Isaiah 53 ("and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:") may reflect the burdens and cares that He endured. With great reverence, I take notice that the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ required a visible physical toll on the physical body prepared for Him.

For my purposes in this paper, Acts 20:16-38 may be cited as a functional summary of the experiences of Paul in the pastorate. With the intent of directing our attention to particular words that describe the pastor in the pastorate, I will use bold type.

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