UNDERSTANDING YOUR PASTOR

**DATE: 4/29/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 13:7, 17; Acts 20; I Peter 5**

**INTRODUCTION**

(Please Remain standing for the reading of the Word of God)

We began chapter 13 last time … and looked at 3 thoughts on The Conduct of the Believer

Our Compassion toward Others, Our Conduct in the Home and Our Contentment with the Lord

Tonight we will look at what a Pastor is in relationship to the local church

There are only 2 official positions in a Local church

Pastors and Deacons

A pastor is not a priest; he is not a pope; he is not a father; (Matt. 23:9) he is not a vicar; he is not a reverend (Ps.119:9) and he is most definitely not the king

A deacon is not a board member, a trustee or the administrative leader of the church

The word deacon means servant and he is to be the helping hands of the pastor

The word pastor means shepherd

The church is often referred to as a Flock

Jesus said in **Luke 12:32 – *“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”***

Paul, while admonishing the Galatian elders said –

**Acts 20:28 –** ***“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”***

The apostle Peter said **– I Peter 5:2, 3 *– “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”***

I think these is a lack of understanding of the Biblical mandate for the Local church pastor and his responsibilities

Paul lays out some truths about the Pastor's authority and the believer’s responsibility to follow his leadership in our verses

I hope this will clear up any misunderstanding

Let’s read our text and then pray

Let’s Read Together **vs. 7, 17**

***~~~Prayer~~~***

First, let us look at …

**I. THE PASTOR’S “AUTHORITY” - vs. 7a, 17a**

What is Authority?

By general definition it means *the right or power to enforce rules or order*

Where does … what a pastor claims, is his Authority … come from?

The word Authority is used throughout the NT

In the Biblical sense it means *Capacity; delegated influence*

Pastoral Authority is the influence that someone gets from the Lord (for example)

**Luke 9:1 *– “Then He (Jesus) called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority …”***

**Mark 13:34 –** ***“For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch”***

The Lord told Peter **Matthew 16:19 *– “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”***

A key is an instrument for opening a door

He that is in possession of it has the power of access, and has the general care and administration of the house

Hence, in the Bible, a key is used as a symbol of superintendence, an emblem of power and authority

**II Corinthians 10:8 *– “For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should (shall) not be ashamed:”***

**Titus 2:15 –** ***“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee”***

I think that’s enough to establish Pastoral Authority

First let’s look at the Pastor’s Authority and …

**A. His ‘Rule’ – v.7a**

There are 2 thought here

**1. *“the rule over you...”***

***“Rule”* –** *is a measure to a known standard, An Action taken to make something happen or to prevent something from happening*

What the Bible is talking about here is the Standards set in place (Bible Percepts, Principles and Practices)

These standards need to be taught by the pastor to help that church live for God

That we may have something to gage ourselves by

How will someone know if they are living right, unless the Bible directive is declared

The Bible describes the Pastor as being...

***“over you”***  … here …

And in **I Thessalonians 5:12 –“*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;”***

Notice the other terms used as well

***“labour”*** and ***“admonish”***

The difficulty here is that no one likes being ruled over

No one likes being told what to do

Man instinctively by his old nature is a rebel

Man in is sinfulness has always abused his rule

Man always wants to dominate / control

We are therefore encouraged to …

**2. *“Remember them”***

**I Thess. 5:12 – *“know them”***

Appreciate what they do

Remember where their Authority comes from

Appreciate why they do what they do

Remember to pray for them

Next, let’s look at the Pastor’s Authority and …

**B. His ‘Oversight’ – v.17a**

Supervision

There are 2 words here that would show one’s appreciation for a pastor’s supervision

**v. 17a – *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves...”***

In the Book of Acts we find the term ***“overseer”*** used in relation to the Pastor's work

Again **Acts 20:28 – *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers...”***

Notice Whom; it is that makes someone an authority

***“the Holy Ghost”***

The office of the pastor requires that he be the spiritual overseer / supervisor of the Church

We understand that Christ is the head of the Church

However, since God is a God of order

He has set the local Church up in such a way that it is an organized body

The Pastor's authority is a delegated authority

**John 10:30 – *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me”***

*God called* Pastors … are sent by Christ and are to be received as sent by Him

Therefore ***“obey them … submit yourselves”***

In **Jeremiah 3:15** God said ***– “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart...”***

Let's understand that the Pastor is not some guy that has been hired simply to fill a position

Most Churches look for Pastors today like an employer looks for an employee

The church board runs the show; they just need a preacher to fill the pulpit

However, God doesn't see it that way

When God places a Pastor in a real Church,

He is placed there with the God-given authority to lead that Church under the direction of the Holy Spirit

This does not imply that the Pastor is to be a dictator

It must be understood that the office of Pastor is administrative, not legislative!

The Pastor doesn’t make the Laws (God does that)

He only administrates the Laws

(Makes sure they are carried out)

Again **I Peter 5: 2, 3** says - ***“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”***

The analogy given to us in Scripture, of the faithful Pastor, is that of the shepherd tending to the flock

The word Pastor describes the heart of his ministry,

That of shepherding the flock

Pastoring a church is tending to the Lord's flock

Peter warns the Pastor to oversee the Church,

Not... ***“as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples”***

That the Pastor has authority cannot be disputed,

But the Pastor must lead the right way

This word translated ***“lord”*** carries the idea of *forcefully ruling over something or of being domineering*

The word was used of bringing someone into subjection by force

This verse warns against the Pastor becoming power hungry

**III John 9 *– “I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not”***

A Pastor taking the oversight and exercising his God-given authority is not wrong …

But *lording* over God's heritage is

The Pastor will accomplish nothing by strong arming the flock

A lot of God's people are scattered because they've been driven instead of led

Peter speaks of the Pastor as... ***“taking the oversight”*** in **I Peter 5:2**

He then tells how he is to do this

***“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, (forced to) but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;” (Cheerfully, promptly)***

Pastors are to labour in their work, not under the influence of the desire of gain, but from the promptings of love

**II Corinthians 5:14 *– “For the love of Christ constraineth (causes) us;”***

**THE PASTOR’S “AUTHORITY”**

Next, let’s look at …

**II. THE PASTOR’S “APPEAL” – v.7b**

What is to be the Pastor’s Appeal? (formal request)

***“… who have spoken unto you the word of God:”***

First we have …

**A. The ‘Command to’ Preach**

**Mark 16:15 – *“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”***

Certainly, the Pastor's work involves many responsibilities

But preaching the Word should be at the top of the list

Again preaching 1st Salvation and then Sanctification

This ought to be the great desire of every pastor

To make the Word of God known to others is the supreme priority of the pastor

God handpicked the pastor and made him an overseer and told him …

**Acts 20:28 - *“to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood”***

**I Peter 5:2** says – ***“Feed the flock of God...”***

God instructed **Isaiah** (**58:1**) to – ***“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins”***

Did you hear what He said?

Most people don’t what to hear that today

In a lot of churches the ministry of the Word has taken a back seat to music programs, children's ministry and other activities

*Where the Word of God is not paramount … the power of God is not prev-a-lent*

**The ‘Command to’ Preach**

**B. The ‘Content we’ Preach**

**Jeremiah 3:15 *– “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding”***

Here again we see that the Pastor's job is to feed the flock with knowledge and understanding

The word ***“knowledge”*** speaks of *being acquainted with facts, truths, and principles*

The word ***“understanding”*** carries the *idea of instructing or guiding in the use of those facts, truths, and principles*

Pastors must do more than simply fill people's heads with facts

Those facts must be taught to be applied

We must go beyond educating folks and we must instruct and guide them in the truth

We are to believe in the primacy of preaching

That is … that preaching is supreme

But we are not to preach to just make a lot of noise

In **Acts 20:24 -27** Paul said – ***“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” “And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more” “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men” “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God”***

A faithful Pastor will declare the whole counsel of God

Paul was free from the blood of all men because he was faithful in preaching the Word of God

A Pastor must be faithful in preaching the Word of God

Churches and Christians are struggling because they don't know how to live a faithful and Godly Christian life

**THE PASTOR’S “AUTHORITY”**

**THE PASTOR’S “APPEAL”**

**III. THE PASTOR’S “ACTIONS” – v.7c**

***“…whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation”***

**A. His ‘Faith’**

***“… whose faith follow…”***

The Pastor's faith ought to be evident in his life

People should be able to look at the Pastor and say –

*That is what my life should be like*

*That is how I ought to live*

A pastor’s faith as it is lived out in his life becomes something that folks can follow

**I Corinthians 11:1 – *“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”***

**II Thessalonians 3:7 – *“For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;”***

**B. His ‘Conduct’**

**“*considering the end of their conversation”***

The word *“****conversation”*** carries the idea of *behavior or conduct*

The ***“end”*** is talking about where it will bring you out

There are 2 kinds of *conversation*

1st there is that which we say with our Lips

2nd there is that which we say with our Life

The Apostle is not speaking of our Talk, but our Walk

Our manner of life

He is talking about how we live from day to day

That is what Paul meant when he said that a Pastor

*“...* ***must be blameless...”* in I Timothy 3:2**

To be blameless is a tall order

However, this does not mean that the Pastor is to be perfect

If that were the case there would be a serious shortage of Pastors

The word *“****blameless”*** comes from a word that means *not able to be held*

It is a judicial term that describes a lack of evidence in a court preceding

Therefore the defendant can't be held

The man who is *blameless* may be charged with a crime,

But in the end there wouldn’t be sufficient evidence to hold him

He must be blameless according to the standards of the Word of God

Not blameless according to man's standards and accusations

I’ve been accused of whole lot of things

But nothing that would hold up in a court of law

We should be able to follow a man’s faith, knowing exactly where it will bring us out

**THE PASTOR’S “AUTHORITY”**

**THE PASTOR’S “APPEAL”**

**THE PASTOR’S “ACTIONS”**

**IV. THE PASTOR’S “APPOINTMENT” – v.17b**

***“…for they watch for your souls”***

This is a solemn verse

The Pastor watches for the souls of men

He stands between God and man in the sense that he deals largely with the eternal part of man

**V. THE PASTOR’S “ACCOUNTABILITY” - v.17c**

***“…as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you”***

This is a principle of Scripture

**Luke 12:48 – *“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required”***

This principle stands especially true in the case of God's man

**James 3:1 – *“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation”***

Those who teach and lead God's people will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and be judged more strictly than others

**CONCLUSION**

1. Protect His Time - Give him opportunity to pray and study the Word. Don’t expect from him, his family or his home to be anymore they you would for yours. Every Pastor wants to be available when needed, but no spiritual man of God can afford to waste his time!

2. Pray For Him Continually - Call his name out to the Father, and God will fill him and use him

3. Pay Attention While He Preaches - The sermon is not the time to be fiddling around, getting up and going to the bathroom, looking through the hymnal, cutting your toenails or taking a nap. The man of God has labored long and hard to prepare the spiritual meal. At least have the common decency to pay attention when he preaches!

4. Provide For The Needs of your Pastor – God will bless the church that blesses the man of God

5. Please The Lord Through Your Ministry To The Pastor – How?

· Respect him for the office he holds

· Follow him as he follows the Lord

· Help him carry out the Lord’s work in this place