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THE SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY OF THE PASTOR-TEACHER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 137
HEBREWS 13:7 and 17

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Pray this prayer with me--"We are here because of who and what Christ is. We desperately need to have his mind in us. We pray for another grace provision from thy hand, O Father. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

HEBREWS 13:7 "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." This is the rule of the Word of God. The word "remember" is the present, active, imperative of mnemoneuo and it means to keep in mind, to fix your thoughts on, to concentrate. This is a customary present, that which habitually occurs or that which you can expect to occur. Concentrating on the teaching of doctrine is what is in view here. So this says, "Be concentrating on them." "Them" is the objective genitive plural of the definite article used as a demonstrative pronoun. The word is ton. The Pastor is not the nice, sweet guy handing out sweetness and light, patting people on the head and promising them blessings for little things they do around the church. So thus far, we translate this "Keep on concentrating on those." It refers to those pastors who teach doctrine.

The Place of Rulership

This is the first place of a pastor. He is the ruler of the congregation. It doesn't mean he is arrogant, or a bully throwing his weight around. Many ministers are not mature enough for a job like this. He just should tiptoe in and start teaching. At first he just whispers and then people begin to listen and little by little as he teaches doctrine, he earns his authority. (You recall in John 21 Jesus told Peter to "Feed the baby sheep, then to care for the hard-headed sheep, then to feed the mature sheep. This is the pastor's task.)

Don't Abuse This Authority

Some people resent this when they hear that the pastor is the ruler of the church. They think they are the rulers. No pastor should be arrogant about his authority. And it is very easy for him to abuse his power. He can't rule as he ought until he has spiritual maturity. The idea of a preacher throwing his weight around because he loves his own voice is ridiculous. No preacher should get the idea that he is God's gift to the human race.

"They which have the rule" comes from the present, middle, participle of hegeomai. So we have thus far, "Keep on concentrating on the pastors who themselves have the rule over you." The next word "who" is a nominative masculine plural of hostis. So correctly translated it says, "The men who."

A Pastor Is A Male

Everywhere in the Bible where you have pastor-teacher, it is always masculine gender. Pastor-teacher is a gift for males only. (By nature, woman is a responder and she is at her best as a responder.) This doesn't mean that a woman is not to teach the Bible. By nature they are some of the best teachers in the world. But this quantitative relative pronoun from hostis is masculine, telling us emphatically that it is the male who is to be the pastor-teacher. (There are some Episcopal Rectors who are women-- well, before it is over, they are going to wreck something.) The next word we have "have spoken" and this is the aorist, active, indicative of laleo and it means to communicate, to teach doctrine. This aorist tense gathers into one lump all the teaching the pastor will do. Now teaching doctrine is not the easiest thing for a pastor. He may strike out completely, but he is to come back the next time and start over again. This is the way he grows and this is the way he establishes his authority. He walks in and opens the Bible and does the best he can with that first verse, then he moves on to the next verse, and then the next.

Rule From Teaching

The pastor-teacher establishes his rulership from teaching. We have next the words "unto you" and it is dative of advantage, and it is to your advantage that the pastor-teacher will teach and teach and teach. Next we have ton logon tou Theou and it means "The word from the God." The words "whose faith follow" comes from the present, middle, imperative of mimeomai and it means to follow, to imitate, to mimic. It means learning by hearing, by concentrating, by listening. The word mimos means "actor" and from this we get the word mimic. The word pistis means "doctrine" so it should be translated "by emulating their doctrine." Next we have the word "considering" and this is a present, active, participle of anatheoreo and it means to view again and again, to concentrate. The next word should not be translated "the end" as they have it here, but it means "the issue" from the word ekbosis. "Of their conversation" comes from the descriptive genitive singular of anastrophe and it means "way of life, life-style."

Corrected Translation Of Verse 7

"Keep on concentrating on your right pastor-teacher, who themselves are ruling over you, male pastors who have communicated to you the Word from the God, pastors whose doctrine you emulate, and be carefully considering the issue of their way of life."

THE DOCTRINE OF PASTOR-TEACHER

1. DEFINITION AND CONCEPT.

1. Important to understand authority.

Since every believer is a priest as well as being a member of the Royal Family of God, it is important to understand the system of authority which God has instituted and authorized for spiritual growth in the world, during the Church Age.

2. Two basic categories of authority.

- a. Overt authority. This includes divine delegation of authority to the Royal Priest in the form of the Word of God. Our first and final authority is the Word of God. The pastor-teacher is the communicator designed by God to give our doctrine to the people.
- b. Inner authority. This is the inner volition of the soul, compatible with the sovereign will of God as expressed in Scripture. You have authority in you, inner volition. You come to the church and listen to teaching and submit to a higher authority. We come because we want to know what our authority says. The pastor-teacher lives it, breathes it, so he can stand up and tell you what it says.
- c. The function of the pastor-teacher is to bring these two authorities together. The authority of the Word of God and the authority of your volition.
- d. Consequently, the pastor-teacher is a spiritual gift solemnly bestowed by God the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation. It is a gift bestowed entirely apart from human merit or talent.
- e. The spiritual gift provides both the ability and the authority to communicate Bible Doctrine to the congregation by monologue. Not dialogue.
- f. The gift of pastor-teacher, like all spiritual gifts, is bestowed at the moment of salvation--it is a grace gift.
- g. The gift of pastor-teacher is restricted to the male population without regard to any certain kind of personality and is given on the basis of the sovereign decision of God.
- h. There is, therefore, no such thing as surrendering to preach, or dedicating yourself to full-time Christian service. The Holy Spirit picks us out for these tasks. No one can replace the work of the Holy Spirit in a call like this. Grow up spiritually and God the Holy Spirit will make it plain to you what he wants you to do. This gift nor any other gift is given on the basis of your innate ability or speaking ability.

2. NOMENCLATURE FOR THE OFFICE OF PASTOR-TEACHER

We find this in four words in the Greek New Testament.

- a. Presbuteros. It means the leader, the ruler and this word has reference to the pastor's authority. It is often translated "elder." One church has one elder. It is false

doctrine that says there can be a plurality of elders in the church. (Plymouth Brethren have this false doctrine.) There can be a plurality of elders in a community, but only one in each local church. His authority is in teaching the Word of God from the pulpit to the congregation. Every pastor-teacher is the final authority in the church. The pastor should not try to be the authority in money matters and he should never be allowed to count the money or get near it. (Scriptures that help define this presbuteros idea are 1 Timothy 5:17 and 19, Titus 1:5, James 1:5, 5:14, 1 Peter 5:1.

- b. Poiminos kai didaskalos and it means "pastor and teacher." (Ephesians 4:11) His function is to rule the sheep. Pastor means shepherd. The teacher is to take doctrine from the Book and plant it into the souls and it takes discipline to do this.
- c. Episkopos It means policy making, it means overseer. He is the straw boss. He runs the crew. This is his authority to get the job done in a church. He has to have a policy in order to get the job done. He delegates authority. He is the executive who makes the policy.
- d. Diakonos and it means "administrator." The pastor is also called a deacon. (Deacons are men of administration, servants.) 1 Cor. 3:5, Eph. 3:7, 1 Cor. 1:7 and 23, Col. 4:7, 1 Thess. 3:2, 1 Tim. 1:12, Heb. 6:10, Acts 6:4 uses the word "deacon" for the pastor.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE PASTOR-TEACHER.

Ephesians 4:12-13 is the passage in view here.

It says, "For the purpose of training and equipping the saints for combat, for the purpose of the vocation of the ministry, for the purpose of the edification of the body of Christ (spiritual growth). Until we all have attained the goal of super grace because of the consistency of doctrine and the epignosis of the full knowledge of the Son of God, with reference to a mature nobleman, to the standard and maturity which belongs to the fullness of Christ."

The work, therefore, is teaching and training and spiritual growth.

4. THE FUNCTION OF THE PASTOR-TEACHER

(Ephesians 4:20-21)

This says, "But you, members of the Royal Family of God, have not been taught this manner, the Christ. In as much as ye have begun to hear him, and have been taught by him, since doctrine is in Jesus."

- a. The pastor-teacher derives his function from the Greek verb didasko. Its cognate is didaskolos and it means good teacher, noble teacher. Didasko means "to teach."

- b. The public assembly of the local church is the classroom of this dispensation. The pastor is the teacher and the members of the congregation are the students.
- c. The pastor-teacher establishes his authority by the faithful teaching of the Word of God under three facets--Isagogics (literary history or Biblical background--Categories (meaning of doctrine) and exegesis (which has to do with the makeup of the words and their force from an explanation of grammar).
- d. To do this the pastor must have the proper credentials and the spiritual gift. He must have spiritual maturity. He must have academic preparation. He must have strong self-discipline and good study habits. He must have academic honesty and moral courage.

5. THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

This is the assembly designed by God to provide privacy for every member of the congregation. Each one is free to learn or free not to learn. It depends on the volition and academic discipline of each member.

- a. The believer in the assembly is called a methetes and it means student, a learner, a student without privileges. The purpose of the student is in the verb manthano and it means "to learn."
- b. Each student is taught under the principle of perfect privacy. This means monologue. One teaches and each has his privacy to learn.
- c. The pastor-teacher is not to interfere with the inner personal life of the members. The pastor-teacher is to give the member doctrine and this doctrine will solve the personal problems. The pastor is never to intrude into the personal life of his members. He must never bully any member of his congregation with any overpowering authority. He must give accurate doctrine and let the member take it or leave it.

Summary The pastor is a student of the Word of God and a teacher. He is a policy maker in his own local church and no where else. He is an administrator and will give advice, but he will never attempt to force his decision on any member. The pastor can advise and suggest but the free will of the member must make the decision.

6. THE APPOINTMENT OF THE PASTOR-TEACHER.

All pastor-teachers are appointed by God at the point of their salvation. His function begins when he becomes the pastor of a church, and between his call and his work, there are many

years of preparation. God gives this gift to certain male believers, apart from talent or ability. (My mother said she knew the day that I was born that I would be a preacher, but that had nothing to do with my call. My mother was just spiritual enough to read the mind of God and know in advance what he would do.)

No preacher can deserve the ministry.

It is the solemn act of the perfect Holy Spirit.

Between the giving of the gift and the exercising of that gift, there are many years of solid preparation. (Some have been put into the ministry by others. They are told that it is a nice white collar job. It is a place where you will be greatly respected. They are told that God needs their talent and their ability. These are not reasons for going into the ministry.) People who enter the ministry without a call from God and an endowment of this gift from the Holy Spirit are suckers. Once he discovers he has been called, it behoves him to get himself ready for his task. (Sometimes God will thrust a man out into the ministry with little academic training and use him mightily. But this is the exception.) Often the preacher must prepare and then wait for God to place him. (Immanuel was without a pastor for 1½ years waiting for me to come.)

- a. The appointment comes at the moment of salvation.
- b. The Holy Spirit makes the sovereign decision to give the gift.
- c. The gift is imparted apart from merit or talent or ability. (Whom God calls, he always qualifies.)
- d. The gift is recognized by spiritual growth.
- e. No substitute for preparation.
- f. The gift is a permanent one.

1 Cor. 2:1 and 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11 tells of this appointment. If you are a female you do not have to worry about the fact that you have missed the boat. The closest that a female can come to this gift is to marry one. Many females are superb missionaries and teachers and soul winners. But the Bible says the pastor-teacher is to be a male.

7. THERE IS A RIGHT PASTOR FOR A RIGHT CONGREGATION.

God's Holy Spirit has a way to bring the right pastor to the right congregation at the right time. (Take an illustration of how God brought Dr. C. C. Warren to Immanuel just at the right time to start the mission churches and the movement spread to all the Southern Baptist Convention.) Even if a preacher and a church are not matches, the proper teaching of doctrine will cover a multitude of sins.

(1 Peter 5:2) This verse says, "Shepherd the flock of God among you. (This is a command given to a pastor who has his right congregation.) Do not do it by compulsion, do it voluntarily according to the grace of God, not for gain but from enthusiasm."

When you have right pastor and right congregation, then a pastor will have enthusiasm.

8. THE CONCEPT OF THE PASTOR BEING A TOTAL GRACE PRODUCT IS VERY IMPORTANT.

The pastor is not perfect and is a normal human being. He is not the pastor-teacher because he has earned the right to be. He is the pastor-teacher because of the grace of God.

(1 Cor. 15:10)

This verse says "But by the grace of God I am what I am. His grace toward me did not prove vain but I even laboured more than they all (More than the other disciples) yet not I, but the grace of God with me." If ever there was a man who didn't earn it or deserve it, it is the greatest pastor of churches that ever lived, Paul the Apostle. We would call him a super-pastor. He was the greatest communicator of the Word of God in all human history. But his greatness was not deserved--it was a grace miracle.

(Ephesians 3:7)

This says, "Of which I had become a minister according to the gift from God's grace. Having been given to me according to the operational function of his omnipotence."

(1 Timothy 1:12-16)

Verse 12 "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful, putting me into his service."

Verse 13 "Even though I was formerly a blasphemer and persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet, I was graced out because I acted ignorantly in unbelief."

Verse 14 "And the grace of our Lord was more abundant with doctrine and love capacity in Christ Jesus."

Verse 15 "It is a dependable statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I rank foremost." (He was the worst sinner that ever lived.)

Verse 16 "And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me (the worst sinner) Jesus Christ might demonstrate his perfect patience as an example to those who would believe in him for eternal life."

Paul was a beautiful grace product, but in the same sense every pastor-teacher is a grace product. The pastor-teacher has an old sin nature and feet of clay and he is never to be put on a pedestal. His job is to execute the authority of the Word.

9. THE BIBLICAL DOCUMENTATION FOR THE PASTOR-TEACHER.

(Ephesians 3:7-13, 4:11-13, Col. 1:23-29, 1 Tim. 2:24-26
1 Tim. 3:1-9, Titus 1:6-9)

When a man begins to realize that he has this gift, he needs to study closely these passages given above.

10. THE AUTHORITY OF A PASTOR

(Hebrews 13:7 and 17)

11. THE REWARD OF THE PASTOR-TEACHER.

(Hebrews 6:10)

This says, "For the God is not unjust to disregard your occupation. Also with reference to his person, having ministered the word with reference to the saints (Royal Family of God) and continue to minister."

HEBREWS 13:17 "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."

The word "obey" is the present, middle, imperative of peitho and should be translated "keep on obeying." Since every believer is a royal priest, he must have authority over you while you are on this earth. This word obey sets up that authority. So the royal priest who is a pastor-teacher has authority over the Royal Family members who are in his congregation. Obey here implies maturity. You never grow up until you recognize authority and are able to respond to it. This principle is related to your free will and volition. "That have the rule" is the dative case and is the present, middle, participle of hegeomai. It means to teach, to guide, to govern with doctrine. The present tense says it will always be this way. The middle voice shows that the pastor is the agent to put this authority into operation. Participle means that this is a universal principle. So this says, "Keep obeying those pastors who themselves are ruling over you."

Next we have "And submit yourselves" and this is the present, active, imperative of hupeiko and it means to submit to those in authority over you. It says, "And submit to their authority."

Look at these factors necessary for learning doctrine.

- a. Believers must have positive volition toward doctrine and must recognize the importance of doctrine resident in the soul.
- b. The expression of positive volition in regular and constant attendance at the local church when doctrine is taught.
- c. The filling of the Holy Spirit which is provided to you through the use of rebound and the use of 1 John 1:9.
- d. Be objective in regard to the pastor-teacher's personality, his dress, his looks. Be tolerant toward him and remember he is a human being.
- e. The content of some of the material may seem irrelevant to you at the moment. But stay with it and before long, you will see that you needed that doctrine.
- f. Be patient in learning doctrine that you do not understand. Later on the Holy Spirit will make it plain to you.
- g. The believer must have privacy to learn and never intrude on the privacy of someone when he or she is trying to learn. No talking, no movement, do nothing that would detract from someone learning doctrine.
- h. Have maximum concentration on the message.
- i. Believers must understand the grace of giving money, for this is the way the pastor-teacher is supported.

Next time we will begin with the phrase "they watch for your souls."