

Call to Obedience #290  
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA  
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## **You and Your Pastor Part 1”**

By Pastor Reimar Schultze

“And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount” (Exodus 19:17).

I will tell you right away that I have written three or more articles on this subject in the past 25 years without ever publishing any of them. This whole subject matter before us is so laden with emotions that hardly anyone in his or her right mind would want to address it. And by addressing it, I mean addressing it frankly and biblically without burying the heart of the matter under a beautiful bed of flowers. No doubt, most all of us on either side—laity or clergy—have had some, if not many painful scarring experiences that make it difficult for any of us to face the subject objectively without prejudice or without opening up old wounds again. But when I was awakened at four o'clock this morning, the Lord impressed upon me to go through with the article this time. That is to say, to lay the matter before you fearlessly in the Spirit of the Lord, as much as in my weakness I am able to discern it.

To sum up this introductory section—talking about hurts on either side—it is now known that 70 percent of all ministers quit the ministry before they have been in it for five years. Nowadays, only one of one hundred seminary graduates is expected to retire as a pastor. That tells you a lot about the pain in the ministry on the platform side. It is also a fact millions of parishioners have left churches because they have been hurt, disillusioned, abused, manipulated, and disappointed by their pastors. Now, let's leave the pity-party on both sides and get on with what God has to say about the matter. But, first, let me give you my credentials to write on this particular subject:

I was saved at sixteen years of age. From age 16 until 30, I sat in the pews, holding down a number of secular jobs from machinist to public health administrator. If you are a layman, I can surely say to you: I have sat where you sit. But from age 30 until now—thirty-eight years later—I have been in the pulpit, declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ. I have had four pastorates. The first three were about three and one half years in duration each, and I have held the current pastorate for twenty-seven years. I have always had an adequate salary. With this background, I believe I have a fair understanding of what is going on on either side of the altar. To begin with, let it be established that:

### **Pastors Should Be Paid**

First, notice that when Jesus called his disciples into the preaching ministry, he removed them from secular work—from fishing and tax collecting, etc.—so that they could be with him every day, twenty-four hours a day. He told his ministers to preach the gospel, to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to raise the dead and to cast out devils (Matt. 10:7–8). Further, he told them that they were not to provide for themselves. He said, “Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses” (v. 9). These men of God were to go trusting the Lord entirely, and it would be up to the people they minis

tered to provide them with the gold, silver and brass they needed for their support and the support of their families.

This pattern of the paid clergy goes back to the Old Testament as well, where the Levites and priests were provided for by the tithes and offerings of the people. The Old Testament teaches of a paid clergy; Jesus taught it; and the first Spirit-filled Christians knew instantly by the Holy Spirit that the apostles—the preachers—were to be provided for by the people. So they laid everything at the apostles' feet to provide for them as well as for the mission of the church (Acts 4:33–35).

The apostle Paul also taught this principle in 1 Corinthians 9:10–11, 14: “Or does He speak certainly and entirely for our sakes? [Assuredly] it is written for our sakes, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher ought to thresh in expectation of partaking of the harvest. If we have sown [the seed of] spiritual good among you, [is it too] much if we reap from your material benefits?...[On the same principle] the Lord directed (ordained, KJV) that those who publish the good news (the Gospel) should live (get their maintenance) by the Gospel” (AMPLIFIED).

Notice that it says that the Lord ordained that ministers should be paid as much as he ordained that the Sabbath should be kept holy. There are ministers who say, “I am not worthy to be paid a salary, so I refuse to receive it. I want to be like the laymen. I want to be one of them. I don't want to be in an exalted position.” My friend, whatever a minister is worth is not up to him to decide, but it is up to the Lord. The Lord has already made up his mind that pastors should be paid. If a minister will not obey God, and refuses to give himself continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4); if he prefers to choke his schedule with a secular job, he is grieving the Holy Spirit and robbing the congregation and the community of many a blessing.

On the other hand, there are lay people who will not tithe or who support a minister only half-heartedly because they think he does not live up to their standards. Apparently, it has never occurred to these precious people that whether to pay or not to pay the man in the pulpit is not an option for them to vote for. God has voted for it, and that's good enough! God has voted for it whether the man in the pulpit is a John who wanted to call fire onto the Samaritans, or a Peter who denied Christ, or a Judas who betrayed him, or a Thomas who doubted. It is up to the Lord, and he has already made up his mind and put it in his sacred Word. Jesus ordained that Peter, who denied him, should be paid full time, and that it should be so with Thomas who doubted him and with all the disciples who left him in the Garden. Faults and weaknesses in ministers are no excuse for not providing for them what they need.

The Scripture also says on this matter, “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn” (1 Tim. 5:18). My friend, if you want to have God's blessing, pay the preacher who brings the blessing, and pay him in such a way that he does not have to have any concerns about his earthly needs. That way, he can focus entirely on what God is telling him to do for his glorious kingdom. To put an ordained minister into the fight against evil and yet having him care for his earthly needs is like sending a soldier into battle with one hand tied behind his back.

Oh, how we can be unfair at times. I once had a layman work me over thoroughly about my lack of accuracy in my sermons. Yet, this same layman was late for church most every Sunday morning and refused to go to prayer meeting. Apparently, he ex

pected more from me than from himself. Oh, how we need to be gracious one towards another. There needs to be a lot of love and forbearance on both sides of the altar for the Holy Spirit to be free to do his mighty work within the church.

It is my contention that any congregation that has ten to twelve full-time salaried men can support one full-time pastor. A congregation of that small size can easily meet in the living room of someone's home or in a basement or garage. Then, once the church grows, with the increase of finance available, a room could be rented in an office building or a factory. The first financial responsibility of a congregation is to support the pastor full time. The building of concrete, steel and wood cannot feed nor mature a congregation. You need to put steel into the first ten men of God of your congregation before you put steel into a building or you may never have a strong congregation. The greatest treasure God ever had on earth was men who walked with him, not buildings. This fascination, this attachment, especially of American Christians, toward church buildings is not of the Lord, especially if it robs the man of God of his salary and stifles missions' giving.

In the days of Jesus, the Romans considered the temple of King Herod one of the greatest architectural wonders in the Roman world. The disciples showed Jesus that beautiful edifice, expecting him to express his awe and wonder. But Jesus was not impressed. He simply predicted that that beautiful building would soon be nothing but a pile of rubble. Jesus was looking for men—men to make up the hedge and stand in the gap for him in the land so that he would not have to destroy it (Ezek. 22:30).

In conclusion, Jesus said that his preachers should not provide for themselves through gold, silver or brass. He wants them to give themselves entirely to the mission of perfecting the saints and saving the world (Col. 1:28; Matt. 28:19–20). My friend, this is not a part time job. Are you still on board with me?

### **Pastors Need To Be Shepherds and Servants**

The pastor/servant role of your minister is best described in 1 Peter 5:2–4: “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.”

Here, the pastor is told: 1) “feed the flock,” which indicates his shepherd's calling; 2) “take oversight thereof,” which puts him into a leadership position; and 3) be “of a ready mind,” being willing to care for the flock. It goes on to tell us that a pastor must not abuse his leadership position by lording it over people, but his leadership should primarily be by example. Let's talk about this a little bit.

The pastor is, first of all, a shepherd. Before Jesus left the earth, he told Peter, who wrote this epistle, twice to feed his sheep and once to feed his lambs (John 21:15–17). There are those who don't seem to recognize the significance of this. There are those who believe that no one can feed them but Jesus, and so they don't have to be in church very often. They can skip a few services at their convenience. But the fact of the matter is that before Jesus departed, he let all the church know that he has appointed shepherds—under-shepherds under himself—to feed his sheep. He made it clear that from that point on, he would work through his under-shepherds, through his apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to feed the sheep for the perfect

ing of the saints (Eph. 4:11–12). My friend, Jesus has decreed that you be fed through his ministers as they preach to you the Word of the Lord. This is also declared in Matthew 10:40, where he says, “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.”

Of course, there are other ways that you can be fed, but this is to be one of the primary sources of your nourishment. You need a shepherd so that you will not go astray, so that you will be protected, so that you will be helped to discern between heresy and truth.

Now, as far as the shepherd/ruler is concerned, the pastor must not drive the sheep but lead the sheep. If sheep are driven, they quickly become stressed, then they become sick, and then they die. Sheep cannot handle stress. They can only be led, encouraged, loved and fed. In the business world, pushing and pressing and manipulating and driving is the key to success. But in the ministry, it is long-suffering, patience and wisdom. Not that the pastor isn't called to exhort, nudge and warn when he sees danger, but this is all done out of love.

Notice that in the last chapter of John, Jesus, by saying to Peter, “Feed my sheep,” indelibly linked himself with his under-shepherds. This powerful linkage between Jesus and his ministers is also found in The Revelation, where Jesus himself explains the mystery of the seven stars. He states, “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches” (1:20). The Greek meaning of the word angels is messengers. The ministers or shepherds are his messengers to the churches. This begs the question...

To be continued. This is the first of two articles. In the next issue, I will continue to talk about the pastor, and I will share with you the divine call of God on the laity.

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