

Text: Ephesians 4:12

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (EP 4:12, KJV).

Introduction:

The Holy Spirit and Biblical standards must guide the local church in selecting a pastor and relating to him.

Jesus, The Great Shepherd, is the model for the undershepherd or local pastor:

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep (JN 10:11, KJV).

20 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,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom [be] glory for ever and ever. Amen; (HE 13:20-21, KJV).

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls (1PE 2:25, KJV).

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1PE 5:4, KJV).

Whom did Jesus give?

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (EP 4:11, KJV).

Why?

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (EP 4:12, KJV).

For how long?

13 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 fullness of Christ: (EP 4:13, KJV).

New Testament words for pastor

1. *Presbyteros*—"elder", literally, "older person." Generally, elders were placed over the early New Testament churches—pastors take time to develop.
2. *Episkopos*—"bishop, overseer."
3. *Kubernesis*—"governments." This word included those who organize or administer; literally, "those who steer a ship" (1CO 12:28).
4. *Prohistemi*—"ruling." This word includes "those who preside, conduct, direct, or govern." The literal meaning of the word is "put before" or "go before."
5. *Poimen*—"shepherd." This is the word from which we get our word, "pastor." It basically means a shepherd. The Israelites were very familiar with the term, since they raised sheep. Sheep were defenseless and needed intensive care. The tasks of a Near Eastern shepherd were to
 - 5.1 Watch for enemies trying to attack the sheep.
 - 5.2 Defend the sheep from attackers.
 - 5.3 Heal the wounded and sick sheep.
 - 5.4 Find and save lost or trapped sheep.
 - 5.5 Love them, sharing their lives and so earning their trust.

The Characteristics of a New Testament Pastor

A Call to the Ministry

He or she has a call to the ministry as a preacher and teacher. Those who go into the ministry because it would be "a good and noble thing to do" are in error. God calls people individually into the ministry. People are sometimes mistaken in their views as to whom are called and to whom are not called. In my first pastorate, one dear old saint questioned my call—she had a preconceived idea of a preacher. When God sent Samuel to anoint David King of Israel, the LORD said these words concerning Eliab, one of David's brothers,

7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for [the LORD seeth] not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart (1SA 16:7, KJV).

New Testament Qualifications and Role

Bishops

1 This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (1TI 3:1-7, KJV).

In summary, bishops must

1. Be above reproach.
2. Have only one wife.
3. Be temperate or self-self-controlled.
4. Be prudent or make wise decisions.
5. Respectable.
6. Be hospitable.
7. Be able to teach.
8. Not be addicted to wine. (This would include other drugs today.)
9. Not be pugnacious (violent), but gentle.
10. Be uncontentious (not quarrelsome).
11. Not love money.
12. Manage one's own household well.
13. Not be a new convert (cf. 1TI 5:22).
14. Have a good reputation outside of the church.

Elders

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

7 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;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 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 (TI 1:5-9, KJV).

In summary, elders must

1. Be above reproach and be a good steward of God.
2. Not be self-willed (selfish, hedonistic and "hard-headed").
3. Not be quick-tempered.
4. Not be addicted to wine.
5. Not be pugnacious.
6. Not be fond of sordid gain.
7. Be hospitable.
8. Love what is good.
9. Be sensible (self-disciplined).
10. Be just (righteous).
11. Be devout (living a holy life).
12. Be self-controlled.
13. Hold fast to the faithful Word.
14. Exhort in sound doctrine.
15. Convince those who contradict the Word of God.
16. Have one wife.
17. Have children saved and living right.

Elders(Continued)

1 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:

2 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;

3 Neither as being lords over [God's] heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1PE 5:1-4. KJV).

In summary, Peter says the pastor must

1. Shepherd the flock.
2. Not serve under compulsion but voluntarily.
3. Function according to the will of God.
4. Not be greedy for money.
5. Serve with eagerness (enthusiasm).
6. Not lord it over the flock (seeking to control people).
7. Lead by example.

Other Guidelines

1. Be faithful in the use of money. Jesus said,

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? (LK 16:11, KJV).

2. Guard and shepherd the flock. Paul told the elders at Ephesus,

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to [shepherd] 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 (AC 20:28-30, KJV).

3. Pray for the sick. Jesus healed the sick. James tells believers to call for the elders to pray for them when they are sick:

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him (JA 5:14-15, KJV).

Supernatural Equipment of the Pastor

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in 1CO 12:1-11,

1 Now concerning spiritual [gifts], brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and [that] no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another [divers] kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will (1CO 12:1-11, KJV).

The pastor's ministry is characterized by at least two of the Revelation gifts, (1) the Word of knowledge and (2) the Word of wisdom. His ministry is also characterized by at least two of the Speaking gifts, (1) Tongues and (2) the Interpretation of tongues.

The most important supernatural gift that God gives the pastor is his love—a pastor's heart. This is *agape*, the God-kind of love that C. S. Lewis calls "gift love." God gives every Christian his love, but pastors receive a special gift of love. (See Chapter Thirteen of my ebook, *How to Raise Your Self-Esteem Using Proven Biblical Principles* . Download this book free of charge at <http://BusterSoft.com/JRCM/> .)

Jesus is the pattern. The pastor will place his sheep above his own welfare. His life will be a continuous sacrifice as was Jesus' life. Jesus said,

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep (John 10:11-15, KJV).

Treatment of the Pastor

How are Christians to treat their pastor? Here are some New Testament guidelines:

Honor him.

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

Support him:

1. With prayer. Paul (and the writer of Hebrews) asks prayer for himself. His implication is that

Christians should pray for all ministers, including one's pastor.

2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: (COL 4:2-3, KJV).

25 Brethren, pray for us (1TH 5:25, KJV).

1 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 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all [men] have not faith (2TH 3:1, KJV).

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly (HE 13:18, KJV).

2. Financially.

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward (1TI 5:17-18, KJV).

3. By attending church.

25 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 (HE 10:25, KJV).

4. When speaking to others about him. When his credibility is undermined, then his counsel to you and your family is weakened. The Bible warns against slander:

11 The mouth of a righteous [man is] a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

12 Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins (PR 10:11-12, KJV).

18 He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.

19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

20 The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked [is] little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom (PR 10:18-21, KJV).

5. Confront him when he is wrong.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses (1TI 5:19, KJV).

6. Obey him in the Lord.

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 (HE 13:17, KJV).

Conclusion:

God has a great plan for every local church. Let us pray for his direction in the selection of a pastor. God will give the pastor a vision for the church and the area. We will know God's place for us by (1) the inward witness of the Holy Spirit and (2) by the Bible.

Let us obey Christ and pray that God would send laborers into the fields:

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest (MT 9:38, ASV).

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