

The *Gift* Of The Pastor

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Introduction

A gift cannot make itself; it needs a Creator. A gift cannot take credit for itself; it did not design its properties or purpose. A gift is given by another's hand.

When it comes to the Pastor of an Independent, Fundamental, Baptist Church; does the average Church Member think of their Pastor as a gift given to them directly from The Lord? Does the Pastor think of himself as a gift given for the benefit of the People in a Church? Do the Church Members know their responsibilities to this gift; and does the Pastor know his responsibilities to a Church Body as a gift?

The Word of God clearly teaches that a Pastor is one of the many “**...gifts...**” which The Saviour has given to His kind of Churches.

*Ephesians 4:8 “Wherefore **he saith**, When **he** ascended up on high, **he** led captivity captive, and **gave gifts** unto men.”*

For the management, administration and supervision of His kind of Baptist Church; with all The Authority of Heaven; God has given three main things to guide, command, and to lead in each of His Local Assemblies.

1. We have been “...**given...**” The inspired words of The Scriptures as our only written rule for “...**the...**” “...**one faith...**,” and how to practice it in our kind of Churches.

*II Timothy 3:16 “All **scripture is given** by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...”*

*Jude 3 “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for **the faith** which was **once** delivered unto the saints.”*

*Ephesians 4:5 “One Lord, **one faith**, one baptism...”*

2. The Lord has given His Presence, “...**sealed...**” in the hearts of each of the saved; and to visit each assembly in The Person of “...**the Holy Ghost.**”

*John 20:22 “And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye **the Holy Ghost...**”*

*Acts 10:45 “And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out **the gift of the Holy Ghost.**”*

*Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that **the Holy Ghost** is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”*

*II Corinthians 1:22 “Who hath also **sealed** us, and **given** the earnest of **the Spirit** in our hearts.”*

3. The Lord has also given a Pastor to each of His Local Baptist Churches, as their earthly shepherd, under the direct delegated authority of “**...the chief Shepherd...**”

*Ephesian 4:11-12 “And **he gave** some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...”*

*I 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”*

If a Baptist Church is operating as The Scripture teaches; with respect for all three of those particular “**...gifts...**” The Lord Jesus ought to be able to accomplish

His work for saving lost souls, and building up the saved for the work.

A faithful Bible believer understands that The Scriptures and The Spirit of God are directly from God's Hand to His Church; but the importance of the earthly shepherd of the flock is often minimized to some degree by the Pastor and by the other Members. The Lord has designed all three of these to be inseparable parts in the workings of His Church.

These three “**...gifts...**” working together, are a powerful force to reckon with; and can be a great blessing to a Baptist Church as a whole. But when the delegated authority of The Lord's earthly administrator is usurped in any way, either in not being understood by the People, or neglected by the Pastor; The Lord is then “**...limited...**” by both Pastor and People, in what God wants to accomplish in that Church.

*Psalm 78:41 “Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and **limited the Holy One** of Israel.”*

That verse points us back to when Moses; The Lord's Old Testament example of a Pastor; called by The LORD to lead “**...in the church in the wilderness...**” was not followed by the People.

*Acts 7:38-39 “This is he, that was **in the church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively*

oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt...”

In doing so; the People greatly hindered The LORD because they would not submit and follow Moses to the promised land! Both the People and Moses had a part in limiting God! Moses was a type of The Lord Jesus Who would come to Shepherd His New Testament Church and Israel! What a gift!

What do you know about The Lord’s giving of the gift of the Pastor, to lead His kind of Baptist Church?

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Chapter 1

The Foundation of The Gifts of God

*Ephesians 4:7-14 “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of **the gift** of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and **gave gifts unto men**. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And **he gave** some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 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 fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive...”*

The Scriptures teach about God giving many “...gifts...” to men. When those things are studied out and received from God’s Word; many in our kind of Independent Baptist Churches, both the Pastors and the members in them, will be helped. But before we get into the subject of a Pastor being one of the “...gifts...” of

God; it must first be said that The Bible is one of the greatest “...*gifts...*” ever given to man! I thank The LORD for giving us a perfectly preserved copy of His Book in the English language. I am grateful for the fact; that The LORD has kept His divine responsibility to oversee that every inspired word, which He gave “...*by inspiration...*” is still alive in our King James Bible. The words “***All scripture...***” in *II Timothy 3:16* either include “***All...***” the words in our King James Bible... or not. This Pastor knows and believes that we have been given a perfectly preserved copy of God’s Book; which has in it “...***every word...***” (*Luke 4:4*) which was “...***given by inspiration of God...***”

*II Timothy 3:16-17 “All scripture is ***given by inspiration of God***, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*

As a Pastor, I need the words of those verses active in my ministry for The Lord. I thank God that every word in His Book came from His own breath; and that every one of those words has been preserved by Him; not man. I am thankful, for Spirit of God teaching, that the men who were used by God to write His Book, in languages of earth; were not the objects of His “...*inspiration...*” It is “...***every word...***” (*Luke 4:4*) which “...***is given by inspiration...***”; not the men. They were not

inspired to write as man says; they were “...moved...” (II Peter 1:21) to write God’s inspired words.

Because of how and Who it was that *gave* us The Scriptures; The Bible is truly a **gift** directly from God!

It is that Word which tells us it is The Heavenly Father Who has given the world The Lord Jesus, as our sacrifice and payment for all sins: He is the greatest of all **“...gifts...”**

*John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that **he gave his only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

Then of course there is the **“...gift...”** of **“...eternal life...”**

*Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

God has also given The Holy Spirit as a **“...gift...”** The original leaders of the first local Church in Jerusalem, received the Holy Ghost *before* Pentecost in *John 20:22*.

*“And when he had said this, **he breathed on them**, and saith unto them, **Receive ye the Holy Ghost...**”*

At the Day of Pentecost; The Holy Ghost was poured out as Jesus said would happen. After that final stage in the completion of the first, local, New

Testament Church; The Head of His Church
“...baptized...” them “...with...” The Holy Ghost...,”
immersing them “...with...” the presence of God!

*Acts 1:4-5 “And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall **be baptized with the Holy Ghost** not many days hence.”*

After that *one-time* prophesied event, of being
“...**baptized with**...” The Holy Ghost; The Scriptures then
record many instances of individuals being “...***filled***...”
with the Holy Ghost; for power to preach and serve!
Truly that is a great gift.

At the moment of salvation, every person is
“...**sealed**...” (*Ephesians 1:13*) with The Holy Spirit. That
is a promise of a very special gift!

*Ephesians 1:13 “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise**...”*

After salvation; God commands the saved to be
baptized in water, under the authority of one of His
Baptist Churches. It is then that The Holy Ghost gives

many different kinds of “...gifts...” to those individuals: to be used in their service for The Lord.

*Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive **the gift of the Holy Ghost...**”*

The Holy Spirit is the internal gift; And The Holy Ghost is then the equipper with certain other “...gifts...” These are designed and tailored for the individual, and how they will be used by The Lord in His Church. These are “...gifts...” which become part of each person who is born again. All of those who are born again have one or more of these. These types of “...gifts...” are listed in other places in The Bible.

But then, as we read in *Ephesians 4:7-14*, God writes of another category of “...gifts...” These are given, not directly to **individuals**; but are given specifically to the **institution** of His Local Church. According to *Ephesians 4:11*, these particular “...gifts...” are men. Men who have been called, prepared, tested, and ordained by God.

*“And **he gave** some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers...”*

According to *Ephesians 4:8*, Pastors, are given as “...gifts unto men...” They are provided to be used by

God to build His Churches; by edifying the folks who are “...members in particular...” (I Corinthians 12:27) in them.

In our time of The New Testament Baptist Churches; the only “...gifts...” now given of this kind, are “...evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers...” At the death of John The Apostle; only these “...gifts...,” in the form of men, are now active. John was given as a dual gift to The Lord’s Churches. John was both an Apostle, and he was the last of the Prophets used to speak and to write directly as “...moved...” by God’s Spirit.

*II Peter 1:21 “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as **they were moved** by the Holy Ghost.”*

Only men such as John were directed by God to write His inspired words. That verse of Scripture does not include the “...evangelists... **pastors** and teachers...” of our day; and back to John The Apostle. They are not Apostles, and they are not Prophets in the sense of being given new revelation from God. That ceased at the completion of The Written Word of God on this Earth. All sixty-six chapters of God’s Book have always existed in Heaven. But with John recording God’s last word of *Revelation 22:21; “...Amen.”* God had then delivered to man His final chapter to be read. Now His Book could be given in the languages of His choosing; with every

inspired word, perfectly preserved under the responsibility of His own oversight.

*Psalm 12:6-7 “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. **Thou shalt keep them**, O LORD, **thou shalt preserve them** from this generation for ever.*

*II Timothy 3:16 “All **scripture is given by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...”*

“All scripture...” is truly a gift of God! Men who are now called by God, and ordained by a local Church to be Pastors (and Evangelists), are to use God’s inspired Word as they teach and preach. They are given no more new revelation; but are responsible to preach personal responsibility, to what has been given; as it was given! When The Scripture now speaks of such men **“...prophesying...”** (I Corinthians 11:4, 14:6, 22), it is only in the sense that they are speaking from the words of God’s Book! It is the inspired and preserved words of God which are doing the foretelling; not the men! By the way; that is how it has always been! The words are the message from God; the men are only the messengers.

God designed, bought, and paid for all His **“...gifts...”** And the **“...evangelists, pastors and teachers...”** are to protect His Church, proclaim His Word, and to practice It, **under** the power of the Giver of those **“...gifts...”**

With those foundational basics laid down, for the rest of this study, I will now focus mainly on the Gift of The Pastor. A Pastor is the only one of these “...*gifts*...” given to **oversee in** a Baptist Church. That particular gift must be understood from God’s point of view.

Chapter 2

The Office of The Gift

*I Timothy 3:1-7 “This is a true saying, If a man desire **the office of a bishop**, he desireth a good work. A **bishop then must be** blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”*

In an Independent, Fundamental, Baptist Church of today; what we now have come to call by the title of Pastor; is actually one of the descriptive words contained in the meaning of the English word “**...bishop...**” In the word “**...bishop...**” are the three basic responsibilities of the man ordained to that “**...office...**” Look at the definition of the English word “**...bishop...**”

That inspired and preserved word means, ‘over, and inspector, or visitor; to view, or inspect; an overseer; a spiritual superintendent, ruler or director. A spiritual

overseer; an elder or presbyter; one who has the pastoral care of a church.'

When it is broken into its prospective parts; and each is understood; that is a word which is descriptive of a very important and powerful "...office..." When those individual elements of a "...**bishop**..." in a Baptist Church; and applied to the man given as a gift to a Church; both Pastor, Deacons, and the other Members in a Baptist Church, might see what they have been taking for granted. Or, it will reinforce the importance of the gift of the Pastor, to those who already know these things. Let's see what a "...**bishop**..." really is made of, from God's definition of this word. In its context, concerning this New Testament "...office..." in a Baptist Church; the very root of this word means 'over.' That alone says an awful lot; but there is much more to this good word as applied to the man in the "...office..." According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary; look at what we call a Pastor. There is much more to this gift than meets the average church members eye.

1. He is an 'inspector.'
2. He is a 'visitor.'
3. He is to 'view.'
4. He is to 'inspect.'
5. He is an 'overseer.'
6. He is a 'spiritual superintendent.'
7. He is a 'ruler.'
8. He is a 'director.'
9. He is a 'spiritual overseer.'

10. He is an 'elder.'
11. He is a 'presbyter.'
12. He is one who has the pastoral care of a church.

When all this is taken in by the mind together; it is extremely evident that a “**...bishop...**” is one who leads in a Church. Just a thought here; but if you put two of those in one Baptist Church; you might have a power struggle to deal with!

The entire definition of a “**...bishop...**” gives the idea of a shepherd leading a flock. That is where the Bible word “**...pastor...**” has come to be used. Where “**...bishop...**” is the actual definition; “**...pastor...**” is the best descriptive term, because that “**...office...**” is all about a man leading a flock like a shepherd. The Lord Jesus is said to be both “**...the Shepherd and Bishop...**”

*I Peter 2:25 “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the **Shepherd and Bishop** of your souls.”*

Without getting too deep into this for now, this has links in Scripture, way back to how The Lord used Moses to lead His people through the wilderness. Moses is often referenced to that of being a Pastor.

Acts 7:37-38 “This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye

*hear. This is he, that was in **the church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us..."*

*Isaiah 63:11-13 "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with **the shepherd of his flock?** where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?"*

Moses was a Pastor for The Lord's people. The thought and the picture of a "...shepherd..." seem to be very special to The heart of The Lord Jesus. What a "...shepherd..." does, mixed with seeing His people as "...sheep...;" and wanting them to be led and to follow, are all what I believe are precious reasons for the use of the word now; for a Pastor whom The Lord uses to bring His sheep through the wilderness of this world.

*Hebrews 13:20-21 "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, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

The English word “**...shepherd...**” means, ‘The pastor of a parish, church or congregation; a minister of the gospel who superintends a church..., and gives instruction in spiritual things. As with Christ... they lead, protect and govern their people, and provide for their welfare.’

Now that is exactly what The Lord Jesus did as trained Moses, and then the first men in His New Testament Church. And, He still leads His kind of Baptist Churches through the wilderness of this world, by the Pastor in the “**...office...**” of the “**...bishop...**”

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

The English word “**...pastor...**” means, ‘A shepherd; one that has the care of flocks and herds. A minister of the gospel who has the charge of a church and congregation, whose duty is to watch over the people of his charge, and instruct them in the sacred doctrines of the christian religion.’

After learning these things twenty years ago when I first became a Pastor; I have often thought that if I had taken the time to learn these things back when I was simply a member in a Baptist Church; had I

understood more about what my Pastor was; maybe I would have been a more faithful church member.

That “**...office...**” needs to be respected. It is commissioned for the teaching and preaching of God’s Word; through the man in that position. That is God’s way of directing His New Testament Baptist Churches. When it is understood from the words of God’s Book, how a man is called and ordained into such an “**...office...;**” Church Members, Deacons, and the Pastor, will all have a greater respect for that position in one of The Lord’s kind of Baptist Churches.

As you read *Ephesians 4:11-15*, what are your thoughts about what The Lord says about the Pastor He has given you?

*“And **he gave some**, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers; For the **perfecting of the saints**, for the **work** of the ministry, for the **edifying** of the body of Christ: 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 fulness of Christ: **That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro**, and carried about with **every wind of doctrine**, by the **sleight of men**, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; **But speaking the truth in love**, may **grow up** into him in **all things**, which is **the head, even Christ...**”*

As a Church Member, what is your idea of a Pastor? Is he really just another church member? What does The Lord Jesus think about the Pastor. Does He see a Pastor as only a figurehead? And what about why he was called and ordained into that “...**office**...” Do you see others who are not in that position treat the Pastor as The Lord would want him treated? And what are you supposed to do about it if they do not? Are you treating your Pastor as a gift from the hand of The Lord?

What about a Deacon? Where are you, as you think about a Pastor, and what his place in to be the authority structure of The Lord’s Church? Is he your overseer; or do you attempt to hold some kind of authority over him or his “...**office**...” As a servant, how are you to treat your Pastor as a gift from God?

As a Pastor; what about your idea of what you are supposed to be to the Local Church? Do you feel the sense of humbling and responsibility that such a calling brings? Are you being faithful to The Lord Who has placed you in that “...**office**...” What do you think about your being given as a gift to the Church you pastor?

Chapter 3

The Pastors Priority as a Gift

*II Timothy 4:1-2 “I **charge thee** therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”*

Because of the fact that a Pastor is a gift given by The Lord Jesus; two things should result. First, it ought to keep a Pastor humble. Pride should have no place in a Pastor. A gift cannot make itself. A gift cannot take any credit for what it is.

*I Timothy 3: “Not a novice, lest being **lifted up with pride he fall** into the condemnation of the devil.”*

And the second thing that ought to be produced; is a heart attitude in the people to follow a godly Pastor; which allows them to benefit from the Pastor as a God-given gift.

*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**.*

This can be a very special relationship in a Baptist Church. It can be structured and disciplined; while also being a spiritually profitable and mutually enjoyable existence, while serving The Lord together.

The Pastor being one of the “...*gifts*...” given to one of The Lord’s Baptist Churches; is not a particularly easy subject for the Pastor to teach. But it is part of every Pastor’s responsibility to do so. Paul The Apostle was one of The Lord’s “...*gifts*...” to His kind of Churches. Paul, using himself as an example, gave command to the “...*overseers*...” of local churches in *Acts 20:27-28*, said that Pastors as “...*overseers*...,” are to do the same as they teach and preach “...*all the counsel of God*.”

*“For I have not shunned to **declare unto you all the counsel of God**. 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 Pastor must not neglect to teach; or hold back in preaching on any subject in The Bible; even when it directly concerns himself. The People in a Church ought also to expect the Pastor to teach such subjects. If not, many problems will occur in a Church that could have easily been avoided by an open Bible.

The Gift Has to Grow

Every Holy Ghost called, New Testament, Independent, Fundamental, Baptist Church Ordained Pastor, is responsible to teach everything in God's Book to the members of the Church of his **"...oversight."** (*1 Peter 5:2*) Nothing is to be left out or avoided. No subject is to be neglected or ignored. A Pastor is to be prepared and stand ready to teach and to preach at all times, and in all situations. Even things of which he himself perhaps has not fully arrived at yet! That is a tough thought for some to handle. The Bible teaches that a Pastor should be qualified and fully prepared to oversee a church by his understanding of the pure Doctrine in The Scriptures; well before he is placed in the **"...office..."** as Pastor. But he must also continue to grow as a servant of God from that point. Even the great Apostle Paul was honest about this when he wrote in *Philippians 3:12-16*,

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have

already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."

That is to be the heart and mind of the Pastor. He is to teach and preach things from God's Book no matter what. I believe that the Pastor ought to set the best example in the membership of a local church. The Scriptures teach this in the qualifications for being ordained as a Pastor. But there is a very human element in this. That *is* the Pastor.

I often hold God's Book above my head in the pulpit; and say to those in the assembly; I am preaching a standard that is much higher; than I may or may not have attained to; but I will not be silent about these things just because I may fail to be perfect in reaching some of them!"

I have often preached that both the folks and their Pastor, are all under the words of God's Holy Standard. That Standard is to be strived for by all. No Standard in The Bible is to be lowered, just because a Pastor may not be there yet! And, he had better know what those standards are before he is placed in the "...office..." of Pastor!

The Pastor is to be the "...example..." (I Timothy 4:12) as he points all to a much Higher "...example..." (John 13:15) then himself. The Pastor is not *the* standard; conformity to Christ is! The Lord is in charge of the standards that a Pastor teaches and preaches. He has no authority to change any of them.

Many a member of a Baptist Church may be being robbed of the opportunity, to grow beyond themselves, and beyond the growth of their Pastor. If he is growing; it is because he is setting the example in his personal *"...labour in the word and doctrine..." (1 Timothy 5:17)*. Humanly speaking, it ought to ...seem... like a hard thing for the other church members to spiritually grow in ways more so than their Pastor; but they need to know that they can. This is not a contest between People and Pastor; both are to be getting closer to being *"...conformed to the image ..."* (Romans 8:29) of The Son of God. According to *Ephesians 4:13*, part of the Pastors responsibility is to help the members grow, *"... 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 fulness of Christ..."* Now that is a very high standard! What a responsibility! As a Pastor, I must grow while I lead the folks to grow to that level of perfection??? Only The Lord can perform such a task. And He can do this, through His gift of the Pastor.

*Ephesians 4:11-15 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the **perfecting** of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the **edifying** of the body of Christ: 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 fulness of Christ**: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with **every wind of doctrine**, by*

*the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But **speaking the truth in love**, may **grow up** into him **in all things**, which is the head, even Christ..."*

I have often looked at those words of a Pastors responsibilities in *Ephesians 4:11-15* with the thought: "If I am called to help the folks reach that goal; I had better work extra hard to learn much more from The Bible." Being well aware of my own faults and my need to grow; I have also thought, that God's Hand in giving this man as a gift to this Church; is truly and only by the grace of God!

I believe there are many, many church members; in good, solid, doctrinally correct, soul winning, separated, fundamental, independent Baptist Churches; who do not take the time, and thought, and prayer; to learn and know enough about their Pastor as being a gift from God. But it is a Pastor's job to lead them to this.

If there is one thing a Pastor has got to learn; it is that he has much more to learn; and many areas in which he needs spiritual growth. But I am talking about growth from a good foundation of Bible knowledge and understanding; and separated, Biblical practices which are already to be in place. A Pastor had better not be carrying around a load of un-repented sins. He should be well past that kind of substandard lack of growth. Please keep in mind that I am not here referring to growth from the hiding, covering up, or condoning of some openly

practiced sin which would disqualify a Pastor from his “...office...” That subject is for another chapter. I am talking about how a Pastor will be working on things such as areas of temptation which have not become sins; things of weakness or inability, lack of talents that others may have. Things such as faults; things under control but of which he has not yet fully overcome. A Pastor may face these and more; but while he is heading in the right direction of growth.

The standards of every Pastor ought to be the highest of Biblical, Baptist standards! The Pastor ought to know much more Bible than the other members; that is not a bad thing! It ought to be the norm! He needs to strive for that goal; and the members ought to be appreciative of the fact that they have a Pastor who does so. But, they also need to know; that their Pastor still has a long way to go.

Every God-called, Holy Ghost sent Pastor; from the time of his ordination; is to be constantly growing; while firmly set, on an already solid foundation of knowledge, and the practicing of Scriptural principles. He must continue to grow from a position of practical and spiritual strength already acquired. If a Pastor ever stops growing; the people in a church are in trouble! While this process of growth is in motion forward; no part of the teaching this doctrine concerning a Pastor being a gift is to be “...**shunned...**” It is part of the Pastors calling to faithfully “...**declare...**” “...**all...**” that is in The Word of God. No matter what!

Chapter 4

The Gift Has One Master

*Luke 16:13 “**No servant** can serve two masters: for either **he will** hate the one, and love the other; or else **he will** hold to the one, and despise the other. **Ye cannot** serve God and mammon.”*

It is God Who gives a Pastor to serve in His kind of Baptist Churches. And that *gift's* first responsibility is to **The Giver** of the gift! A Pastor is to have only “**...one master...**” Although the Pastor has responsibilities to the other people in the membership; (This will also be covered later), his first priority, is to do only as God's Word commands.

A Pastor who has only One Master to Whom he answers; is not often confused about where he is to lead a Church. Having One Master produces great spiritual confidence; not in self; but in The Word of God. This produces faithful consistency in the practice of Its Doctrine. A Pastor with One Master is free to serve God. It is every Baptist Pastors responsibility to look to, and listen only to One Master!

Many a Pastor has failed in this responsibility, by giving in to unscriptural desires, or the selfish demands of someone in a congregation who is attempting to *take* control of an issue at church. The direct opposite is to

take place. A Pastor is the earthly *shepherd* of a local flock. Both the Pastor and the flock belong to The Lord Jesus. The Lord is “...the **chief Shepherd** ...” and has delegated His Authority directly to each shepherd of a local flock; and to no one else in that ministry. Every Pastor is commanded by God, to take “...**the oversight...**” of the Baptist Church he pastors. The Pastor is never to relinquish, abandon, or surrender that Holy Ghost mandate.

*I 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.”*

The Pastor does not just take “...**oversight...**” of his own will or planning; he is to do so at the command of God! Those are powerful words; authoritative words that are often misunderstood, disobeyed, and abused, by the People, Deacons and by Pastors. But in that Scripture, God also gives the right heart attitude that every God-called Pastor is to own and maintain. If the heart of these words is understood; and seen to be in the Pastor; there should be no power struggles in the administration of church ministry. This potential heart attitude is found in the words “...*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..." That is a perfect balance of Holy Ghost led leadership, delegated authority, divine responsibility, and knowing Who placed a man in the highest earthly *"...office..."* and all of this with the deepest sense of humility!

When a Pastor's heart and knee bows to only One Master; he will see things much differently in contrast to those who have not yet received this truth. If other members have the kind of attitude in them; of the way this world treats authority; they will greatly misjudge their Pastor. This kind of understanding sets a Pastor apart in many ways. That is why he must have the right spiritual heart attitudes toward his One Master. I heard a godly old preacher say, "A Pastor ought not to be a dictator; but he sometimes ought to be confused with being one." Someone who will not accept the position of God's gift of the Pastor in a Church; will not understand that statement in the right way. They will need to think it through and out of this world's ideas of what a pastor is to be.

By an example of comparison, look at how Paul thought of the power delegated to those the *"...office..."* of an Apostle in *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 not be ashamed...**"*

The lesson that can be learned from those words, is that a Pastor is never to be “...*ashamed*...” of the authority God has given to his “...*office*...” He must never be reluctant or unwilling to hold and to use that delegated authority as needed.

A Pastor with One Master should not be a hard thing to recognize. That kind of Pastor will always point the members to The Scriptures; not to himself. That kind of Pastor knows he is only the messenger. But; he knows The Master Who gave him to that Church; and, he knows his message is to be **The Masters message!**

One Authority

A Pastor, is delegated by God’s Word as the only earthly authority in a Local Church. That is a Scriptural fact that many have not yet received; and some in this Laodicean age just plain hate it. But thank The Lord for faithful folks who take all in God’s Word as good!

The Pastor as a gift is directly under The Divine Authority of The Word of The ONE Who established His Church. It is The Lord Jesus Who said in *Matthew 28:18*, “...*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*” He has never relinquished any of that “...*power*...” But God has delegated that “...*power*...” to the leadership of His kind of Churches. When a Pastor surrenders his life to serve *under* that “...*power*...;” he enters a very different realm of existence! He now has no authority of his own. He has become the servant of The “...*KING OF KINGS, AND LORD*”

OF LORDS.” (Revelation 19:16) And it is He Who has given a Pastor to lead a Church.

As a Pastor, he owns the divine responsibility to uphold The Authority of God! That is a mix of supreme heavenly power; and an absolute human responsibility to faithfulness!

Because this principle has not been practiced by many in our own kind of Churches; what Paul warned in Acts 20:28-30 has been all too frequent in our Baptist history. Two-thousand years ago, Pastors of our kind of Churches were commanded:

“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. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

When a Pastor does not obey his One Master, and take “...oversight...” of the “...flock...” he pastors; and when the sheep in a “...flock...” do not recognize God’s gift as their only *earthly* leader; there will be someone in the congregation who will feel the need to “...draw away disciples after them.” Someone will want

to be in charge, even if they are not called to do so. That is human nature.

In every Independent Baptist Church; *one Pastor* has got to be known as the *shepherd*, directly under “...the **chief Shepherd...**” The Lord is very particular, about who He, by The Holy Ghost, places in the “...office...” of Pastor.

And by the way. If more Independent Baptist Pastors, would treat the doctrinal training and the Biblical practice the ordination of new Pastors, with the Scriptural respect it deserves; Baptist Churches would have less hirelings in the “...office...” of Pastor! (That too will be covered in another chapter.)

Our kind of Baptists ought to know these things better than we do. Such authoritative words should not seem so alien to Baptist ears, minds, feelings and hearts. I am writing this just after the election in 2016, For years many people in The United States have become accustomed to the politically-correct (which is incorrect) rhetoric of a man in an office, who acts and speaks under his own egotistical, narcissistic, and self-centered authority. Now, those who accepted that vain idiocy; are having to seek special counseling, because they can not handle the authoritative words of a man standing in the power given to him by the people. These frail liberal souls, have been appropriately called ‘snowflakes!’

In contrast, God’s people should not be so shocked when a Pastor speaks from the power of an “...office...” given by God! The ministry and

administration of many of The Lord's Baptist Churches, have become worldly, and much to humanized!

We are talking about God giving gifts; in the form of men as Pastors! This is not some theologically devised, man-made preference. Many speak about this subject of a Pastor; without ever acknowledging The One Master Who called and gave a Pastor to them!

This principle of One Master concerning the Pastor, has got to be upheld. That “...office...” is a position of a very high calling; with immense Scriptural precedence, and more power than some want; or will be able to understand. Because of that; God has wisely set Scriptural boundaries for the governing and use of this kind of delegated dominance. Many who do not want an authoritative Pastor seem to forget, or do not know, that the Pastors Master is God! If The LORD is The Master of a Pastor; what is it that they expect? Do they really think such a man is just going to disregard God to do what they want?

When a Pastor is under One Master; he will not hesitate to teach and to preach; for the other members in the Church, to also be under The Same Master! Amen! If they will submit to that One Master; they will follow the Pastor, as he follows his One Master!

Chapter 5

The Gifts Scriptural limitations

*John 5:26-31 "For as the Father hath life in himself; **so hath he given** to the Son to have life in himself; And **hath given** him authority to execute judgment **also, because he is the Son of man**. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. **I can of mine own self do nothing**: as I hear, I judge: and **my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will**, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. **If I bear witness of myself**, my witness is **not true**."*

According to *1 Peter 5:4*, We know that The Lord Jesus is "...the chief Shepherd..." But while on this earth, He imposed some limitations upon Himself. He said, "***I can of mine own self do nothing...***" This is in no way a statement of inability; it is an avowal of being under the authority of another. What a statement of humility! The Lord did not use His own authority; He placed and held Himself *under* The Authority of His Father. We know that *if* The Lord chose to use His own authority; that He would do what was right. But, according to this Scripture; in this case, it would have been wrong to act in His own power!

A great lesson is found in this for *a* shepherd who is under ***The Chief Shepherd.***

The Lord was acting as ***The*** example; to every future man who would ever be ordained into the “...office...” of Pastor. If The Lord while here had acted in His own power; Pastors would not have learned this important constraint of power! What a thought! This self-imposed limitation, actually made Him more powerful than if He acted on His own; and He was God! The Lord was “...***given...***” The Power of the Authority of Heaven; at that time, it was not His! It was delegated to Him.

There is another reinforcement to this lesson found in *John 5:27*. Look at the last part of this verse carefully.

*“And hath ***given*** him authority to execute judgment ***also,*** ***because he is the Son of man.***”*

Did you catch it? We know Jesus is God; but when He was here on earth at that time; He was “...***also...***” acting in another capacity; as “...***the Son of man.***” He was not in the ***Office*** of The Judge of Man at that time! This same lesson is stated in *John 12:46-48*.

*“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, ***I judge him not:*** for*

*I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that **rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words**, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, **the same** shall judge him in the last day."*

What a passage for this subject! Pastors are here to point the lost to be saved; and to get the people to do the same. We are to preach God's Word; and not be shocked when people *reject* His Word! When members of a Church usurp the delegated authority of their Pastor; they are usurping **The Authority** of The Lord. They are not *rejecting* their Pastor; they are rejecting The One Who gave the Pastor The Words to preach! Pastors are not *the judge* of the people to whom they preach and pastor; God's Word is! When a Pastor stands firm with The Scriptures; he is not the authority; but the Pastor, is held in The Hand of The One Who wrote The Book; held in the hand of the Pastor! That is in essence The greatest authority on the earth.

What an example for a Pastor to follow. There is to be in the heart and in the will; a self-imposed limitation, in the ministry of every Pastor.

Unlike **"...the chief Shepherd..."** a Pastor as a shepherd, must deal with his own sin nature as he oversees a **"...flock."** Because God has given such power to the **"...office..."** of a Pastor; He has also set a Scriptural check and balance system in place in His Baptist Churches.

A Pastor does not have the authority to be **the authority** over himself. That may sound strange to some; but it needs to be understood by both the Pastor, Deacons, and the other People in a church.

The Lord Jesus set Himself “*...under authority...*” while He was The “*...chief Shepherd...*” on this earth. That Authority was The Word of His Father in Heaven. After John The Baptist baptized Jesus Christ; no man on this earth had any authority over The Lord Jesus when it came to His ministry, or the administration of His Church. The same is still true; and that is to be carried on as the gift of the Pastor takes his place under The Authority of The Lord. This principle must always be in control in the ministry of the Pastor.

Because Jesus did so; every Pastor must consciously keep himself “*...under authority...*” Jesus was sinless and perfect in all that He said or did. A Pastor; even the best of all Pastors; will not be so perfect! But thank God; **The Authority** over all in a Baptist Church is perfect.

Chapter 6

Correcting The Gift

*I Timothy 17-20 “Let the elders that **rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.** For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, **but before two or three witnesses.** Them **that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.**”*

God’s Word gives instructions as to how a Pastor is to treat church members; and, The Scriptures teach how a Pastor is to be treated by them. God covers both the constructive; and remedial elements designed to balance out this unique relationship. Although the Pastor holds an “...office...” in one of The Lord’s kind of Baptist Churches; he is not exempt from being held to the same Scriptural expectations as the other members of the flock. Church members must be taught from The Word of God how to treat their Pastor; not only in blessings, but also if it ever becomes necessary to correct a Pastor. This is a tough subject to keep in Biblical balance, and even harder to practice; but it can and must be done. Hopefully a correction of this kind will never be necessary. But if the situation does present the need; it must be dealt with according to The Scriptures, or much

hurt will result. It is the testimony of The Lord Jesus which is really at stake here. He, His Work, and His Church, are far more important than any man.

If this is taught to a congregation by the Pastor himself; it will serve the operation of a Local Church well. It will create an atmosphere of trust, the discipline of responsibility, mutual respect, and an attitude of humility. The congregation will then be much more able to know just **Who** is the real **Head** of their Pastor; and as to how The Lord has ordained for His kind of Church leadership to be treated. The Pastor will show the People that he understands his accountability to The Lord and to them. The flock will learn of their accountability to The Lord and to their Pastor; if a corrective measure is ever needed. But most of all; Pastor and People will be better equipped to **keep themselves under** the absolute authority of God and His Written Word. That is the main thing. This is not to be thought of as a ‘power struggle’ between the shepherd and the flock; it is for all involved to be in submission to The Power of God’s Book!

The first section of this chapter will cover the treatment of a Pastor who has done something which must be corrected for the sake of The Lord’s Doctrine and His Church. When I became the fortieth Pastor of this Independent, Fundamental, Baptist Church fifteen years ago; one of the first things that I taught the folks at that time, was how to dismiss of the Pastor from his “...office...” if needed! We even voted unanimously to add this to our then one-hundred and fifty-eight-year-

old Church Constitution. (Of all things voted on in a church; you would think that was one, of which the Pastor would hope to have many dissenting voters!) No, it should be in every Baptist Church Constitution. Thank the Lord, that the wonderful members here at Hilltop Baptist Church, have not had to use that instruction!

Over the years, I have met many faithful members of Independent Baptist Churches, who treated their Pastor as a precious gift from God. I have also met others who wished that gift came with a return receipt! That kind of attitude may be understandable or even valid, if a pastor is unfaithful to God's Book, or has in some way disqualified himself from his "...office..." No matter the case; The Bible must be the only guide used by the shepherd and the flock.

If a Pastor does that which would bring reproach on the Church; The Scriptures tell how to handle this the right way. The first step to have settled is that of the heart. That is to face the offence with the Bible open to *Galatians 6:1*; with the goal to **"...restore..."**

*"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, **restore such an one in the spirit of meekness**; considering thyself, **lest thou** also be tempted."*

Even when an issue is just beginning to be perceived; restoration must be the first thing in our thoughts; and the first attitude of our hearts. I wonder how many good, faithful Pastors, have not first been

given the benefit of the doubt, before some critic jumped directly to dismissal. Many a disgrunt, who has sought only to get rid of a Pastor for their own selfish agendas, have or will terribly reap what they have sown. Because of the human natures natural lean, toward wanting to hear something bad; even a well-intended church member could be guilty of the same unfounded, malicious treatment of their Pastor. That is why restoration must always be out front to lead. I know many in The United States no longer think of innocence first, as they should; but God's people need to be far above that bad attitude of the world.

If a wrong is suspected, the issue needs to be kindly confronted by **the first person** who finds it out; directly to the Pastor *"...alone..."* Matthew 18 will be used later to show this process. If not resolved in private, or if the offence is not repented of; or, if the offence is such that the church cannot Biblically allow the Pastor to remain in his *"...office..."*; The Scriptures must be used to kindly and carefully dismiss the Pastor *"...in the spirit of meekness..."*

Those in the membership of such a church are not to be in *"...respect of persons..."* as in showing favour to the *person* who is in the *"...office..."* of Pastor in this. The people in the church must be taught what to do in such cases. And, it is the Pastor who has been given the responsibility to lead them to learn this principle.

Many of the good and faithful people, in our kind of Baptist Churches, have faced this situation without knowing what God has written for them to do. Personal

feelings will have to be set aside, with great integrity of Scriptural, spiritually guided, Christ-like character. The Lord's Church and testimony must be put first over personal feelings and friendships. Hopefully this will never have to be used; but if it does, The Scriptures must be the Only Judge in the matter.

*Colossians 3:25 "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is **no respect of persons.**"*

There is to be a just balance between the Pastor as an individual person; and the "...office..." to which he is ordained. These are not easy principles for a Pastor to teach; or for the members to practice; but they must be in reserve for The sake of The Lord's Church and His purpose.

God is not silent about this issue of correction and neither should those in His Churches. The book of / Timothy was specifically written to instruct the Pastor about **his behaviour** in a church. God always commands the leadership first.

*1 Timothy 3:14-15 "These things **write I unto thee**, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, **that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God**, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

Because of that context; this verse teaches us that there are principles for the **care and correction** of the Pastor. Whether it is a Pastor in training; or a seasoned Pastor; both need to understand their responsibility to this balance of blessing and accountability. Of course, the same goes for the other members in a Baptist Church. *Matthew 18:15-17* is to be applied to both the People and the Pastor.

*“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and **tell him his fault between thee and him alone**: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”*

A Pastor is not immune to being rebuked; when and if it is Scripturally warranted. Keep in mind that we are not talking about differences that arise because of personal preferences here. Preferences that are not unscriptural can be considered; but should not be pushed by the people; nor preached by their Pastor. Preferences are often the only issues that create problems in a Church. Preferences; even if good; combined with pride, never turn out for good. Preferences combined with humility can be discussed and decided on without problems. If the Pastor does

voice a preference about things that do not go against The Bible; the people ought to consider such things. The same goes for the Pastor. He will be wise to hear *good preferences* without automatically dismissing those who voice them. But the people need to be taught that they are to follow the Pastor in all good things. A well meaning church member may voice a preference that is not wrong; but it just does not fit in with how The Lord is leading the Pastor at that time. That needs to be taught to the people. A Pastor who welcomes the ideas of the folks; but always points them to The Scriptures and the current direction of the ministry will not have as many upset feelings involved in these kind of things.

Back to correction when needed. The Bible is not speaking about correction of petty, personal issues between an individual and a Pastor. The Bible is not teaching to correct a Pastor just because a member thinks that his or her way to do something is better. That may be true; but God does not lead by the preferences of the People. A wise Pastor may choose to ask the congregation of their ideas in the cases of preferences; but never in the case of something set in solid. Doctrinal, Scriptural precedence!

Biblically confronting a Pastor for an offense; can be applied in the case of a personal, individual offense toward a church member. Or it can be for violations of The Scriptures in Doctrine. Both cases are to begin only in private! If not, there will be others who will be unnecessarily hurt for no valid reason.

Pastors do make unintentional errors. It could be that a correction may be needed for teaching or preaching an error in innocence. Errors such as that are not due to disobedience, or not believing right. Sometimes a Pastor may get his words and thoughts crossed. I once preached a sermon where I had Moses in the cave of Noah! After the sermon, a faithful man told me what I said; we both had a laugh; and I corrected my error in the very next service. Those types of errors might happen from time to time; and they need to be corrected. If things like this are not brought to the attention of the Pastor; even an error in innocence can be a potential problem in a church. Then there are corrections for things the Pastor did not previously understand. When he admits such things in private or in public; and corrects them; there is no need for taking this any further.

But then there is the correction of things of a very serious nature. Keep in mind the first principle of *Matthew 18:15*. Even in these very bad situations; if restoration is possible; it must begin in private before such cases are brought before the congregation.

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone...”

Even when this is followed; there will be those instances when restoration is not Biblically possible. These are things which will damage the testimony and the work of The Lord’s Church. This would be things such

as the Pastor leaning toward or promoting false doctrines, unbiblical practices, and extra-Biblical teaching, without recognizing and admitting them to be false. Correction must also be enforced for any form of immoral behaviour by the Pastor which becomes public knowledge. If these things are not corrected promptly and properly; there will be terrible and disastrous results. Such things must be handled right; and The Bible must be the only guide in this. This is when the Pastor as a person, must be held accountable to responsibility of his “...office...”

I have witnessed a case where there was a very serious offence committed by a Pastor. Even though he admitted the sin and openly repented; if he had stayed in the “...office...” as Pastor, the testimony of the Church would have suffered; and some of the good folks would no longer have been able to look to him as their Pastor. It was handled correctly and he humbly stepped down as Pastor. But that is not the end of that tragedy. That Church dismissed the Pastor as they should; but they also forgave the man! The Lord then gave a new Pastor to that Church. And to this day, that new Pastor; and the man who was dismissed; are both still a faithful members of the same Church! I know that is a rare thing; but it should not have to be so! Thank God for His grace!

I have also witnessed the result, of uncorrected doctrinal falsehood, and immorality; which was not dealt with correctly. Such cases have greatly damaged and even destroyed entire ministries. If someone in the

congregation had been taught how to get it corrected; and acted appropriately; before it went too far; much unnecessary hurt to the overall cause of Christ would have been avoided!

For me personally, as a Pastor; this principle reminds me that I am responsible to do all I can, to avoid doing, teaching, preaching, (or writing); anything that will require me to have to be justly confronted or rebuked by a church member.

As a person, I am a Pastor in an “...office...” As a Pastor, I am accountable in my personal life as a church member; to uphold the Scriptural sanctity of that “...office...” When I, as a person or as a Pastor, must be corrected for an offense; or when I allow myself to be offended by an offense; The Word of God has the way to fix it! If church members are taught this; they will treat the Pastor as they want to be treated.

Pastors Must Learn This First

In *Matthew 18:15-17*, The Lord Jesus set this principle to be learned and practiced very early in the training of the leadership of His first local New Testament Church.

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he

will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

At the speaking of this Scripture, The Lord, having already started what would be His first New Testament Church in *Luke 6:12-13*; had only twelve charter members and Himself at the time of the instruction in *Matthew 18*. He had no Deacons as yet; and His Treasurer was a traitor. And those eleven other good men, had already experienced church arguments and power struggles, and needed to be taught how to handle them the right way.

*"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and **tell him** his fault between thee and **him alone**..."*
Matthew 18:1.

Those words were first applied to "...gifts..." placed in the "...office..." of an Apostle. There were no other church members at that time. These principles are to be practiced in our kind of Baptist Churches today; by all in the membership. But for this study, these words need to be first applied to the treatment of a Pastor for a very unique reason.

Because the Pastor will be the one doing most of the teaching, preaching; reproving and rebuking; and

making all kinds of decisions; even the most faithful of Pastors; will also have the most potential to offend other church members. Whether this is intentional or in innocence is not the issue. It will happen sooner or later. That is just a fact of life in a church; but it can be handled without church fights and splits!

The Lord was teaching His first Church members how to handle the doing of some kind of wrong that involved **only two people** at the start! The offence affected only **one** person. Here is a thought for you. Every Baptist church split ended with many of the members involved; but could have been avoided with **one private** question asked to a Pastor (or **one** other member) “*...alone...!*” “*...alone...!*” “*...alone...!*”

You have to admit; it is kind of comical that there was only The Lord Jesus and twelve men in His local church at that time; and He had to keep them from fighting with each other! And some of them would be used as writers of Scripture, and church leaders! Therefore, we surely need to apply this teaching to us!

Someone has humorously yet wisely said, “The ministry is people; and people, to include pastors; are potential problems. Therefore, a large part of the people ministry, will be to fix problems!”

No Pastor is 100% exempt from the possibility of doing something wrong which offends the members. When he does, the Pastor is under the same rule as all

church members. He does not get a get-out-of-wrong card for free! And, A Pastor is to be given the dignity, of the same the opportunity, to make a wrong right, as it is to be with the other church members.

Just because the Pastor is a gift placed in an “...office...;” does not discharge the responsibility of the rest of the members, from going to the Pastor “...*alone*...” if he offends them. A Pastor ought to teach the folks this principle. It will keep both he and the congregation on the same disciplinary page!

The Treatment of a Pastor for Preaching Truth

The principles in *Matthew 18*, are not speaking about a Pastor being held accountable if the people get offended by the Truth. That is never something for which a Pastor needs to apologize. He must not! When The Holy Spirit is involved in the preaching against sins; and commanding toward the doing of right; strong leadership will be demonstrated and felt; and not all God’s people will bless the Pastor for telling them the truth. He will not always have the folks to thank him, for the blessing of being rebuked by his message!

Some members can handle more of the truth than others. Some may not like it; yet they take a spiritual rebuke and it ends up as a blessing. But there will be church members who will be offended by the

Truth. When they cannot get over it; even then they are still to go to the Pastor “...**alone...**”

*“Moreover if **thy brother shall trespass against thee**, go and **tell him** his fault between thee and **him alone...**”
Matthew 18:15.*

Many a Pastor has preached truth, and it offended a faithful (or unfaithful) church member; but it takes months or even several years before the one offended goes to “...**tell him...**” what they felt he did to them. That uncorrected problem then wedges itself in the heart and mind of that faithful (or unfaithful) church member, and causes that soul many unnecessary problems.

If that person, who failed in not being offended, (*Psalm 119:165*), happens to be a critic, a scorner, and a disgrunt who loves to sow discord; who will tell everyone *except* the one who they feel to have hurt them; many others get hurt for no valid reason. There will always be some folks who will fail to “...**love...**” the written Word of God as It was faithfully preached.

*Psalm 119:165 “Great peace have they which **love thy law**: and **nothing shall offend them.**”*

Even in the case of a mere perceived offence; if it is not brought out right away; “...**alone...**” to the one who is thought to have committed the offence; things such as this often fester, and grow into a deep-rooted

bitterness. And when it does finally come out; it still disrupts the entire church body! Something which should not have been offensive in the first place, is ultimately spread into many hearts in the membership! And it all could have been corrected, and much hurt avoided; by a simple, "Pastor, could I speak to you **"...alone...?"** If I heard you correctly, I think I need to ask you for some clarity."

A Pastor needs to prepare himself and the congregation for such occurrences. I have said to the folks I pastor things like, "There will come the time when I will offend you by something I say. When it happens, please come **"...alone..."** to me first."

I have also said from the pulpit, things similar to, "I know that am fully capable to do wrong, just as you are; and I need to be held to the same standards as you are."

The members of a church must never be aided to think.... that a Pastor thinks that he is incapable of doing wrong; or, that he somehow is not as accountable as they are.

I have said many times while preaching and teaching, "I will do my best to not *intentionally* offend you; but there will be those times; if the message is against your personal sin; when it will seem like I have."

Teaching these things has built an atmosphere in the services where I can say things like, “Get ready folks, I am going to upset your flesh for a few minutes!”

When the Pastor teaches that the flesh **ought to get uncomfortable** when it is in the wrong; things and people, get put in their proper place without a fight! And they do not “feel” personally offended! They know they have offended God and His Holy Spirit in them!

That kind of good attitude is able to be experienced in a Baptist Church. It begins by a Pastor saying things such as, “If at any time you hear me say something that is not correct with The Scriptures; even if you only think it may be wrong; you must come to me with an open Bible; and we together will see what God thinks about it.” I have then followed up with the words, “If or when that happens, come directly **to me first**, before you go to someone else about it; I want to do right by The Word of God and by you; please do the same by me. When I fail; please give your Pastor the opportunity to make it right.”

This is not an excuse for failure; it is teaching the folks how to treat a Pastor properly when he does fail. Please look again at *Matthew 18:15*.

*“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and **tell him his fault between thee and him alone**...”*

If just those **seven words** in bold print were practiced by all the members of a Baptist Church when

such offences took place, many of those in ministries, which split up, would still be out winning souls today!

The members in a congregation should be showing love, honour and Biblically guided respect for their Pastor. But if he is at fault in a matter; he must be held accountable and take responsibility to do what is written in The Scriptures. You and I have seen or heard of the tragedies and bad testimonies, in our own kind of Baptist churches, when these things are neglected to be taught, practiced, and upheld.

Chapter 7

Treatment of The Gift in Blessing

Now that we have covered the **correction** of the Pastor as a gift; let's see how a congregation is to be a **blessing** to their Pastor as a gift.

When a Pastor stays faithful to The Word of God and his calling; such a servant's **"...office..."** must be given its due respect; as guided by The Scriptures. The members in a Baptist Church ought to count it a great thing, to have a Pastor who is actually leading the flock in the strength of The Scriptures, and in the power of The Holy Spirit. This needs to be acknowledged and received as a blessing. When an Independent, Fundamental, Baptist Church has such a Pastor to lead them, there will be many times in the life of such a Church, when the people will need to be able to separate their feelings, between the man in the **"...office..."** and the **"...office..."** itself. To treat their Pastor as a blessing; a congregation will have to grow in learning to love the man; and to respect the **"...office...!"** This balance must be achieved.

The Pastor, as a man; needs to hear words of encouragement, feel that he is loved, shown acts of kindness and honour as defined in The Bible. Because He will be known to have only One Master to please; at times, it will seem that he is indifferent to the People. But it at those times, especially when he puts The Lord

first; that a Pastor will need to know that he is appreciated. He may or may not be looking for this; but the folks need to show him this.

When the Pastor is faithful in respect to knowing, teaching, preaching, and practicing the Doctrine in The Word of God; the members of the flock should willingly follow the leading of their shepherd. But, there will be decisions which will have to be made by the Pastor, when there will not always be 100% agreement among the sheep. There will be times in the best of Baptist Churches, with the most faithful of members; when a Pastor will have The Bible principle out front, as led by The Holy Spirit; but the understanding or the feelings of some of the members, may not have caught up to the integrity of a Scriptural based decision yet. There are going to be many times when the flesh will want its own way. This is when respect for the “*...office...*” must take control over personal feelings about a decision made by the Pastor.

When church members grow in this; they will be a great blessing to each other, to The Lord Jesus, to The Holy Ghost; and to their Pastor.

The Blessing of Being Followed

God’s Word teaches how a faithful Pastor is to be treated as a leader. This begins with the members **remembering** the place in which God has placed the Pastor in their lives. God has given the members a Pastor as a gift specifically to lead them. The example of the

shepherd/sheep relationship is used in Scripture, because it is not the kind of leadership that hurtfully drives the sheep; but patiently trains them to follow.

No one enjoys being pushed to follow by an ungodly tyrant. But God's people ought to count it a blessing to be ruled by The Word of The Lord, and led by His delegated representative.

Biblical leadership also contains the element of the flock being protected by a shepherd. A Pastor is blessed knowing the Church Members are safe from the elements of this world which will harm them. A Pastor best protects the People by teaching them Biblically established standards. Standards are Bible based rules which define the boundaries that clearly divide between worldliness and godliness. Inside of those guidelines is the safest place for the sheep! It amazes me how that liberal, Laodicean, "...lukewarm..." baptist people speak as if rules are a bad thing! Such as these are dropping Bible standards and living as close to this world as they can. That is where "**...wolves...**" do most of their hunting!

As the Pastor teaches The Lord's kind of rules to the flock; and they follow, and stay well within those Scriptural limits; they will be as protected as possible from the things out there in this world. Concerning His kind of Baptist Church; The Lord speaks of wanting His Baptist Pastors, to keep His Baptist Sheep safe from the "**...grievous wolves ...**" who pretend to be baptists!

*Acts 20:28-29 "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. For I know this, that after my departing shall **grievous wolves enter in among you**, not sparing the flock."*

Rules are right and safe for the shepherd and for the flock. Truth is made up of immutable rules to be followed! The members of a Baptist Church who are willing to be led to follow God's righteous rule Book; will be a great blessing to their Pastor. John The Apostle showed that he had the heart of a loving shepherd as *"...the chief Shepherd..."* (I Peter 5:4), had him write the words of III John 1:4,

*"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children **walk in truth**.*

Following is obeying those who rule

A Pastor is not called a ruler; but he is to have *"...rule..."* in a Church. It is God Who says that the Pastor has *"...the **rule** over ..."* the members in a local church. He does not initiate this.

*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."*

Because every Baptist Pastor is supposed to be a strong leader; the members will need to ***“Remember...”*** this principle often. If Biblical rules are not taught and preached; sin will reign in a church. If the sheep will follow the shepherd which God has ordained to ***“...have the rule over...”*** the flock; the less sins will need to be dealt with; and more time can be concentrated and allocated to spiritual growth and the winning of more lost souls!

*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.**”*

Then God goes on to say, ***“...whose faith follow...”*** If a Pastor is spending time in God’s Word and in prayer with his Master; this will be evident to other spiritual members of the flock. The Pastor will **be led by** The Holy Spirit, **to lead** as the earthly shepherd of the flock; in the direction set by The Word of God.

God does not lead in an opposite direction of His Word. The Lord never leads a church closer to the ways of this world. And The Lord, as The Head of His Church, never leads through another member of a church; without confirming it with the Pastor! The Lord does not undermine the delegated leadership of a faithful Pastor. The Lord does not give the People in His kind of Baptist Churches two masters to follow! God gives the Pastor as a gift to a Church to lead them. There are many in our

kind of Baptist Churches who do not have this settled. They have not learned, or have not been led, to know the kind of blessing this will bring to both People and Pastor.

There is a great illustration given in The Old Testament as Moses led what God called “**...the church in the wilderness...**” in Acts 7:37-39.

*“This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet **shall the Lord your God raise up** unto you **of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.** This is he, that was **in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake** to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts **turned back again into Egypt...**” Acts 7:37-39*

The sermon preached by Stephen in Acts 7:37-39, was pointing those listening back to when the people once rejected the leadership of Moses in the wilderness. They got the message and knew Stephen was preaching against them because they also rejected and crucified Jesus Christ.

This is also teaching principles relating to the life of Moses, that show he is The LORD’S pattern for a Pastor. The parallels here are amazing when seen in the light of Moses being a shepherd. The Lord Jesus being “**...the chief Shepherd...**” (1 Peter 5:4), often spoke of “**...pastors...**” with Moses as His example.

There are many things in The Old Testament which apply to a Pastor: as being the shepherd of a New Testament flock. God's New Testament Baptist Churches need to be taught these powerful principles.

As The LORD gave Israel Moses to lead them in the wilderness; God has given His flocks the gift of a Pastor to lead them through the wilderness of this present world. If they had faithfully followed Moses; things would have been much different for him and the people. If these things are applied by those in our kind of Churches; more Church Members will look at following their Pastor as being a blessing.

1. The Lord Jesus is “**...the chief Shepherd...**” (*1 Peter 5:4*), leading all who will be saved; **out** of the world of sin and its penalty; and into being prepared for the holiness of Heaven!
2. Moses was *a shepherd* called and sent to lead the people out of Egypt; through the wilderness; and into the promised land.
3. A Pastor is to lead God's people out from the world; and get them through this world; and ready them for the culture of Heaven
4. Moses did not just decide to be a leader; Moses was called directly by The LORD to lead His People. “**...shall the Lord your God raise up...**”
5. The same goes for a Pastor. It is The Lord Who *raises up* and calls a Pastor to lead a flock.
6. The Pastor is no different; his calling and his gifts to lead all come from The Hand of God.

7. God said that the people were to hear Moses *as if* they were hearing The LORD. “***...him shall ye hear...***”
8. When Moses spake God’s Word; it was in the power unseen by others. “***...the angel which spake to him...***”
9. A Pastor often speaks in the power of The Holy Ghost; but it is not recognized as a blessing by some.

When the people wanted to constantly turn “***...back again into Egypt...;***” God’s Old Testament Pastor, Moses, lead those, who willingly followed, into The Promised Land! God used Moses to lead His people **out and away from the world**. Church members who follow their Pastor; as he does the same things Moses did, will be blessed, and will be a blessing to their Pastor.

It needs to be said here of how many who did not follow Moses; died in the wilderness; missing the blessings they could have enjoyed! A godly Pastor deserves the blessing of having the flock he shepherds, follow him away from the world; and into the place of blessing!

The Blessing of God being able to Help People through The Pastors Prayers

A Pastor wants to be able to pray for The Lord to bless the membership because they are following The Word of God. No Pastor wants to see The Lord having to

chasten and punish the members of the church. It is a blessing to a Pastor, when he can focus on a Church Body moving forward; and not having to ask The Lord to stay His hand of judgment. I am convinced that Moses would have rather seen God's people follow his leading; instead of having to beg The LORD not to destroy the whole congregation!

*Exodus 32:9-14 "And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. **And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. **And the LORD repented** of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."***

Moses was truly a gift given to those wilderness wanderers. But oh, how many did not count him as a gift

or a blessing! What was said to be a journey of only eleven days from Egypt to Canaan; took those rebellious people forty years! If you will treat your Pastor as a blessing as he leads you; perhaps he and you, will not be so long in the wilderness of sin!

The Blessing of Showing Thankfulness for not leading the Church back into the World

Here is a lesson every church member; especially in this present day, needs to learn concerning how a Pastor should be treated. Concerning following God's gift as a shepherd to a flock; if you have a Pastor who is leading you away from the world, and preaching against the things of the world; do not go against his leadership! Just look back to those who would not follow Moses. It did not go well for them; or for Moses.

Many an unfaithful *baptist pastor*, is now heading back to Egypt's land and taking many of ***The Lord's members*** with him. A Baptist Church member, ought to be thankful for an old-fashioned Pastor, who is not getting culturally-friendly with the world! And, for one who is on his face begging The Lord to continue to bless the people; even when some of the members are not following The Lord, or their God-called Pastor. A flock ought to bless their Pastor for preaching principles as found in *Romans 12:1-2* and *II Corinthians 6:17*.

*"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye **present your bodies** a living sacrifice, **holy**,*

*acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And **be not conformed to this world**: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:1-2*

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you...” II Corinthians 6:17

Go back and read *Exodus 32:9-14* again. Have you ever thought how you, or many other church members, may be enjoying a victorious life that began as a result of a Pastors prayer; asking The LORD to stay His hand of judgement on a rebellious church member? A Pastor may just be a bigger blessing then some will ever know; at least in this life!

The Blessing of Obedience

In *Hebrews 13:17*, The Lord reinforces the commands for the members of a church concerning the following of their Pastor.

*“**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 Scriptures are clear in such matters and must be learned and followed. At first hearing the words in that Scripture; some saved church members who have not learned this yet; or, worldly-church members, might have a difficult time in understanding what the Lord means when He says, ***“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves...”***

When it comes to defining a pastor of the ecumenical ministries of the religious world; words such as ***“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves...”*** are not words found in association with the describing those types of ‘ministerial leaders.’ It is a shame that God’s people get their ideas of what a Pastor is to be, from worldly, unscriptural sources. And it will not get better in the future; unless more Baptist Pastors open up The Word of God, and do not back down from teaching what he himself is supposed to be as a Pastor.

It is not an easy thing for a Pastor to teach the folks to ***“...obey...”*** him. As a Pastor, I understand that ‘feeling.’ But a Pastor is not teaching this for his own agenda! This type of obedience is much more than people obeying a man; it is God’s saved ones obeying The Word of God; as It is taught and preached by the Pastor.

The devil hates this principle. Decent people in this world will obey those who enforce the law; good soldiers obey their chain of command; yet God’s people are led to think that *obeying* a Pastor is a bad thing.

If a Pastor is using only The Word of God for his decisions; people should gladly follow. He is commanded to teach and preach this. Pastors need to do this for The Lord and for the congregation! If they do not; they will also hurt themselves and all others involved. Learning this kind of obedience can be a source of great blessing for the people and to their Pastor.

The Blessing of Oversight

Even the unsaved in the world love it when someone looks out for them. God has ordained the Pastor, to take the responsibility to “**...watch...**” over His People. God calls men as Pastors to be “**...overseers...**” (Acts 20:28), not pushovers. Pastors; not Church Campus CEO’s. Pastors; not Worship Leaders. Pastors; not Marketing Masters.

In the duties of the “**...office...**” of Pastor, he will do those things; but he is to be called Pastor while he does so. God has not renamed His “**...office...**” to sound more like the world. The word “**...overseers...**” is a powerful word.

God calls Pastors to be followers of The Lord first, Pastors who are administrators in His Church, Pastors who are leaders of the flock, Pastors who preach, and Pastors who teach. They have been given 100% “**...oversight...**” of those things in the ministry. God has placed Pastors over the Deacons; not under the control of a deacon board. Pastors serve the People by leading them; not by being led by them. A Pastor is a servant

called by The Lord to show the people how to serve; and remind them of their sin when they will not serve The Lord.

Those last comparisons will not settle well in the minds or hearts in the pastors or people involved a worldly, *Laodicean-christian baptist* church. But they ought to be a blessing, to those who have been taught and preached to, and led by a God-called, old-fashioned Pastor.

The Baptist people of today must learn from and obey The Scriptures, and not listen to, or read things from the devil's kind of watered-down, worldly religion. They are to learn what a Biblical Pastor is supposed to be from The Lord Who designed that gift. When our Independent Baptist folks learn about a Pastor, from only the English of The King James Bible, they will understand, and will treat their Pastor with blessing.

People must not treat their Pastor with the rebellious attitudes of a “*...Diotrephes...*” (*III John:9*), who wanted to be in charge, when he was not called to be in charge...of anyone but himself!

The membership of a Baptist Church ought to be a blessing to their Pastor as demonstrated by their obedience to The Word of God; as It is taught and preached to them by their Pastor.

Look the last part of the verse in *Hebrews 13:17*. God does not command the People to obey their Pastor for only his benefit. It is a “*...joy...*” to a Pastor when

people follow; but look at the negative if people will not **"...obey..."** him as he leads.

"...that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

A Pastor who is leading with The Word of God out front, ought to be able to experience some **"...joy..."** because of seeing the flock being obedient to follow his leadership. People should be Scripturally conscious not to cause their Pastor **"...grief..."** There are few things more disheartening to a Pastor, then to see the people not following what is preached, wandering around on their own, out in the wilderness of this world; instead of being in a place of blessing. The old preachers used to call it staying on blessing ground!

A Pastor who **"...rules well..."** is mainly working for the benefit of the membership being able to be blessed; as he sees God's Hand on his ministry; and on the lives of the people.

Monetary Blessing

*I Timothy 5:17-18 "Let the elders that rule well be **counted worthy of double honour**, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, **Thou shalt not muzzle the ox** that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his **reward**."*

God gives the command, “**...Thou shalt not muzzle the ox...**” three times in His Word. The first time is back in *Deuteronomy 25:4*. The next two times this is commanded are found in direct relation to providing for the those who have been called to serve in The Lord’s Church. The Scriptural picture is that of “**...the ox...**” being used to work for a family or a community. The illustration was given specifically in relation to God’s people Israel back in the wilderness.

Having an “**...ox...**” was considered a great blessing. It was used to work to plow a field, to carry heavy burdens from one place to another, to help a family on its journey to the promised land. The “**...ox...**” also served in the grain mill; harnessed, but not muzzled; to move the stone which broke down the kernels of corn into digestible food for the family. The command was to allow “**...the ox...**” to reap the benefits of its labour without restricting “**...the ox...**” in its provisions for the work!

The Lord uses this to teach that a Pastor is to be able to serve in a Church without having to work in the secular world. That context is clear. All the members of our kind of Baptist Churches; are to learn and practice these words when it comes to caring for the Pastors pay-check and living. All Church members have been given written responsibility, as to how they are to treat the gift of the Pastor as their “**...ox...**,” with monetary blessings.

Pastors are the ones who need to teach these things. This is not only for his subsidy. The Pastor has

been given command to teach and give out these things for the benefit of the People.

Paul reinforced this again with another Scripture associated with God's Old Testament example of a Pastor: Moses, in *1 Corinthians 9:9-11*

*"For it is written in the law of Moses, **Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox** that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? **Or saith he it altogether for our sakes**? For our sakes, **no doubt**, this is written: that **he that ploweth should plow in hope**; and that he that thresheth in hope **should be partaker of his hope**. If we have **sown unto you spiritual things**, is it a **great thing if we shall reap your carnal things**?"*

That is speaking directly about making sure that the Pastor is being paid what he needs to live on; and do it in such a way, that you give him the blessing of **"...hope..."** as he labours as your Pastor.

When a Church Body treats a *well ruling* Pastor right in these things; all in The Lord's work; Pastor and People; will benefit greatly in many other ways.

Personally, I believe this principle is one of the most violated; and the most damaging in the lives of many a Baptist Church and Baptist Pastor. Because of two other books I have written about the subject of taking care of the Pastor and The Church finances; I have

had opportunity to help several Baptist preachers and Baptist Churches to get their Pastors salary up to par with Scripture! So often, Pastors have had to struggle, just to barley have enough money to provide for their family. Those who have heeded this principle; and obeyed God's Word when He commands the congregation: "...***Thou shalt not muzzle the ox...***;" have seen The Lord build those ministries and the folks in them.

About thirty years ago, back before I was ordained to be a Pastor, I served as a Deacon at Grace Bible Baptist Church. The Pastor at that time had a family about the same age and size of my own. I knew what it took financially to provide for my precious wife and children; and I knew what was being paid to the Pastor. I studied out this subject of *not muzzling the Pastor*. I saw in The Scriptures how that he was to be allowed to have all he needed for him and those under his care at home. I studied out how the blessing or the curse of this would be reaped by the Church as a whole. I remember the affect this had on me as a fellow church member. In my very first Deacons meeting, I asked if I could say something and was allowed to do so. I opened to / *Timothy 5:17-18* in God's Book, and I briefly told of my burden for the Pastor to be given a substantial raise and some more benefits. The Pastor; although showing he was willing to have his salary remain as it was; graciously said he could use the extra money. I can still remember the good attitude of my Pastor that night. We prayed,

shed some tears. Some of the other Deacon's expressed words such as, "Pastor, we did not know!" And then the good men in that meeting all were convicted; and saw the need as was evident by what followed. We as Deacons figured out the average amount of our own personal salaries; and doubled that amount. We then voted to pay that amount to our faithful Pastor! Many blessings were seen and reaped following the decision of that night. The Church offerings increased substantially! The atmosphere and the spirit of the services changed! The altars were used more often. Souls were saved. Not long after that, I was called and ordained; and sent to Pastor in Canada. God also blessed that Baptist Church; and they were a blessing to me as their Pastor in many of the same ways. And, the Pastor of the Baptist Church where I was first called, ordained; and sent from; is still the Pastor of that Church! Some of those Deacons are still serving there also. And the faithful, giving members of the Independent, Fundamental, King James Bible, Old Fashioned, Baptist Church in which I now Pastor, are an open testimony to many other Baptist Churches, Pastors and Evangelists; of how they obey The Scriptures command to take care of their **"...ox...!"**

Every faithful Pastor ought to be cared for in such a way, that he has the time he needs to **"...labour in the word and doctrine."** And he is the one to set that time! This passage of God's Word is specifically giving instruction for the people to be sure that the monetary care of the Pastor, allows him to work full-time in The

Lord's business; without so many of the burdens others have to bear. It is the **"...office..."** ordained by The Lord; and the man in it who needs to be cared for as God has written.

Many a congregation are not learning or growing as they could be; because this principle is being violated. They are reaping exactly what they are **'not'** sowing to the Pastor; in money and in provision for his family.

The following Scripture in *Galatians 6:6-10*, has been used for many *applications* about many things. But has often been neglected to be used in the full context of its *interpretation*. Those words are speaking as to the connection between taking care of the Pastor with money; and what the people will gain in return.

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

The word **"...communicate..."** is used four times in The Bible. Each time it is in the context of having to do

with money! The word “**...communicated...**” is used two times; and only one of those usages is for a context of speech.

Part of The English definition of that word, listed first in Webster’s 1828 Dictionary is:

*‘To impart; **to give to another**, as a partaker; to confer for joint possession; to bestow, as that which the receiver is to hold, retain, use or enjoy...’*

Now read *Galatians 6:6-10* again with that in mind.

*“Let **him that is taught** in the word **communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things**. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, **that shall he also reap**. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that **soweth to the Spirit** shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in **well doing**: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, **especially unto them who are of the household of faith.**”*

God’s Word says that it is a **spiritual thing** to properly pay the Pastor who is doing the teaching and preaching! It amazes me how God takes the monetary care of His Pastors very personal. God spoke again of this same context through Paul in *1 Corinthians 9:11*,

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

Take the time to study this out carefully. God was writing directly about money to care for the leaders in His Churches; and others “...who are of the household of faith.”(Galatians 6:10)

!

In the early stages of a church; the degree that this can be afforded will be limited. But as the church grows; so should the salary grow to meet the needs of the Pastor and his family. He needs the blessing of being able to “***...plow in hope...***” (I Corinthians 9:10)

It is a disgrace how little some people and deacon boards think of their Pastor; as shown by what *they* set as his salary. By the way. That is not the responsibility of the people or the deacons! They are not the “...overseers...” of the Pastors salary; and they will not answer for one penny of the finances of a Church. They will answer for what they bring in; but not for how it goes out! The one in the “...office...” of “...overseer...” is the only person given that responsibility. In many churches Deacons set the salary of the “...ox...” They are not authorized by God to do so. The “...office of a deacon...” is one of service; not “...oversight...” As a matter of Scriptural fact; a Deacon is to be serving in the church in such a way; as to make sure that the Pastor has the time

to “**...labour in the word and doctrine...**,” so the Pastor can care for the “**...spiritual things...**” (I Corinthians 9:11) of the people.

*I Timothy 5:17 “Let the elders that **rule well** be counted worthy of **double honour**, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”*

If I read those inspired words correctly; the Pastor who is said to “**...rule well...**” is to be “**...counted worthy of double honour...**” And that is speaking not only about respect for his “**...office...**,” but according to the word “**...honour...**,” that too is related in Scripture to taking care of the Pastor in not putting a “**...muzzle...**” on him. And, **doubly** so!

I have often been amazed; and a bit disappointed; to hear of a Pastor and his family hurting in the ministry, because of not having enough money. But moreover; that **some Pastors** have not taught these things to the church. We, as Pastors, do reap “**...that...**” which we have sown.

I taught a series on this very subject fourteen years ago to the members this church. From that I wrote a book called “Don’t Muzzle The Ox” which deals thoroughly with paying those “**...who are of the household of faith...**” (Galatians 6:10) according to The Scriptures. As a result, the faithful Deacons, and the

other faithful folks of the Baptist Church I pastor; have been faithfully practicing what they have been taught in paying their Pastor, very well. A Pastor must not be muzzled from access to resources and the time needed to do things as necessary in the ministry of The Lord's Church. A Pastor must not be muzzled in any way. Because of a faithful bunch of caring Church Members, this un-muzzled "...ox..." is now able to do such things as studying to teach and preach so that the flock has better potential of being well fed. And even now, I can freely schedule my use of time to do things such as writing this book. What a blessing the folks at Hilltop Baptist Church are to this Pastor! They truly have obeyed The Lord by giving "...double honour..." to this "...ox..." We do reap "...that..." which we have sown.

To put the corn meal down on the bottom shelf for all to reach; the Pastors pay check ought to be a blessing to him and his family. It ought to be an "...honour..." for the People to take care of their Pastor.

Back in Moses' day, one of the Lord's families that did not have an "...ox...", had to toil much harder through the wilderness, than a family with an "...ox..." Properly caring for an "...ox..." is hard work; but the benefits far outweigh that of not reaping the benefits provided because of "...the ox..."

To be a blessing to their Pastor, every Church Member needs to consider the questions The Lord asked in *I Corinthians 9:9-10*.

*“For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. **Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes?** For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.*

Those inspired words were not written for the benefit of a livestock farmer. This is applied to the Pastor of a Baptist Church. There is no other job on this planet with a higher calling. There is not another vocation which carries more spiritual responsibility! A President may lead a nation; a good Soldier keeps us all safe from physical enemies; a Policemen’s presence may deter a crime; a Doctor may keep a heart beating. But they were not specifically called by The Lord! Only a Pastor is called to lead others to go through all of the problems in this world; oversee the winning of lost souls from Hell, and teach others to be doing the same till the trumpet sounds!

In *I Corinthians 9:13-14*, God points us back to how men were cared for who served in an “**...office...**” in The Tabernacle and Temple. These words need to be asked to every church member concerning the man as a gift in the “**...office...**” of Pastor.

*“Do ye not know that they **which minister about holy things** live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are **partakers with the altar**? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which **preach the gospel should live of the gospel.**”*

A Pastor ought to reap some blessings for having studied to learn The Doctrine of The Faith, being called for meeting God’s requirements to be a Pastor, passing the test of ordination, being placed by The Lord and serving in such an honourable “**...office...**” in a Baptist Church; which was “**...purchased...**” with the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

*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 One Who suffered death and Hell to pay “*...for the sins of the whole world...*”; and Who also “**...purchased...**” His Church with that same precious “**...blood...**” of the atonement; has made it abundantly clear, how He expects His gift of the Pastor to be treated.

Chapter 8

Criticizing the Gift

Pastors are often criticized for many things. They are a big target for scorners. Some of this may be based on fact; some not. Regardless, criticism is not one of The Lord's methods for correcting anyone! That is a tool of Satan's crowd. The Lord says He hates many "...*things...*;" but when a church member uses criticism among God's people; The Lord's hatred for "...*things...*" turns toward calling "...*he...*;" that **person**; "...*an abomination...!*"

*Proverbs 6:16-19 "These **six things** doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and **he that soweth discord** among brethren."*

The LORD wants no criticism given about anyone in a church. God's Word teaches that the members of the church are not even to listen to such things when a single critic is the speaker! In the context of the Pastor; God commands in *1 Timothy 5:19*

*"Against an elder **receive not an accusation**, but before **two or three witnesses.**"*

That means that if someone comes to you, by themselves, with “**...an accusation...**” about the Pastor; (or anyone else), they are **not to be heard** at all; unless, they have “**...two or three witnesses...**” with them. If they have followed the Bible, they have already gone directly to the Pastor. A wise thing for a church member to do if approached by one critic; is to ask them, “Have you spoken directly to the Pastor before you came to me?” In my years before pastoring, I did this several times with other church members. One time in particular; one of my Pastors had me preach while he was in the auditorium. Right after the altar call, a church member came; shook my hand, but then and began to voice a criticism about the Pastor’s salary. I immediately gripped his hand very firmly and said to that person, “Did you speak to Pastor about this? Let’s go talk to the Pastor, he is right over here.” That most definitely stopped the mouth of an “**...unruly...**” disgrunt.

*Titus 1:10-11 “For there are many **unruly and vain talkers** and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who **subvert whole houses**, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.”*

Most of the time, when something like this happens; it is the person speaking the criticism; and the infamous “they” who never seem to materialize! “Well, me and some other have been talking, and...they think...” Many who start such sentences do not even

understand that they have just identified themselves as a scorner, a critic, and one who is disobeying The Scriptures and putting an entire Church in a bad situation! Now I ask you, who in the church that is spiritual; would even think that what ‘they’ had to say is even close to being credible?

Many a good Pastor has been spiritually executed, by a critical jury of one! A Pastor must be treated justly in this. Church members can be a great blessing to the Pastor by shutting down a problem of an “...*unruly...*” mouth before it spreads to anyone else.

On the other hand, the Word of God is also clear; for The Lord also teaches us that “*Them that sin **rebuke before all**, that others also may fear...*” That is for Pastors and People. We all need to obey these things. That is a good balance for both the treatment of rebellious members, and of their Pastor! And, it will help keep the fear of God in all members; including the Pastor! If a Pastor has to be the one to publically rebuke a “...*vain talker...*” the other members ought to judge this as a blessing in the ministry of a Church.

We now live in a day when just one who gets their feelings hurt; justly or the opposite; have a new way to criticize in a church. They can do so on the world-wide-web! New, modern-day scornors can use the internet at home for their critical posts for that sort of ungodliness, for the cyber world critics to “like” and to read about!

Until The Judgment Seat of Christ; we may never know all the unnecessary damage and hurt that one who does so has caused! But The Lord will sort all those offenses out with the fire of that day. He is keeping perfect records of “likes” of such things, which are thought to be blocked from the view of their Pastor. All will see such easily burned up works at The Judgement Seat. Many ought to thank The Lord, that He has given cyber critics, the way to make things right!

If these Bible principles for the proper handling of offences are followed, and pride and ungodly respect of persons is set aside; there ought to be many things discussed between one person and their Pastor; “**...alone...!**” Things which never have to be taken, told, or posted to anyone else! I have found that when this is obeyed and practiced; that what could have been the start of a church split; often turns into the blessing of a strong and trusting relationship with Pastor and People!

A Pastor needs the blessing of being treated according to The Bible in all of the things in this chapter. This can begin in any Baptist Church with just **one** altar call; or, in just **one** private meeting between two of The Lord’s people who have been at odds with each other!

Chapter 9

The Attitude of The Gift

*I Timothy 3:14-15 "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, **that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God**, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

The context of these words is to be applied to the behaviour of the Pastor first. For the outward behaviour to be right; the attitude must be right with The Word of God in the heart.

A Pastor is a very unique position to be in. He is directly under The Lord and His Word; with no other man or woman on earth as his authority. He holds an **"...office..."** that is directly under The Lord Jesus. The authority of that **"...office..."** does not belong to him; but a Pastor will answer for what he does in it, just as if it does.

In that **"...office..."**, a Pastor is to hold himself accountable to an individual Church Body; but they are not to rule over him. He cannot place himself in that **"...office..."** but he can be removed from it by the Church. A Pastor is given the absolute power of **"...oversight..."** but cannot force anyone to serve God. He is to have **"...the rule..."** over the membership; but the People must choose to obey the Pastor by

determinations of their own surrendered will. Only God could design such a thing! And only The Lord; through His Word, can keep that kind of balance in the attitude of a man.

*Matthew 20:25-28 "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But **it shall not be so among you:** but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."*

The organization of The Lord's kind of Baptist Churches are completely different from any other institution; religious, business, or otherwise. Those who serve as Pastors in His Churches must not take up any of the worlds kind of attitudes of what they think is leadership.

*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."*

The Lord's kind of Church is not a business. It is a Church! There is nothing on earth that can be compared to it; and it must not be compared to anything else on this planet! The same goes for a Pastor. He is not to be compared to some position other men hold in the world.

A Pastor must understand that he is to hold himself responsible with respect for to seven Scriptural, Spiritual things. His accountability to these things must be before him at all times. His life and his ministry are to be influenced by these seven things. All decisions which a Pastor must make will have to be checked by these things first.

1. One Master. *II Timothy 2:21*
2. The Word of God. *II Timothy 2:15*
3. His "...calling..." *II Timothy 1:9*
4. His ordination "...charge..." *II Timothy 4:1*
5. The requirements of the "...office..." which he was placed in by God. *I Timothy 3:1-7*
6. The "...oversight..." of the church. *Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2*
7. To be the "...example of the believers..." (*I Timothy 4:12*).

The average member of a church is responsible to The Lord as their Master, The Word of God, the needs of the church, and to be an example to their fellow members. A Pastor is in a position which requires much more of him. All the saved are to obey The Word of God.

When they will not repent of a sin; and it becomes public knowledge; The Scriptures tell us exactly how such church members and are to be treated. The Pastor is not exempt from this. In fact, a Pastor is to hold himself to an even higher level of expectation. Not a higher standard; for all standards in God's Book are applicable to all of the saved. A Pastor needs to know that he will answer for so much more than the average member of a Baptist Church. This must live in the attitude of a Pastor.

A Pastor is to be responsible to the church members in this way. He needs to know it; and they need to know this. But a Pastors first priority is to be responsible to obey The Lord Who called him, and placed him in an “...office...”

If I as a Pastor, will set myself to obey God and His Word; I will not need to be corrected by anyone else. I must live up to my calling; and I must work to earn the trust of others, which results from consistent teaching, preaching and the personal practice of solid Doctrine in the sight of God and the people. This builds integrity in a Pastor. The devils counterfeit of integrity is pride; and pride must have no place in the ministry of a Pastor.

As a Pastor, I must do right concerning both man and God; without compromising with truth . A Pastor is not to make decisions according to situational ethics; but by enforcing Scriptural principles. This will bring about many tests. A Pastor will be tempted with some things

that other Church Members may never have to face. And those temptations may be far greater than the average Church Member will ever know. A Pastor has to make the People aware of these things without playing on their sympathy. That is not always an easy task to accomplish. But when it is achieved; the flock will take up their responsibility to do all they can to support and encourage their shepherd. A Pastor who is now in Heaven use to say, "Don't discourage your encourager." A Pastor must keep an attitude which does not rely on the People uplifting him; but it sure is a blessing when they do.

A Pastor is never to diminish or dilute his message using his lack of growth, or that of the people as an excuse. That kind of attitude will destroy a Church. Attitudes of personal preference must be set aside. Church politics must be cast out. Ungodly respect of persons, favoritisms and friendships, must never be allowed to influence a Pastors attitude in the teaching and preaching. A Pastor must never capitulate to a push for the worldly lowering of old-fashioned standards. The Pastor must not bend his principles or his preaching of the truth. He must keep a right attitude when tempted with thoughts of offending those who are able to give larger amounts of money at The Lord's House. Unscriptural loyalty to other preachers or educational institutions, must never undermine a Pastors responsibility to absolute faithfulness to The Lord and His Doctrine first!

If it comes to a choice of submitting to men or The Lord; a Pastor is always to submit to God and His Word. Those things do not contradict when understood from God's point of view. A wise old Pastor use to say, "Duty's never conflict." All of these attitudes must be sought out in prayer; and enforced by Scripture. The attitudes of a Pastor will be transferred to the People. Attitudes; good or bad; will be perceived by the People. Sometimes a bad attitude stands out in such a way; that it hinders solid truth from being received.

Pastors get Offended Too

A Pastor must continually guard his attitudes in dealing with people; and in how the People deal with him. The devil will constantly attempt to attack the attitudes of both. As a Pastor, I must have the right attitude in understanding that I am also a Church Member. I too must practice the words of *Matthew 18:15-17* in order to keep my attitude right with The Holy Spirit.

Matthew 18:15-17 "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if

he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

When someone does or says something against me in private, as Pastor, I do not have license to get in the pulpit and correct that church member publically. A Pastor has to be able to check that kind of attitude; and leave it at the Throne of God in prayer. Before I get in the pulpit to preach, I am to go to them “*...alone...*,” in private first. If I do not; “Like Pastor Like People!” They will follow my bad attitude in how they treat others!

When a Pastor teaches that he has this same responsibility as other members; this principle will be a means to help control the attitudes of his own sin nature. A Pastor will be tempted to speak out at people because of personal offences; more often than the other members. A Pastor must not bring that kind of bad attitude into the pulpit.

A Pastor must not Offend Others

Knowing he is accountable to *Matthew 18:15-17*, a Pastor will be more conscious; that he does not offend the people in the church unknowingly, unnecessarily, or on purpose. It is to be expected, that truth will naturally offend the rebellious, and it will cause division with the disobedient. Knowing this to be true; a Pastor must have the attitude, that he will do his best not to offend people; by **the way** truth is presented. That is not an easy thing to balance out; and there will be times when certain

corrections will require strong words of rebuke. I am not speaking about compromising the truth in any way; but to be conscious of the potential to offend. It is amazing how just a slight adjustment in attitude can help or hurt a situation.

Strong Doctrine, combined with Spirit led, Spirit filled preaching and teaching; ought to offend the flesh every once-in-a-while! But the attitude of the man in the “...office...” of the Pastor, needs to be under the power which will control his flesh at all times.

A Pastor and Service

*Colossians 3:22-24 “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, **as to the Lord**, and **not unto men**; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for **ye serve the Lord Christ.**”*

A Pastor must never teach or preach with an attitude to make the church members feel as if they are to serve him. They are to be led to serve The Lord in the work of His Church. The Pastor must keep and promote the attitude of **one “...master...”** for himself, and for the other members. When all members are taught this; and it will build a great working relationship. The Pastor will be seen and heard as The Lord’s ordained messenger; trying to get the people to be accountable to serve The Lord from the heart. He must preach for the members to

serve The One Who bought and paid for their sins, their souls, and their bodies! *1 Corinthians 6:19* is a powerful Scripture that needs to be a foundational attitude in both the Pastor and the People. These words need to be memorized and practiced by every Church Member.

*“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye **are not your own**? For **ye are bought with a price**: therefore glorify God **in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**”*

That is a great attitude to develop. When it is understood that all service is to be only for The Lord Jesus; there will be less conflicts at The House of God. A faithful Pastor will always have to preach for more of the flock to get involved in serving at Church. This will be the thing most often neglected by a large number of those in the membership. A Pastor will have to constantly use The Bible, prayer and preaching; trusting The Spirit of God in the believers to move them to serve Jesus. The Pastor must keep his attitude in check as he leads in this aspect of the ministry.

A Pastor is to rule; not be ruled

*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...”*

This kind of rule is not as it is with the world. The “...office...” of a Pastor has the authority to rule only by use of The Scriptures. And it will be only as the people “...submit...” to The Bible. This is not to be thought of as “...the rule...” of force; but of willing participation. These things must become part of the attitude make-up of the heart. A Pastor is not to make a rebel obey; he is to seek out those who **will to be** ruled by The Scriptures! Only God could create that kind of attitude about leadership. The man in that “...office...” is to use that delegated authority to lead the faithful; and he is never to relinquish it to another who will not be led. If a Pastors attempts to lead a rebel are not accepted; they are not rejecting the Pastors leadership. They are however rejecting The Lord Jesus; even if they do not know this; the Pastor must have this attitude in action. In such cases, a Pastor must make a decision whether or not to continue attempting to “...restore...” (*Galatians 6:1*) a rebel; or if it is an offence damaging to all the members, and requiring the removal of that particular member from fellowship at The Lord’s Table.

The Pastor is always to maintain complete “...oversight...” of every aspect of the administration of the ministry. This is not an attitude of superiority; it is an attitude of submission to the calling and command of God.

The next part of this section on attitudes is to be applied in the case of the Deacons. Before this is read,

ask yourself, “Do I hold the doctrine of Deacon as taught only from The King James Bible; or have I received some of my understanding about a Deacon from some other source; to include a Church Constitution and By Laws?”

A Pastors attitude about Deacons; and their attitudes about the Pastor must be under the control of The Word of God. Bad attitudes in relation to this doctrine have caused many People in Baptist Churches to be discouraged.

To begin with, the English word deacon simply means servant. A Biblical Deacon is not in an “**...office...**” of “**...oversight...**” A Deacon or Deacon board is not over the “**...office...**” of the Pastor. That false version of a deacon has “*...crept in...*” (*Jude 4*) to Baptist Churches by the influence of Protestantism. Not one word of The Scriptures gives authority for a Deacon to “**...rule...**” over the Pastor, or the other members. When this is taught to the men who will be *ordained* into the “**...office...**” of a Deacon; and the Pastor has the right attitude about Deacons, there will be a very close and special relationship between the Pastor and the Deacons.

Pastor, Deacons, and the People must understand how The Lord has set up His way to administrate in His kind of Baptist Churches. Look at these simple steps in relation to the Deacons.

1. A Pastor in the “**...office...**” of a Bishop, is the only person on the Earth, who has been delegated by The Lord, with the authority of “**...oversight...**” in **all** Church matters.

2. According to Acts 6:1-3, The Members of the Church are to know the qualifications listed in The Scriptures, before perspective candidates for Deacons are selected. Those men are to meet the qualifications listed in The Scriptures before they are nominated to be Deacons.

*Acts 6:2-3 “Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of **honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom,** whom we may **appoint** over this business.”*

*1 Timothy 3:8-11 “Likewise **must the deacons be** grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”*

3. Men who meet the qualifications are first **nominated** by the other members in the Local Church.

*“Wherefore, brethren, look **ye** out **among you...**” Acts 6:3*

4. Those are then tested for their knowledge of **“...the faith...”** by the existing leadership, before

the whole congregation; to be sure they are right with Doctrine.

*I Timothy 3:9-10 “Holding the mystery of **the faith in a pure conscience**. And let these also **first be proved**...”*

*Acts 6:6 “Whom they **set** before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.”*

5. They are then **appointed** into the “...office of a deacon...” by the leadership of The Church; which now is the “...office...” of the Pastor.

*Acts 6:3 “...whom **we may appoint** over this business.”*

6. Baptist Deacons are to be **appointed** into “...the **office** of a deacon ...” by the Pastor.
7. Nowhere in The Word of God does The Lord teach that Deacons are *voted* in by the congregation.
8. Because they are *appointed* by the man in the “...office...” of Pastor, they can be un-appointed by the same “...office...”

*Acts 6:2 “Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should **leave the word of God, and serve tables**.”*

9. Deacons are to serve The Lord by taking care of the physical aspects of the Church; in order to

allow the Pastor to take care of the spiritual aspects of the Church.

I Timothy 3:10 "...then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."

This is how it has always been in The Scriptures since that first New Testament Church in Jerusalem needed Deacons. I have known several Baptist Pastors, who have been un-scripturally ruled by a doctrinally Protestant Deacon or a Deacon Board; or held to some Protestant influenced, Church Constitution and By Laws; in an Independent, Baptist Church.

According to God's Written Law; in a Doctrinally Correct, Biblically Baptist Church; the one man ordained into the "...office..." of the Pastor; is God's administrative gift given for leadership in His kind of Baptist Churches.

An ALL Controlling Attitude

One of the best things I have been taught about a Pastor's attitude toward the people in The Lord's Local Church, is that I am here being used by The Lord Jesus; to help in the preparation of His Future Bride. That Bride to be is not mine. She belongs to The God-Man. I have no right to treat her as if she answered to me! If she will not comply willingly with my use of The Word of God; I must go no further; but to turn to her Master, and ask for His wisdom, to know what to teach and to preach

next. I am to stay at my post in His “...office...;” unless He makes it clear that He is going to use me somewhere else. I have no right to decide on my own to leave the place where The Lord has sent me. *Romans 11:29* has taught me by application; that if God has placed a Pastor in one of His Churches; and has supplied him with gifts to be used there; and has given him as a gift to that Church; that only The Lord by His Spirit has the authority to move a Pastor.

*“For the gifts and calling of God are **without repentance.**” Romans 11:29*

I have personally determined; that if I ever get to the place in attitude or in actions; where I get angry at The Lord’s Church members for not obeying what is taught or preached; that it is then time for me to ask The Lord to move me; to serve Him in the preparation of another part of His future Bride; at another Independent, Fundamental, Baptist Church.

Chapter 10

The LORD designs a Pastor for a Flock

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

Every member of a solid, Scriptural, doctrinally correct Baptist Church; has got to understand that it is The Holy Ghost Who give them a Pastor to be “...overseers...” in the Church for The Lord’s work.

A faithful Pastor is truly a “...gift...” from God. In my own life; I thank The Lord often for the seven different Pastors He has used in preparing and helping me to be a Pastor. Each of them had been given many of the same individual “...gifts...” to teach me; and, others had different and unique “...gifts...” which The Lord used to influence and ready me for His work.

A Pastor is a very specific kind of gift. Every church member will benefit from God’s gift, if they will think of their Pastor as being one of the many “...gifts...” from God.

*Ephesians 4:11-15 And **he gave** some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 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 fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ..."

The Lord used the word "**...pastors...**" only once in His New Testament writings. In *Ephesians 4:11-15*, God lists some of the duties given to these "**...gifts...**" The calling of a Pastor, carries with it the greatest and most important responsibilities given to a human being. That is something that is not considered enough in these days.

This passage in *Ephesians* also speaks the gift of an "**...evangelist...**" He is also given these specific responsibilities; but there is no "**...office...**" of an Evangelist in The Scriptures. The duties of an Evangelist do not include that of "**...oversight...**" as with the one earthly shepherd of a flock. Only a Pastor is called to be an **overseer**, and to have "**...rule...**" in a local church. No other way of administration is taught in The Bible. The Lord does not call two Pastors to the same Baptist Church. The Lord prepares and calls; and ordains "**One...**" Pastor per Baptist Church. Other men may serve under him; but there is only to be "**One...**" Pastor.

*I Timothy 3:4-5 **“One** that ruleth well **his own** house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if **a man** know not how to rule **his own** house, how **shall he** take care of the church of God?) ...”*

God would be violating His own Word if He put two Pastors as co-pastors in His Local Church. I know many associates are called “pastor,” but I believe this causes a divide in the ideas of the members as to who is the ***“One...”*** shepherd of a flock. There are no contradictions in God’s Book; just in the lack of practicing it. People will not follow ***“One...”*** Pastor if they are led to think it is alright to call more than ***“One...”*** by the title of Pastor. This idea of multiple pastors is fairly new in our kind of Baptist Churches. Only in the last ten years or so has it become much more prevalent. This is an unwise trend that is weakening the perception and the power of the ***“...office...”*** of Pastor. By the way, when God writes of that ***“...office...”*** He writes of it in the singular! Anything else is an addition to The Word of God. “Just saying!” As some say to make a point!

With that in mind, the following Scriptures were written to benefit more than one congregation. They are not teaching that there are multiple Pastors in a Baptist Church. That ***“...office...”*** is definitely filled by only ***“One...”*** man at a time in each local church. And God gives definite leadership instructions to both Pastors of individual Churches and the other members in each of them.

*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.”*

*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.”*

*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.”*

Those things must be taught and received if the full importance of the gift of the Pastor is to be understood. Other men as Directors *under* the Pastor, or *Associates to* the Pastor, or even Deacons can be considered as Elders in a church. But there is only one “**...office...**” of “**...a Bishop...**” as Pastor. All other positions are delegated and appointed by only the Pastor. The Pastor is prepared by The LORD to be delegated with much more responsibility. And the Pastor is to delegate **the work** of some of that responsibility for others to do. But he is never out from under the full weight of answering for the responsibility of all the work. That needs to be thought through very carefully.

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

The Scriptures make it clear as to Who makes a Pastor ready to be placed in one of His two New Testament “**...offices...**” in His Local Baptist Churches. Looking back at my life; I can now see some of the ways The Lord was using to prepare me to be a Pastor. I know a Pastor will always need to be growing; but there is to be that initial time of preparation first.

Some of the things which go on in how some Baptist churches bring in men as prospective pastors need to be considered more carefully.

Before a man can be placed in the “**...office...**” of Pastor; There are several things which must come first.

1. Solid testimony of **Salvation**
2. Having been **baptized** under the authority of a Doctrinally Correct Independent **Baptist** Church; in which The Bible is not in dispute as to its perfection, and inspiration, and preservation!

Those first two things **must be** in place before going any further. *Alien* baptisms disqualify a man from pastoring a Baptist Church! That should not even have to be said; but this has been violated by some Baptist churches. If a man was not Baptized in a Baptist Church

with Biblically Baptist Doctrine, he was never a member of one of The Lord's kind of New Testament Churches. He is not qualified to Pastor any church. But, a man can however make that right; by becoming one of the "...members in particular..." I Corinthians 12:27, of a New Testament Baptist Church: by being "...**baptized into**..." one local body! (I Corinthians 12:13)

After those two things are settled, God lists no less than **twenty-four** more **qualifications** that "...**must be**..." in place, **before** any man can even be considered to be placed in the "...**office**..." as a Pastor. These are found in I Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:4-9.

*I Timothy 3:1-7 "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then **must be** blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."*

Titus 1:4-9 "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and

the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. 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: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. 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; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; 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.”

Every one of the inspired English words, which constitute those **qualifications**, are not optional! Any man who has the “**...desire...**” to pastor; which is evidence of God’s calling on their life; has got to face those **prerequisites**, and be able to show the other members of their local church, a testimony of those things. This is to be known by the members of the Church, and the man wanting to pastor. Both must do their part to be responsible to those fundamentals. We are supposed to be “Fundamental Baptists.” Of all people, we cannot set aside any such things when it comes to putting men into an “**...office...**” in the ministry of The Lord.

Personal searching of the individual; and hard questions enquired about him, must be asked to him **before** an ordination. That is no easy thing to be able to do. It is a very humbling; and overwhelming

responsibility. But these things “**...must be...**” evident in a man. He must pass this test **before** he can be ordained by a church into “**...the office of a bishop...**” If not; desire or not, he is not qualified to be an Elder, Overseer, or Pastor.

This “**...office...**” must be one of extreme preparation. It must not be taken so lightly or flippantly by Pastors, or the other people in the membership of a Baptist Church.

After the preparation stage; which will vary in the interval it takes with each man; then comes the time when a prepared man is “**...ordained...**” As an example for us to follow, The Lord Jesus first called twelve men. He spent about three years personally preparing them. And then there came the time when He knew they were ready; and He “**...ordained...**” them.

*John 15:15-16 “**Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...”***

That order is to be the same with the “**...office ...**” of Pastor. The Lord does all things in perfect “**...order...**” The Lord gave written command to Paul; The Lord’s Apostle

to us Gentiles; exactly as to how this was to be kept and performed by us in His Baptist Churches!

*Titus 1:4-5 "To Titus, mine own son **after the common faith**: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. 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:*

Ordination is still to be "**...after the common faith...**" That "**...common faith...**" was given to us "**...once...**" and has never been revised!

*Jude 1:3 "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for **the faith which was once delivered** unto the saints."*

These things are to be "**...set in order...**" The same "**...order...**" as they were given two-thousand years ago!

*I Corinthians 14:4 "Let **all things** be done **decently and in order**."*

I have witnessed men being 'called' by others, or calling themselves a pastor, without first being ordained to be a Pastor. I have heard and read of men in the past,

who said they were not ‘called” to be a pastor; but took on being a Pastor. Churches have voted men in as their pastor, without ever checking what Doctrine they were ordained under; or if in fact they were ever ordained at all. Those such as that are not examples of The Lord’s way of a Pastor being prepared to be “**...ordained...!**”

I believe a good, Doctrinally solid Baptist Bible College: under the authority and the direct “**...oversight...**” of an Independent, Fundamental, King James Bible Believing, Separated, Baptist Church; can be a great tool used for the *preparation* of a man to be “**...ordained...**”. But, a Baptist college diploma; even when earned from a school under the authority of a good Baptist Church; or, a certificate of Bible study from a Baptist Church; does not constitute exemption from a man being “**...ordained...**” under the authority of the Local Baptist Church where the man is an active member! Anything less is a side-step out from Scripturally “**...ordained...**” “**...order...!**”

Every Pastor who is ordained into the “**...office...**” of Pastor is supposed to have already met the Scriptural qualifications “**...given by inspiration of God...**” That is a lot to take in. A Pastor will grow from that starting point. I have often wondered if the bar has been set way to low these days? The Lord does not put unqualified men into an “**...office...**” in one of His Churches. So how do they get in? By lowering or ignoring what He says “**...must**

be...” God has never modified His peremptory qualifications to be called by the title of Pastor.

Here is a searching thought. Those qualifications are commands which are the *starting point* of a Pastors service! He is not to be put in that “...office...” in hopes that he will *eventually* meet those preliminaries! If he is found deficient in any of them; a promise to do better does not negate the “...must be...” at the beginning of that list.

As I am writing this, I am thanking The Lord for His grace in preparing me for His “...office...” No Pastor “feels” like he is qualified for such a calling. That is not the issue. He had better have a clear conscience that it is only by the grace of God that has made him to meet those qualifications. If a man desires that “...office...” he must set himself to work at being ready; *before* he seeks to actually be a Pastor.

The Lord’s Gifts are Not Novices

One of the Scriptural qualifications for a Pastor given in *1 Timothy 3:6*, is an inspired “...**must be**...” written back in verse 3. God says,

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

The word “...**novice**...” is a powerful word when applied in the case of the qualifications of a man **before**

being ordained. Look at the English definition of that word.

‘One who is new in any business; one unacquainted or unskilled; one in the rudiments; a beginner. One that has entered a religious house but has not taken the vow; a probationer. One newly planted in the church, or one newly converted’

Every word of that definition is still valid today! The Lord has not lowered the standard for the prerequisites to be ordained into the “**...office...**” of a Pastor.

Synonyms for the word “**...novice...**” are ‘beginner, learner, trainee, apprentice, greenhorn, neophyte (amateur), and rookie.’

God says a “**...novice...**” has a greater tendency to be “**...lifted up with pride...**” and the devil will be able to take such a man down. A man who meets those tough qualifications, will not be so inclined to live in the pride of his qualifications. **Humility** of the heart is best understood in the case of one who knows he has been prepared by another; not of himself! Pride often swells up in the heart of a “**...novice...**” in an attempt to cover up their fear of being **humiliated**; because they know they are not prepared. A “**...novice...**” will want to tell everyone what he does know; while a prepared man

works to help folks learn what they do not yet know; and what they need to know for The Lord!

When The Lord prepares a man to be a Pastor; He does not teach the man self-reliance; nor does The Lord build the man's self-esteem. Ego is not used as a tool in the training of a Pastor. Arrogance and self-confidence are not by-products of being trained by The Lord. The only confidence that is to be in the heart of a Pastor; is that of faith. A faith that knows that The power of The Word of God, will do as It is ordained to do; as It is used by a Pastor.

*Proverbs 22:17-21 "Bow down thine ear, and **hear the words** of the wise, and apply thine heart unto **my knowledge**. For it is a pleasant thing if thou **keep them within thee**; they shall withal be **fitted in thy lips**. That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I **written** to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, That I might make thee know **the certainty of the words of truth**; that thou mightest **answer the words of truth to them** that send unto thee?"*

Not being a "...novice..." is all based upon learning The Written Word of God. The preparation of a man to be a Pastor has got to be concentrated on the teaching and application of Doctrine! I believe that this is sadly lacking today in many of our kind of Baptist Churches.

This has to be speaking first of not being a doctrinally deficient “...**novice**...” All Pastors, young or old; will have to grow **in experience** while in his “...**office**...” But a Pastor should not have to be learning the Basics of Doctrine; while he is attempting to teach a flock!

Just the fact that a man meets those listed qualifications, before ordination will be evidence that a candidate for Pastor has had much life experience already. That is why he must be married and know how to rule his children and his home. That speaks of someone a bit older in age. So God must be directing us to focus of the experience of knowing Doctrine. That is why ordination is so vitally important! Ordination is a public testing and a very open declaration of what a man knows about Doctrine. There are to be no shortcuts or doctrines for dummies here!

God gave us all of His Doctrine of The Faith. If a man is taught every part of that Doctrine first; it will give him the **written wisdom** that has not yet been gained through the experience of years. He is to know **The Doctrine** before he is put into the “...**office**...” of Pastor. Pastors are to be prepared in this; from a long and faithful line of those who were taught and held to The Precious Doctrine of The Faith, as it is in The Word of God! Look at these words found in *Luke 1:1-4*

*“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are **most surely***

believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."

I have heard men down-play the need for knowing of solid, strong Doctrine; as if it was secondary to the other parts of preparation for the ministry. I contend that it is the **first thing** a man is to be taught! Men such a Paul knew it; and he knew a young preacher named Timothy knew it. And Timothy was taught by Paul! If Paul the aged, seasoned veteran; and a man, according to *1 Timothy 4:12*, who was still in his **"...youth..."** could **"...fully..."** know **the same Doctrine** as an Apostle was given; then we today have no excuse for the substandard teaching, learning, understanding, testing, and application of Doctrine! We can do what we have been ordained to do.

*II Timothy 3:10 "But thou **hast fully known my doctrine,** manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,"*

If a potential Pastor; even a younger man; has The Doctrine of The Faith right; only then will The Holy Spirit of God be fully able to guide him until he gains more experience as a Pastor in The Lord's work. The age

of a candidate for Pastor is not the issue here. The preparation to Pastor is! Knowing Bible Doctrine can add many years to a man's understanding. Look what Paul told the **young** Pastor Timothy who was already in the **"...office..."** of Pastor.

*"Let **no man despise thy youth**; but be thou an example of the believers, **in word**, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, **to doctrine**. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; **give thyself wholly to them**; that thy profiting **may appear** to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto **the doctrine**; **continue in them**: for in doing this **thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee**."*
I Timothy 4:12-16

Did you see the references to the importance of **"...doctrine...?"** In this passage, it was not Timothy's longevity in the ministry that was being referenced when it was written **"...thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee..."** That is speaking about that young Pastor being immersed in **"...doctrine..."** and his calling.

And to further make this point; Paul was writing to for Timothy to ordain other men as Pastors! His youth was not the issue; Timothy's knowledge of Doctrine was!

Casualties in The Battle

Over my thirty-eight years as a child of God; and now twenty years as a Pastor; I have witnessed some of the reproach that has been brought on to the public testimony of several Independent Baptist Churches. Some of this was due to men in the “*...office...*” of a Pastor; who stood and fought well; but because of one of “*...the wiles of the devil...*” finding its way past the “*...armour...*” into the mind, soul or flesh; they fell. There are always casualties in war; but especially in that of the spiritual kind. None of these men; no matter the circumstances; no matter the level of personal fault; ought ever to go unforgiven by others. If not for the grace and the mercy of The Lord; I know I too could be one of those wounded servants. Of those who fell; or in the case of those who just got tired of fighting and quit; we will never know all that those who once served had to face. Perhaps, some of them were not well prepared before they were commissioned to the fight. It may have been the case that they were supplied with the unproven weapons of substandard doctrines. Some may not have been instructed, or they failed in learning how to handle “*...the sword of the spirit...*” (*Ephesians 6:17*) Those battles must be put behind and under the blood. But what we must and can do now; is to be sure to do our very best to prepare the next generation, of well-trained, doctrinally skilled Pastors. (and Evangelists too.)

*Ephesians 6:10-13 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against **the***

wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against **spiritual wickedness in high places.** Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand **in the evil day,** and having done all, to stand.”

We are talking about preparation of men to serve, in the highest calling and “**...office...**” given to man! We cannot do much about the honorable casualties, nor the faithless failures of the past in this; but we can hold ourselves; and those who seek to be Pastors (and Evangelists), to a much higher standard than has been the case in many an Independent, Baptist Church. If more men were better prepared, as The Lord has written for them to be; “**...grievous wolves...**” would not be able to so easily **infiltrate** the pulpits of our kind of Baptist Churches. And even fewer would be **invited** in; by a doctrinally deficient ordination! More of the members of our kind, would be better prepared to serve God. There would be more power to preach, to teach, to live holy lives, and to keep God’s Baptist people and His Baptist Churches from going back to the world. It used to be that we watched for wolves in sheep’s clothing; but now-a-days, we see more sheep dressing like the wolves! A well prepared Pastor will be able to help many more of the saved; to be in less “**...terror...**” (*II Corinthians 5:11*) as they stand before The Lord Jesus at The Judgement Seat of Christ.

But most of all; the greatest priority in this; is for more of the members in our kind of Baptist Churches; to be able to continue on as we were given charge! We will be able to see more lost souls saved from Hell and The Lake of Fire, and be baptized into membership. They will then have better opportunity to learn The Old Doctrine of The Faith! And when they sit in on an ordination service, of the next man to be placed in as a Pastor; **they** will know what he is; what he believes; what The Lord expects him to be, and what he is **charged** to continue to believe and practice without changing!

Avoiding a Potential Problem

When a saved and baptized man, knows the God-given desire to be a Pastor; meets Scriptural the qualifications and requirements; learns The Doctrine of The Faith; is tested as to his understanding of Doctrine; and is publically ordained into the “...office...” as a Pastor; this process of preparation will make it much harder for The Lord’s Baptist Churches to be destroyed from the inside. God used The Apostle Paul as His man to ready His Gentile Churches; and those who would lead them; to be able to stand firm in The Faith; until the trumpet sounds and the testing fires of The Judgement Seat of Christ are lit. We as Baptist Believers are to own that responsibility as it was passed on to us!

I believe The Lord has provided every word that we now need, to carry on as we were commanded to do. In *Acts 20:26-30*, God was using Paul to warn us about

what is taking place at this very hour in many Baptist Churches. The power in the words of this inspired warning needs to be heeded and applied specifically to Pastors right now. As you read the next verses from Acts 20, don't hear these words as coming only from Paul; but directly from The Lord Jesus! Every Pastor needs to have the authority of these words filling their hearts, empowering their voices, and ringing in the ears of others as they preach them about their own **"...office..."**

*Acts 20:26-30 "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. **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. **For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.**"*

Let's get better prepared as Pastors! Let's teach these things to **"...all the flock..."** under of our particular charge as **"...overseers..."** Let's beg The Holy Spirit of Truth to empower us; and to lead and to guide us **"...into all truth..."**; so we can pass it on to all those that we can, so they too understand the Pastor is as a Gift to The Lord's House. Let' ask the faithful people in our kind of

Baptist Churches, to pray for their Pastor more than ever; to be able to lead them.

And most importantly, we must get more of the Male members of our individual flocks ready; so they can be readied, to be called by The Lord; as one of His “**...gifts...**” to a Local, Independent, Fundamental, King James Bible, Separated, Non-contemporary, Old-Fashioned, Baptist Church!