

Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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Do We Need A Pastor? Is A Preacher The Pastor?

This double question is designed to make us think. The issue of a preacher being the sole overseer (The Pastor) of a congregation of the Lord's church has surfaced over the years and continues to be an issue in the Lord's church. In the Crossroads/Boston Movements the "Campus Advance Leader," "The House Church Leader," "The Zone Leader," etc. etc. was but a way to disguise The Pastor in these settings. This has been pretty much exposed in the states. However, it is still a major problem on foreign fields. I received a letter recently from a brother in India wanting me to provide him a copy of the *Critique of the Multiplying Ministries of the Boston Church of Christ*. I did and I hope it will help him.

The issue of a preacher Pastoring a church is common in Denominational circles and may be one of the reasons it is adopted by some among us. It has been a problem in the past

and had to be opposed. Brother G. K. Wallace exposed Ketcherside's version of this false position in the Wallace-Ketcherside Debate, 1953. The proposition defended by Ketcherside in this debate on the issue was as follows:

"The New Testament authorizes an evangelist to exercise authority in a congregation which he has planted until men are qualified and appointed as bishops." (Ketcherside affirmed this and Wallace denied)

Questions and Observations

①

May the Church be placed in order without an evangelist? If no, is a group without an evangelist over them in error? If yes, then who has the authority in that congregation with no eldership or evangelist?

②

Anyone affirming that the preacher is in the oversight

is affirming that the preacher is THE PASTOR of the church. Advocates of this position should not be permitted to redefine terms so that uninformed or misinformed brethren will not recognize this for what it is. Advocates of this position should not be ashamed to wear the title they defend. Are they or are they not THE PASTOR?

③

Will the knowledge of the Scriptures and their application enable brethren to be complete in their service to the Lord (II Tim. 3:15-17)? Do brethren today need the Scriptures plus a pastor of the church to set in order what needs to be done to be pleasing to God?

④

The individual upholding The Pastor System as outlined by Ketcherside and those like him can not oppose the Boston/Crossroads Pastors without giving up the principle that would promote themselves

as The Pastor of a church.

Passages Considered

Spiritual gifts were that which qualified the speaker or miracle worker to present the truth of God for the church of Christ in order that the Lord's people might have immediate direction, and to enable some to complete the writing of the Bible. Passages that regulate spiritual gifts are not the passages to show who the Holy Spirit designated as overseers of the churches (Acts 20:28).

The concept of body in these passages discussing spiritual gifts has reference to the total body of Christ (the church) not merely to a local congregation. Are we to have a Pastor over the entire body of Christ? If we do then we have a Pope and not merely a Denominational Pastor.

Before the Bible was completed, while the New Testament was being written, God set spiritual gifts in the church to make possible the truth for the pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.

The orderly arrangement in a given verse must not be pressed beyond its intent by God. Consider the following arrangements:

①

In Romans 12:6-8 we have "*Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let*

him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." NOTE: This list would place teachers above rulers? Are we to use this arrangement to organize a church today?

②

In First Corinthians 12:28 we have "*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*" NOTE: This list places teachers third in "command." May we make an argument that a teacher has authority to pastor a church? If not, why not?

③

In Ephesians 4:11 we have, "*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.*" NOTE: Given the other passages how can a person defend an argument on this verse for a preacher to be THE PASTOR of a church? Truth is, he can not. The fact that God provided some with miraculous capabilities in the early church is no argument to have a single Pastor over a church.

④

Titus 1:5 "*For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.*" "Set in order" does not mean "take over" or "boss a church," G. K. Wallace's statement from debate cited above.

⑤

Titus 2:15 "*These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*" "All authority" is qualified (modified, limited) by speak, exhort, rebuke, etc. The preacher has all authority to teach, exhort, rebuke, but he does not have authority to oversee unless he qualifies as one of the pastors/elders. No single elder has authority when he assumes the position to act alone as The Pastor. No preacher serving in the dual role of preacher and as one of the elders has no authority to act alone as The Pastor. The Bible knows nothing of a SINGLE PASTOR over a church.

Expedient and/or Common Sense

Is it likely that a young preacher, (with little or no experience) in a congregation where he has recently begun his preaching who finds himself without elders, prepared to oversee the work? Do you truly think that he knows best what a local work needs? He may have a good working

The Harvesters

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Editor: Jackie M. Stearsman

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

knowledge of the Bible and how to teach it but this does not mean he has infinite knowledge in expedient matters. What would happen if a business followed this practice?

Why should we think that one person is the only individual who has a say in expedient judgments. Most decisions in local congregations have to do with judgments of one kind or another. A sure receipt for failure is for one person to have the only say in matters of judgment that involve others who are on the same plane as the person making the decision.

Not only is having a single Pastor over a church without Biblical authority it is not expedient, practical and/or wise.

✉Editor

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*Sympathy

We extend sympathy to the family of **KYM POLK**. Kym along with his two children were killed in a car accident recently. Kym taught some in the School of Preaching. His father-in-law, **GLANN LEE**, has served on the Board of Directors of the school.

If you wish to send condolences to the family you may do at brother Lee's address:

Mr. Glann Lee
137 Brooke Elyse Lane
Max Meadows, VA 24360

•••

Dear Bro Stearsman,

I know you're busy starting another school year. We wish the very best for you and the school in the coming year and God's continuing blessings as you prepare men for the battle of this life.

Harold "Mac" & Vera McMullen were married 60 years on July 12th. They lived winters in Bradenton for many years but not recently. They have always had only good to say about FSOP and I thought a gift in their honor would be appropriate. They were both Christians when they married at such tender ages and I know they credit the Lord God for supporting them all these years...She is my mother's twin sister.

Hope to see you in January if not before. We're grateful Ted and Renee are back safely(from Ghana) and with such a good report.

In Him,
Ron & Pat Ford

•••

I'm writing to say Hello. How are things going. I am doing OK. How are the students doing? Ask them to study hard. There is no greater need than men of God preaching the word of God. There is no better place to learn the basics than FSOP.

I am sending a little money. Maybe it will help. I know that it is not much but I will try to send more later.

Keep me in your prayers.

Charles H. Folsom

•••

Dear Bro. Stearsman,

I have a friend who is a member of the Midway congregation in Sarasota who, from time to time, sends me your monthly newsletter, I truly enjoy the articles and information contained in it. I was wondering if I might be added to your mailing list? If there is a subscription fee, or a need for postage, please let me know and I will send you the necessary amount.

May God bless the good work you are doing in training men to preach the gospel. Yours is a vital work, now more than ever.

In His service,
Robert Johnson
Evangelist

FSOP BEGINS 26TH YEAR

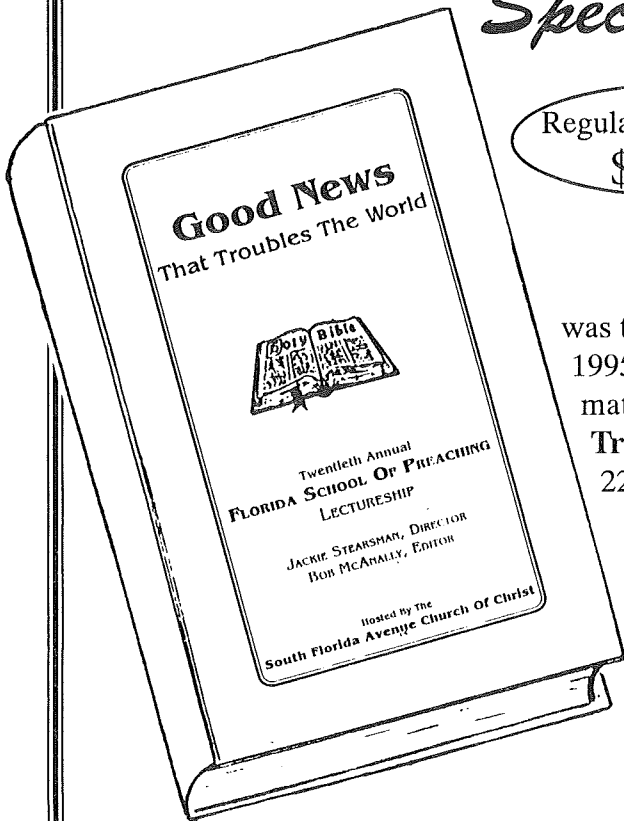
Most day classes have twenty (20) or more in each class. Greek had thirteen (13) for the first meeting and brother J.H. Blackman, Jr. had 15 in his first night class Tuesday evenings. He says more are to register later.

We have two full time students that have registered but not come yet. We are hoping to see them this next week so that they will be able to receive credit for their class work.

With this number of full time students it requires that we do all possible to secure funds to assist those who need assistance. We appreciate your continued interest in our work.

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