

The BEACON



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Should We "Keep" the Sabbath? (Harold Hancock)

For any who may not know, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" is one of the "Ten Commandments" (Exodus 20:8). Furthermore, the Sabbath day is the seventh day of the week. Those to whom the commandment was given were told, "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God" (Exodus 20:9-10). There are some people who think every person must "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." These people fail to realize that the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy was given only to the Jews as a part of the Law of Moses and that the Law of Moses has ended.

Some cite Genesis 2:2-3, "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" as proof that from the beginning of creation all men were commanded to keep the Sabbath holy. While this passage affirms God rested on the seventh day, sanctified it, and blessed it, the scriptures do not here, or anywhere else, state that God issued a commandment for all men to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Furthermore, we find no example or mentioning of men keeping the Sabbath holy before Israel came out of Egypt. Whenever God spoke of the sins of non-Jews, there was no mention of their failure to remember the Sabbath either before or after Israel came out of Egypt (Romans 1:28-32). They were not charged with that sin, because there was no law commanding non-Jews to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Neither did God charge Israel with the sin of breaking the Sabbath before they came out of Egypt. We must accept all that Genesis 2:2-3 teaches, but we must not assume or assert more than this scripture implies. There is no indication in scripture that men were commanded to keep the Sabbath holy from the beginning of creation.

The ten commandments, including the commandment to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, were a part of the covenant God made with Israel. Exodus 19:3, "And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel...,'" is the prelude to that covenant. In it God specified that the covenant was being made with Israel. Elsewhere, God declared why He commanded Israel to remember the Sabbath and why He chose the Sabbath day as a holy day for Israel-"Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath...It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was

refreshed" (Exodus 31:16-17; see also Ezekiel 20:20). How could the Sabbath be a sign between God and Israel if all men were already obligated to remember the Sabbath? Furthermore, when God sought to institute the "Sabbath rest" as a sign between Himself and Israel, He chose the seventh day of the week because that was the day He rested after creating the world (Genesis 2:2-3). Because the Sabbath was a part of God's covenant with Israel and because it was a sign between God and Israel, only Israel was obligated to "remember the Sabbath to keep it holy;" Israel would be required to keep the Sabbath holy as long as that covenant between God and Israel was in force.

The covenant God made with Israel in Sinai along with the law He gave to them on that occasion, the Law of Moses, ended with the death of Jesus. The book of Hebrews shows that the law of Moses had to end and a new covenant had to begin (Hebrews 8:7-13) before Jesus, who was born of woman and born under the law (Galatians 4:4), could become our high priest in heaven (Hebrews 7:11-14). Jesus is now our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14); Through Jesus' blood (death) a new covenant came into force allowing Jesus to be our high priest (Hebrews 9:1-28). The new covenant (New Testament) far exceeds the old covenant God made with the Jews. Furthermore, the new covenant is not for Jews only, but for Jews and Gentiles (Galatians 3:26-29). While some of the laws given under the old covenant are repeated under the new covenant- do not kill, do not steal, do not commit adultery, etc. - many are not; laws concerning animal sacrifices, the law of circumcision of the flesh, and THE LAW OF THE SABBATH, as well as some other laws, are not reiterated as a part of the new covenant. Therefore, neither Jews nor Gentiles are expected to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," today.

When Paul wrote to the Colossians, he wrote of the great blessing all Christians have in Christ- forgiveness of all our trespasses (Colossians 2:13). He further stated that Christ had "wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). The "handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us" was the law of Moses. It was so called because everyone under that law was "cursed if they continued not in all things written in the book of law to do them" (Galatians 3:10). No man could be justified by that law (Galatians 3:11). Having thus stated that Christ "wiped out" that law, "nailing it to the cross" (causing it to end by His death, h.h.), Paul goes on to instruct the Colossians: " So let no one judge (condemn or punish, h.h.) you, in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16-17). They were not to be "judged" by these things, because the law of Moses had ended. The things of the law were only "shadows" of what was to come in Christ. God never intended for the law of Moses to justify men or to remain in effect. That law was given to bring men to Christ; after Christ had come, the first covenant, which included the law of Moses, was no longer needed (Galatians 3:24-25).

We have no command, no example, and no passage in the New Testament that implies or states that Christians remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. We do have passages that give significance to the first day of the week. Jesus was raised from the

dead on the first day of the week (Mark 16:9); the Lord's church began on the first day of the week (Acts 2:1-47; Leviticus 23:14-16). We also have passages that inform and imply that Christians in different places assembled regularly on the first day of the week. Christians in Troas assembled on the first day of the week to "break bread," or take the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7). Paul knew that Christians in both Corinth and throughout Galatia assembled on the first day of the week (1Corinthians 16:1-2); he commanded that when they came together on that day that each person should "lay by in store," or give into a treasury according as he had prospered. Why would Paul think these churches assembled on the first day of the week unless it was a common practice for churches everywhere to do so? It seems evident from these passages that Christians met and worshipped on the first day of the week out of conviction- not convenience nor coincidence.

We do not "remember the Sabbath to keep it holy" today because the only ones to whom God gave the "law of the Sabbath" were those who were a part of the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. That covenant has ended and a new covenant has been established with Jews and Gentiles in Christ. Those who are a part of that new covenant consider the first day of the week to be the "Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10) - a day distinguished from all other days of the week and a day devoted especially to the Lord for many special reasons.

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Did the Early Church Observe the Lord's Supper Daily?

(by Wayne Jackson)

"It is becoming increasingly common to hear Christians argue that the first-century church, under the oversight of the apostles, observed the Lord's supper on a daily basis. Hence, it is alleged that it does not matter upon which day Christians partake of the communion elements. The time and frequency are said to be optional matters. We have been asked to comment upon this.

The "Proof-Text"

The chief "proof-text" for this new concept is Acts 2:46.

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat [food] with gladness and singleness of heart."

Some are contending that this passage affords evidence that the primitive saints broke bread, i.e., partook of the Lord's supper, on a daily basis. The exegesis underlying this view is flawed in several particulars.

The expression "daily" denotes the frequency with which the disciples were meeting in the temple. Grammatically, it does not modify "breaking bread." Thus, even if it could be established that "breaking bread," in verse 46, is an allusion to the Lord's supper, there still would be no proof that the communion was an everyday occurrence.

The term "breaking bread" in this passage does not refer to the Lord's supper; rather, it denotes a common meal. This is evidenced by the fact that they are paralleled with "eat

their food” in the same clause. The word “food” translates the Greek *trophe*, which essentially means nourishment (Danker, et al., Greek-English Lexicon, 2000, p. 1017). The term (employed some sixteen times in the Greek New Testament) is never used of the communion, for such was not designed to nourish the physical body.

A comment from Presbyterian scholar, Albert Barnes, speaks to this point:

“Here [meat -KJV] it means all kinds of sustenance; that which nourished them – trophes – and the use of this word proves that it does not refer to the Lord’s supper; for that ordinance is nowhere represented as designed for an ordinary meal, or to nourish the body” (Commentary on Acts, p. 59).

In Acts 2:42 there is a reference to the disciples “breaking the bread.” Notice the article preceding “bread” (not translated in our common versions, but present in the Greek text). The article indicates that a special “bread” is under consideration, i.e., the Lord supper (cf. Acts 20:7 “the breaking of bread” and 1 Corinthians 10:16 “the bread which we break”).

However, in Acts 2:46 there is no article in connection with “bread,” hence a distinction seems to be drawn between the “bread” of 2:42 and 46 (cf. A. Campbell, *The Christian System*, pp. 272-273). Numerous scholars do not believe that the Lord’s supper is referred to in Acts 2:46 (cf. R.C.H. Lenski, A.T. Robertson, J.W. McGarvey, W. E. Vine, etc.).

There is an interesting context later in the book of Acts that may add some insight to this matter. Near the conclusion of his third missionary journey, Paul had departed from Philippi after “the days of unleavened bread”—which came just following the Jewish Passover—(cf. Acts 20:6), and he was making his way hurriedly to Jerusalem. He hoped to arrive there in time for Pentecost—fifty days after Passover (cf. 20:16).

In spite of the fact that he had a journey of several hundred miles yet to make, which could involve difficult sailing conditions, he took the time to tarry seven days in Troas. Why? The most reasonable inference is so that he could meet with the saints of that city and observe the communion with them. Burton Coffman noted:

“Presumably, this delay from Tuesday till the following Monday was to enable the missionary group with Paul to observe the Lord’s supper with the church in Troas, an inference from the fact that no reason was given for the delay, coupled with the account of the Lord’s day meeting in Troas immediately after mentioning the delay” (Commentary on Acts, p. 384).

If this reasoning is correct, the following question is entirely appropriate: if the communion was being observed daily, or if the time of this commemoration was optional, what need would there have been for a delay of one week? This is circumstantial evidence for a weekly (not daily) Lord’s supper.

The Record of Church History

The testimony of the writings of those who lived shortly after the apostolic age bears unmistakable witness to the fact that the Lord’s supper was observed each week on Sunday, and only upon that day. In the *Didache* (a document written about A.D. 120),

the statement is made that Christians “come together each Lord’s day of the Lord, break bread, and give thanks” (7:14). Justin Martyr (c. 152) also speaks of Christians meeting on Sunday and partaking of the communion (Apology I, 67).

In his book, *Early Christians Speak*, Everett Ferguson has observed that the literature of the post-apostolic age indicates that the Lord’s supper was a constant feature of the Sunday service. He declares that there is no second-century evidence for the celebration of a daily communion (p. 96).

Thus, it must be concluded that there is no biblical authority for the novel concept that one may partake of the Lord’s supper at his own discretion.

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THE DAY OF THE LORD

(Richie Thetford)

Peter, the apostle, writes some words which each one of us should take to heart. In 2 Peter 3:9-11 he writes: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness." In these verses Peter encourages each and every one of us to repent and live our lives here on this earth in holy conduct and godliness. Why? Because there will come a time that no man knows, when the Lord will return. When the Lord does return, we better be ready or we'll burn in eternity. Let's look at some key points concerning "the day of the Lord."

How Do We Know "the day" Will Come?

Every Bible student knows that "the day of the Lord" will come simply because God said so. In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 the apostle Paul wrote: "But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them." Peter said that the day of the Lord would come in 2 Peter 3:10 and Jesus Himself told us: "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Matthew 24:43-44). We learn from these scriptures that the day of the Lord will come but no man knows when it will come.

What Will Happen When "the day" Comes?

It should be plain by Peter's explanation of the event that this means that the end of the world is taking place. When the earth is melted with fervent heat all will be destroyed. But what will happen to those that are righteous in the sight of God? The inspired writer

Paul said: "deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Corinthians 5:5). Those that are in sin should be made aware of their sin, that it is lawlessness to God (1 John 3:4). Being aware of sin (Romans 3:23), man must make themselves right before God so when the day of the Lord happens we can be saved. Truly there will be some that will rejoice when the Lord returns. In Paul's letter to the Philippians he said: "holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain" (Philippians 2:16). If we will strive to be obedient to the Word of the Lord while we live, then we can rejoice when Christ returns because we know that we have obeyed His Will (Matthew 7:21).

How Should We Be Found When "the day" Comes?

Comes? If we are living as we should be living in holy conduct and godliness then we should be found looking forward to Christ's second coming. "looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:12-13). If we are walking in the light we have nothing to fear. However if we should be walking in darkness, which has NO fellowship with the light, then we better be concerned. If we are in darkness the day of the Lord will come upon us as a thief. Paul said: "But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:4). True disciples, lovers of Christ, will be ready for Jesus! Each Christian should possess a genuine desire to be found in favor with God when His Son returns. When we are walking in the light, favorably toward God then we will glory when the day of the Lord comes upon us.

How Can We Be Found Obedient When "the day" Comes?

For us to be ready to meet the Lord on His return we must prepare right now! We must get rid of sin in our life and be determined to follow the ways of the Lord. In Romans 12:1-2 it says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." We must understand that heaven is the MOST important goal to obtain in our life. Understanding this, then how should we act? What must we do? We must transform ourselves, having our mind set on things above, not on things of the earth (Colossians 3:2). We must constantly live in such a way that we approve of only those things that are good and acceptable to God. Paul said that we "Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). The Christian must live their life in such a way as to show others that they are determined to live for Christ and not for man. The alien sinner, those not IN CHRIST, must get in Christ to be saved. The way to get IN Christ is through baptism (Galatians 3:27). If you are not IN Christ why not do so today? "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins" so you can be saved when "the day of the Lord" comes!

"Aid" or "Addition" -- What is the Difference? (by Wayne Jackson)

A kindly gentleman replies: "Because musical instruments are not authorized by the New Testament, hence, they are additions to the divine pattern which prescribes Christian worship."

But the intrigued visitor probes further: "Why then do you use song books? Aren't these also additions?" "No, the brother replies, "our song books are merely aids; there's a difference between an addition and an aid."

Conversations like the previous take place on numerous occasions. There is much confusion in discerning the difference between an "addition" and an "aid." What is the difference? This is a great question, and we focus briefly on it in this week's Penpoint.

How is an "addition" distinguished from an "aid"? An addition occurs when a particular action has been altered, or the fundamental composition or substance of a thing has been changed. An aid alters nothing; it merely facilitates the implementation of the action or substance, without changing anything.

Perhaps several examples will help us focus on this.

Aids vs. Additions

A cane may aid one in taking a walk, but with or without this device, one is just walking. But if one walks for a while, and then rides a bicycle, he is no longer just walking; something has been added to his mode of travel. Now, he's both walking and riding.

A mother sends her son to the market to buy a loaf of bread. He brings the bread home in a bag. The bag is merely an aid. Should he purchase a candy bar as well, he has disregarded the instruction of his mother by an addition.

A man takes his automobile to the service center for an oil change. The attendant may use a wrench and funnel to aid in his replacement of the oil. There is no problem with that. But we all understand that if he changes the spark plugs as well, he has augmented the original instructions.

Jesus taught that the communion supper is to consist of bread and fruit of the vine. A table, plates, and cups facilitate (aid) the implementation of those commands. But to garnish the bread with peanut butter, and "punch up" the fruit of the vine with ginger ale, is to be guilty of addition.

Christians are obligated to preach the gospel everywhere to the extent of their ability. In order to accomplish this, it is acceptable to use aids (e.g., tracts, television, the world wide web, or a building). But if one combines something with that gospel (as the Judaizers did in the first century when they taught that circumcision, an element of the Mosaic law, is also necessary to receive salvation – Acts 15:1), that is an offense.

When the church commences the praise portion of its service, the saints may "sing," for such is enjoined by God (Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16). Christians may employ song books,

a projection screen, or a tuning fork (to determine the appropriate “pitch”). Still, though, in the final analysis, they would be singing only.

On the other hand, if the church sings to the accompaniment of an organ, piano, etc., those thus participating have added something to what the Lord authorized. There now are two types of music – vocal and instrumental. The nature of the original command has been supplemented.

Additions are wrong.

And so, the serious Bible student must conclude that the use of a mere aid only accommodates obedience to God’s will. Such expedencies may fluctuate from time-to-time and from place-to-place.

On the other hand, those who respect the authority of the sacred Scriptures will not tamper with the divine prescriptions for worship by the clutterment of additions. They will not add to sacred instruction, for to do so is to invite the wrath of God ultimately.

One needs to remember what happened to those who put God’s Ark of the Covenant on a “new” cart (2 Sam. 6:3), instead of transporting the sacred chest as the law had required (Ex. 25:12-14). David later admitted that this addition was “not according to the [divine] ordinance” (1 Chron. 15:16). It pays to know the difference between an “aid” and an “addition.”

To many, such matters perhaps seem rather trivial. This is because they have never fathomed the concept of the necessity of absolute obedience to the sovereign Creator.

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I am not a Pastor, I am a Preacher!

(William J. Imrisek)

Words are merely symbols that convey meaning. They may signify objects, actions, abstract or concrete ideas and concepts, emotions and feelings, etc. Good communication depends upon speaking so as to be understood. As the apostle Paul recognized, "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?" (1 Cor. 14:8-9).

Man's ability to communicate effectively depends upon his ability to utilize words properly. He must use words that are familiar to his hearer. He must also attach to these words the same meaning that his hearer understands them to possess. When either one of these principles is violated a breakdown in communication occurs, with the end result of a misunderstanding or a complete failure to understand.

I recall an instance several years ago in which I and the one with whom I was speaking were guilty of violating this latter principle. We were talking about the manner and habits of "gophers." However, as the conversation progressed it became evident that we were not speaking about the same creature. I soon learned that my friend was referring to a tortoise, common in the southern coastal states, which the local people called a "gopher."

But to a homegrown Northerner such as myself the only type of gopher of which I was knowledgeable was a rodent, similar in appearance to a squirrel, which burrows tunnels through the soil of the Midwestern prairies in search of roots and plants for its next meal. In our conversation we were using the identical word symbol, but we were each attaching to it a different meaning. This resulted in a temporary breakdown in communication.

This same problem can occur when we are studying or expounding the scriptures. We may use biblical terms and think that we are expressing biblical ideas, but unless we are attaching to these terms the same ideas that God attaches to them, we are misunderstanding Him. Thus it is possible for a person to use such terms as "faith," "works," "born again," "saved by grace," "church," "bishop," "priest," "confession," "baptism," "repentance," and "confirm," all biblical terms, but attach a different meaning to them than that given to them by their use in the Bible. The result is a failure to understand God as He has spoken.

As a preacher I often encounter this problem when trying to explain to people the type of work that I do. Almost invariably they will respond, "Oh, then you are a pastor." I must then stop and explain to them that I am not a pastor, but rather a preacher or evangelist. But this usually only confuses them. They have learned to associate the terms "pastor" and "preacher" with the same function. They fail to realize that in the Bible a preacher is not the same as a pastor. Their error lies in giving a biblical term an unbiblical meaning. In this case, it usually results in a perversion of both the work of a pastor (in its biblical sense) and the work of a preacher (in its biblical sense).

The Work of a Pastor

The word "pastor" is found only one time in the New Testament of our English Bibles, this being in Eph. 4:11. And although the function of a pastor is not here specifically identified, it is seen to be distinguished from that of the evangelist (or preacher). "He (God) gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teacher." Thus, the Bible identifies these two function separately.

Although the word "pastor" is found only this one time in our English translations, the Greek word from which the term "pastor" is translated (poimen) is found fifteen more times in the Greek, and is elsewhere translated in the New Testament as "shepherd." It describes one who feeds and tends a flock of sheep. It is used in its literal sense in such passages as Matt. 9:36 and Luke 2, 8, 15, 18, 20. Metaphorically, Jesus is referred to as a shepherd (John 10:11, 14; Heb. 13:20). Likewise, it is used as a descriptive term to identify the servants of God who have been given the responsibility to shepherd, feed, and tend the flock of God (Eph. 4:11), the church. We can therefore learn more about who a pastor is by examining the scriptures and recognizing to whom this identical responsibility of shepherding, feeding, and tending God's flock has been given.

The scriptures inform us that this responsibility has been placed in the hands of men who are called "elders" and "overseers" or "bishops." For example, in Acts 20:17-28 it is said of Paul that "from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them . . . Take heed therefore unto

yourselves, and to all the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed (poimaino) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Here we see that elders (also called overseers) were given the responsibility of feeding or pastoring the church of God. The term "elder," from the Greek, presbuteros, meaning "aged person" is used synonymously with the term "overseer." Overseer comes from the Greek, episkopos, and is also translated in the Bible as "bishop" (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7).

Peter likewise tells us that the work of elders was that of overseeing and feeding the church of God. He says, "The elders (presbuterois) which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed (poimaino) the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight (episkopeo) thereof, not by constraint, but willingly" (1 Pet. 5:1-2). We can conclude then that the terms "elder," "bishop" (overseer), and "pastor" all refer to the same person: "elder" referring to his physical age as well as to his spiritual maturity; "bishop" describing his function of overseeing the church; and "pastor" designating his responsibility to feed and tend the flock of God so that their spiritual appetites will be completely satisfied.

Although the word "elder" signifies seniority in years, maturity, and experience, a man does not become a pastor or bishop by reason of years alone, but rather by right of qualification (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and appointment (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). It is God's will that there be elders in every local church where there are men qualified (Acts 14:23). Thus we read about elders in the churches of Ephesus (Acts 20:17), Philippi (Phil. 1:1), and also Jerusalem (Acts 15:4). It will be noted that in each church there was a plurality (always more than one) of elders. No single elder was exalted over another, but they all shared equally in the responsibility given to them. In addition, their oversight was limited to the "flock of God which is among. you" (1 Pet. 5:2).

As Christians we have responsibilities toward these men. They are watchmen for our souls. Therefore, we are commanded to "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" (Heb. 13:17).

These men rule not as lords or dictators over God's church, but as servants, leading us by their instruction (Heb. 13:7) and their example (1 Pet. 5:3), correcting us as faithful watchmen, and feeding us with the wisdom and instruction which is from God (Acts 20:28). We must respect these godly men and give them the honor which is due to them (1 Tim. 5:17). These are the men that the Bible refers to as pastors, bishops, and elders.

The Work of a Preacher

But I am not a pastor. I am a preacher. And as a preacher I do not have the oversight or rule over the church of God. Rather, as a member of the local church I must also submit to the elders as those that have the rule over me, and I must not seek to usurp their authority. I must give them the honor that is due to them, and I must maintain the proper distinction between the function of a pastor or elder and the function which I must fulfill as a preacher.

Inherent in the work of the evangelist or preacher is the proclaiming of the good news of Jesus Christ. He must proclaim the word of faith whereby souls might be saved (Rom. 10:13-17). He must bring this message to the lost so that they might learn of it, believe, and be baptized (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Eph. 3:8-10).

He also has a reciprocal responsibility to those who have had their sins forgiven to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I (Jesus) have commanded" (Matt. 28:20). He must "put the brethren in remembrance of these things" in order to be "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:6). He must be a defender of the gospel (Phil. 1:17), ready to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). His life must be a reflection of the gospel which he preaches, and he must be an example to the believer as well as to the unbeliever (1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7-8). He labors for the Lord among the lost and among the saved, and stands accountable to his Master (1 Cor. 4:1-5).

The distinction between a pastor (or elder) and a preacher (or evangelist) is seen not only in the function which each must perform but also in the qualifications which each must possess. Inherent in the definition of the term "elder" is that he be an older man. An evangelist, however, may be a younger man, such as Timothy (2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Tim. 4:12). Likewise, among the qualifications for an elder is that he be the husband of one wife and have children who are faithful to the Lord (1 Tim. 3:2, 4, 5; Titus 1:6). But a man who is a preacher need not be married or have a family. The apostle Paul referred to himself as a preacher (1 Tim. 2:7). Nevertheless, he was unmarried (1 Cor. 7:8). Thus, although he was a preacher, he was not qualified to be a pastor.

Conclusion

Many have erred in believing that a preacher is inherently a pastor. They are guilty of an unbiblical use of the word "pastor" and, more often than not, have placed upon the preacher a function and responsibility not given to him by God. The preacher is not the shepherd or pastor of the local church. This responsibility rightly belongs to those men who are qualified and appointed, men whom the Bible calls elders and bishops.

In order to understand God we must understand Him as He has spoken. We do not have the right to redefine His words. Such would be dishonest.

Let us be careful lest we have misunderstood God by mishandling His word (2 Tim. 2:15). Words are important. They are the means by which God has chosen to communicate His will to man. To fail to understand God as He has spoken is to fail to understand His will.

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THE END OF THE WORLD

The Scriptures teach that this present world will end: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Pet. 3:10.) Be Ready!

God's Plan of Salvation for all Mankind

Hear the Gospel Rom. 10:17

Believe Rom. 10:10; Gal. 3:26; Heb. 11:6

Repent of Sins Acts 2:38; 17:30

Confess Jesus as the Son of God Acts 8:27-39; Rom. 10:10

Be Baptized for Remission of Sins Mark 16:16; Acts 2:48; Rom. 6:4-6; Gal. 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:21

Live Faithfully *If you fulfill these commandments, you will be saved, and the Lord will add you to His Church (Acts 2:47). You'll be a Christian and are expected to serve God faithfully until death (Rev. 2:10)*

Your soul is important to us . If you would like to set up a study please contact us..

The Newton church of Christ

P.O. Box 893

Newton, NC 28658

www.wordandsword.com

We meet at 656 St. James Ch. Rd.
in Newton, NC

Join Us

Sunday

Bible Study - 9:30 AM

Worship – 11:00 AM

Wednesday

Bible Study – 7:00 PM

Website:

www.WORDANDSWORD.com

contact@wordandsword.com

Phone:

(828) 465-3009 leave message