

THE GIFT OF P A S T O R - T E A C H E R - A SPEAKING GIFT

Text: Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 5:1,2

I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN THIS GIFT

- A. This gift involved the God-given ability to lead, to instruct, and to minister to the various needs that a particular local church might have.
- B. This gift involved the oversight of what was done in a given local church and this position is described in the Scriptures in a threefold way.
 - 1. First of all the pastor is referred to as an elder (Presbuteros) and this indicated his appointment and ordination to that position (Titus 1:5). This had nothing whatsoever to do with age as we use this word today. It does however speak of spiritual maturity which is necessary for this appointment.
 - 2. Secondly the pastor is referred to as a bishop (episkopos) which describes the function of his office or appointment (I Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:7). This is the same word for overseer and it means literally to watch or to look over.
 - 3. Then thirdly the word pastor (poimen) is used which means shepherd (Eph. 4:11). This word refers to the service of tending to those over whom God has given oversight. A comparison of Acts 20:17; with Acts 20:28 shows who these individuals were and what they were called to do.
- C. This gift involved the care of those in a local church and the word pastor or shepherd involved three particular areas

of ministry.

1. We notice first of all that the pastor or shepherd is to lead and guide the flock which God has given him. This is supposed to be done by the Word and by his example (I Pet. 5:2-3). One without the other is of little value.
2. Secondly the pastor or shepherd is to feed the flock which God has given him (I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28). This involves a ministry of preaching and teaching the Word of God and giving them the proper spiritual nourishment that they need. The word pastors and teachers in Eph. 4:11 is actually one word referring to the pastor and describes how the shepherd leads and feeds by teaching them the right way to go and by giving them sound or healthy doctrine.
3. A third area of ministry for the pastor involved protecting and caring for his flock (Acts 20:31; Phil.2:19, 20). To do this the pastor had to warn of false prophets and refute false doctrine (Titus 1:10, 11; II Tim. 2:17,18; I Tim. 1:19,20).

II. HOW THIS GIFT WAS EXERCISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. This gift was exercised by those who were God-called and ordained to this position. They were made overseers by the Holy Spirit Himself (Acts 20:28; Heb. 5:4)
 1. One example of a pastor and his ministry can be seen in the apostle Paul as he ministered to the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:18-21; 26,27,31,35).
 2. Just how this gift was exercised in the N.T. can also be seen in the pastoral epistles of Timothy and Titus. Both Timothy and Titus were pastors and all of the things outlined for them by the apostle Paul in these books make up what the exercise of their gift involved.

III. HOW THIS GIFT OPERATES AND APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALS IN OUR DAY

- A. The gift of pastoring or shepherding has continued to our present day and God has a particular person to shepherd every flock. He is still supposed to lead, guide, and care for his flock by taking the oversight of them, setting a proper example for them, feeding them with the Word of God.

- B. No doubt the reason for a multitude of problems in local churches today stem from the matter of pastoral authority. Many churches want a preacher but they do not want a pastor to lead them. Some want to run ahead of the pastor, some want to go around him, still others refuse to be led by him. All these can be summed up in two words - pride and rebellion against that which God has ordained. It's the same sinful problem that Lucifer had, it's the same that Diotrephes had, it's the same that some had in the church at Ephesus and the church at Pergamos and it will be the same problem of those in the Millennial reign of Christ.

IV. HOW THIS GIFT IS OFTENTIMES MISAPPLIED AND MISUSED

- A. Sometimes individuals seek the pastorate as a professional career without having been called of the Lord to preach and shepherd a flock. This is evidenced today with the number of women being ordained in the pastorate. Note I Tim.. 2:11,12; 3:2; Gal. 1:15.

- B. Sometimes individuals profess to be called of the Lord to serve as a pastor but they fail to prepare themselves with the training which is necessary for this calling. Note Gal. 1:15-18; Matt. 15:14; II Tim. 2:15.

- C. Oftentimes individuals in this position become overbearing and dictatorial and attempt to drive others rather than to lead them as undershepherds of Christ who must give an account. Note I Pet. 5:3.

- D. Then there are some who use the pastorate for their own selfish means and are motivated by financial gain or an aspiration to build a great name or great empire for themselves. Note I Pet. 5:2.