

THE VISION OF A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

“Expectations Which Bring Unity”

- I. RECOGNITION OF SWINGING GATE. (People coming and going).
- A. Need to know what church stands for; what is its vision?
 - B. Need for solid commitment; church membership; so pastor knows who to be responsible for.
 - C. Going to give you that which represents sound doctrine.
- II. GOD'S WILL--THAT THEY MAY BE ONE...AS WE ARE ONE. (John 17:20-21).
- A. ***Singleness of vision and purpose.***
 1. Everyone pulling in the same direction.
 2. No doubleness of mind.
 - B. ***How beautiful to dwell in unity.*** "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. 133:1).
 - C. ***One spirit, one mind, one mouth glorifies the Lord.***
 1. Rom. 15:6 - "That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 2. Phil. 1:27 - "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - D. ***Some reasons for disunity.***
 1. Lack of understanding of true basis for unity--We are one because of our relationship with Jesus.
 2. Too much emphasis on differences--should emphasize sameness.
 3. Too much emphasis on our own agenda rather than promoting the kingdom of God--Personal ambition.
 4. Fear and distrust.
 - a. Distrustful of one another because of lack of communication.
 - b. Fear and distrust because of unresolved problems and unhealed personal hurts from the past.
 5. Satan.
- /// THE PURPOSES OF GOD FULFILLED THROUGH LOCAL CHURCH.
- A. ***Must recognize each of us has a calling to a particular church.***
 - B. ***Must abide in that calling.***
 1. Will never find peace and contentment outside the will of God.
 2. Don't try to make the will of God fit our desires; rather our desires to fit His will.
 3. Don't run at first sign of pressure.
 - C. ***Possible legitimate reasons to leave a church (only after exhausting every avenue).***
 1. There is constant warring, strife, and confusion.

- a. Not to say there won't be a disturbance every now and then; will be so as long as there are humans.
- b. Everybody has problems; problems are simply opportunities to find solutions.
- 2. You are being misled--you are being led away from the Word of God. Everything should be centered around the Word of God.
- 3. You are being cheated or shortchanged.
 - a. You are not being properly nourished and fed.
 - (1) Pastor's responsibility to lead into green pastures.
 - (2) Can't force anyone to eat.
 - b. You are kept in darkness through ignorance of the provisions of the Lord. For example:
 - (1) Need healing and church doesn't believe in healing.
 - (2) Need a miracle but church denies miracles.

IV. WE EACH HAVE A SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE PURPOSE OF GOD.

- A. *What does God expect of us?*
- B. *What can we expect of the church?*
- C. *What can we expect of the pastor and leadership?*
- D. *What can the pastor or leadership expect of the sheep?*

V. GOD'S EXPECTATION.

- A. *That we love Him with all our heart.*
- B. *That we love one another.*

VI. WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT OF THE CHURCH?

- A. *The church's responsibility.*
 - 1. To be a place of refuge or a have; safe from storms; peace and harmony..
 - 2. To be a place of koinonia.
 - a. Should have the best friends and relationships inside the church.
 - b. The church should be center of social activity.
 - 3. To be a place of worship.
 - a. One of major activities of the church.
 - b. If nothing else happens, we can say that we have worshiped God..
 - 4. To be a place of ministry (where needs are met).
 - 5. To be a lighthouse--shows way through times of darkness through example by the uncompromising Word of God.
 - 6. To be an outreach to the community, nation, and world.
- B. *Your responsibility to the church.*
 - 1. To be faithful to it.
 - 2. To support it through prayers, finances, and regular participation.
 - 3. To defend it against false attacks and accusations.

VII. WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT OF THE PASTOR?

A. *Defining bishops, elders, pastors.*

1. Three terms closely related in the Word of God.
2. Represent the office, the man, and the work.

B. *Bishop (the office).*

1. Episkopos.
 - a. Overseer, superintendent, guardian, or bishop
 - b. Overseer. (Acts 20:28 KJV) Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers...
2. Episkopeo.
 - a. Verb form of previous word and means exercising the oversight, to oversee, to care for, to look at, to take care of.
 - b. (1 Pet 5:2 KJV) 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

C. *Elder (the man).*

1. Presbuteros.
 - a. Elder, older person, senior.
 - b. In NT, leaders raised up and qualified by the Holy Spirit and appointed to have spiritual care of, and to exercise oversight over the churches.
2. Presbuterion - Assembly of aged men, the order of elders.

D. *Pastor (the work).*

1. Used once in King James. (Eph 4:11 KJV) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.
2. From Greek word poimen which occurs 18 times in NT (translated shepherd)
3. Literally means "one who feeds, tends a flock, or keeps sheep"
4. Poimaino - feed; to act as a shepherd
 - a. (Acts 20:28 KJV) 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.
 - b. (1 Pet 5:2 KJV) 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;

VIII. SUMMARY: TWO-FOLD WORK OF PASTOR.

A. *Governing (ruling; oversight).*

1. I Tim. 5:17 - let elders that rule well be counted double honor

2. Heb. 13:17, 24 - obey them that have the rule over you...salute them that have the rule over you.

B. *Shepherding.*

1. Feed the flock. (Acts 20:28 KJV) 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.
2. Watch for wolves. (Acts 20:29 KJV) For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. (Acts 20:30 KJV) Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.
 - a. Protect from outside forces and influences.
 - b. Protect from inside forces.
 - (1) Wrong motives.
 - (2) False teachings including distorted or extreme demonstrations.
3. Help the weak. (Acts 20:35 KJV) I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
 - a. (Isa 35:3 KJV) Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.
 - b. (Heb 12:12 KJV) Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;
4. Minister to sick. (James 5:14 KJV) Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: (James 5:15 KJV) And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.
5. Go before the sheep with good example. (1 Pet 5:3 KJV) Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

IX. QUALIFICATIONS OF PASTORS (ELDERS). 1 Tim 3:1-7.

A. *Moral.*

1. Blameless.
 - a. Shun appearance of evil.
 - b. Not being put in compromising situations.
2. Temperate.
 - a. Exercising self-control in all things.
 - b. Not given to extremes.
3. Sober.
 - a. Alert; proper exercise of senses; good judgment.
 - b. A serious side; not given to frivolity.
4. Good behavior. Behaving self in proper manner in all situations.

5. Not given to wine (closely associated with sobriety).
 6. Not a striker (no physical battles).
 7. Not greedy of money.
 - a. Money should not be motivation for ministry.
 - b. God's people should help take the pressure off in this area.
 8. Not a brawler (not be contentious, quarrelsome, argumentative).
 9. Not covetous.
 10. Not self-willed (self-pleasing, dominated by self-interest, and inconsiderate of others).
 11. Lover of good (not taking pleasure in evil or other's misfortune).
- B. ***Domestic.***
1. Husband of one wife.
 2. Hospitable.
 3. Rule well own house (taking proper domestic leadership).
- C. ***Spiritual.***
1. Able to teach.
 - a. Instruction in the Word of life.
 - b. Faithfully ministering in God's Word.
 - c. Teaching through example.
 2. Not novice or young convert (spiritually mature).
 3. Good report from without (give no reasonable occasion for otherwise).
 4. Just (loves justice; desires to see justice served).
 5. Holy.
 - a. God-like in thoughts, conversation, and behavior.
 - b. Should never be an embarrassment to you because of behavior.
 6. Hold fast the faithful word--not blown by every wind of doctrine.
 - a. Embraces sound doctrine; try the spirits.
 - b. Not following foolish fads which will pass away.
 7. Patient (patiently waiting for the harvest).

X. THE SHEEP'S RESPONSIBILITY.

- A. ***Realize pastor is God's leader and honor him as such.***
1. Know those who are over you. (1 Th 5:12 KJV) And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;
 2. Esteem them highly. (1 Th 5:13 KJV) And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.
 3. Submit to them. (Heb 13:17 KJV) 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.
- B. ***Build his spiritual power by praying for him.***
1. (1 Th 5:25 KJV) Brethren, pray for us.
 2. (Heb 13:7 KJV) 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.

- C. ***Build his reputation by speaking highly of him.***
- D. ***Build his morale by encouraging him.***
- E. ***Build his pulpit power by hearing him.***
- F. ***Build his leadership by cooperating with him.***
- G. ***Follow the Christ he preaches.***