

Friday, August 21, 2020 - Guard the Flock

The last five months have been extremely difficult for my wife and myself. After nine years, we made the difficult decision that we must leave the congregation we have called family because we can't abide false teaching or false teachers going unopposed by the eldership.

The saddest part is there was no reason for this to have happened. If the elders of the flock had simply conducted themselves in the manner God commands, this situation would have been resolved to the glory of God.

Acts 20:28 - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

The elders were first to take heed to themselves. They must practice what they teach or preach. They must look after the flock, the church. The Holy Spirit did not make these men bishops (elders) miraculously. The Holy Spirit revealed the qualifications for elders which are recorded in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. Elders must be appointed in accordance with these qualifications for each man. To be thus appointed is to be made elders by the Holy Spirit. Bishop and overseer are from the same Greek word. A bishop is an overseer. It means to superintend, one that oversees with a view of helping and correcting.

One of the most important features in this address by Paul was the charge to the elders concerning their oversight responsibilities, and his express warning of coming apostasy. Once more we have material before us so urgently needing to be preached today, and so urgently needing application in the elders' faithfully providing oversight and feeding for the congregations of God.

The points to be made in reviewing these remarks are these:

- (1) Elders are made such through the agency of the Holy Spirit's instruction found in the Word of God, the saints of God being involved through study of the qualifications set forth by the Lord.
- (2) Elders are made overseers of the flock, and they watch for souls (Heb. 13:17). Part of their responsibility is the feeding of the flock.
- (3) Elders are charged with taking heed -- rendering watchfulness and vigilance -- not only within the flock they oversee, but also in diligent examination of themselves. Elders are NOT qualified for life! They are ONLY qualified as they meet the GOD GIVEN qualifications.
- (4) Elders here are warned of coming apostasy, and Paul lets them know that men dealing in crookedness will arise right within the eldership. As the New Testament closed, history was bearing this out. That truth continues to be manifest even today.

It doesn't matter how nice the one speaking falsely is, how 'dynamic' a speaker people think he is, how many likes he gets on his social media posts or how many (or few) subjects he speaks falsely on!

It is often family situations which cause men to speak falsely. Sometimes it is ego or trying to be cute or shocking as if he came up with something new no one has ever thought of before.

The scriptures state to treat them all the same:

- Rebuke (Titus 1:13)
- Reject after the second admonition (Titus 3:10)
- Stop their mouths (Titus 1:11)

The Lord was mocked, beaten and scourged that His church might exist! The Lord was hung on a cross so that His church might exist! The Lord BLED so that His church might exist! The Lord DIED so that His church might exist!

Far be it that any of us become so blind, deaf or complacent to not follow His commands.

Let all of us determine in our mind to do what God calls us to do and not just talk about it.

In Christ, Chuck