***The Pastor-Teacher - PH11-01  
  
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:1***

We are continuing with our study on the church visible that we read about in Philippians 1:1. We have noted that the word "church" is used in a visible local sense. It can refer to a single congregation. It refers to all of the churches in a single area like a town like Ephesus or an area like Galatia. It refers to all the believers on earth who are viewed as one body constituting the church on earth. As we look in the New Testament epistles, we find the books of the Bible being written to many churches in various areas. The very content of the New Testament officials deal with a diversity of problems. As a matter of fact, with so many problems, it would seem unlikely that all these problems existed in just one local congregation. A congregation can be bad, but it doesn't seem that it could be as bad generally as we find in the New Testament epistles. So, apparently it's a group of churches, each of them with various problems, and one letter is written that they passed around to that territory.

Also there are general geographic descriptions of the recipients of the letters. For example, in Philippians 4:15, we read, "Now you Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia (which is the province of territory), no church shared with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only." This indicates again the concept of writing to churches in a group.

The advice is of a general nature so that it would apply to any number of churches. We find little recorded in a way of direct personalized advice to an individual such as you might expect if they were writing to a certain church. There is some of that, but even that is in somewhat general terms. It is not very prevalent.

We also pointed out that the New Testament was written over a period of time, so we have progressive revelation. As far as the authority and leadership in the local church, this progressive revelation moves from the stress on the universal church with apostolic leaders. When you get down to the end of the line, you come up with the local church with elder leadership in the later books. Since the gift of apostle was temporary, the provision was made for an elder bishop with the pastor-teacher gift to move on the scene and thereby to replace the spiritual authority of the apostles after they all died off.

**Singular Leadership**

Since the main objective of the Christian age is to teach doctrine, the local church had to be provided with the means for doing this. That's what we have in the pastor-teacher gift in the elder bishop leader. The New Testament apostle was supreme in his authority over the group of churches that he had. He left behind an organization with an elder bishop who had the gift of pastor-teacher in charge of the local churches. This indicated that the local churches are fully independent today. That is, a congregation is the group that is in charge. The congregation appoints the elder bishop who is in charge, and it may also dismiss him.

We pointed out several evidences for this singular leadership. In other words, what we're saying is that it is not God's order today for churches to be ruled by a church board. That is a disorder. Any church which is ruled by a group of men (a committee of men, or a board of men) is out of the will of God. God's plan is that the authority and leadership of a local church resides in one quarterback who is the elder bishop pastor, and the boards are under him. They are not over him. The evidence for this was the fact that the size of ancient cities required many congregations. So, when a letter was written to the city, it wasn't written to just one church. It was written to many. So when it talks about plurality of elders, it is talking about elders in all these different churches--one to a church. The same thing applies when we recognize that they met in homes. They had to have many homes for hundreds of Christians to gather in a metropolitan center like Corinth. And when it speaks of elders in a place like Philippi, for example, in our book, it's because there were many homes in which congregations met--each of them with a pastor.

The apostles wrote to many congregations but they view them as being part of the universal body of Christ in a visible form. When we read about the qualifications that we're going to look at for an elder, we notice that they are qualifications for a singular person. "The elder shall be." However, when we look at deacons, it says in the plural, "the deacons" shall be this, because there are to be many deacons assisting the one elder bishop. The term "apostle" is in Scripture phased out in favor of the word "elder" during the first century as the switch is made. The single church authority came in after the Scriptures were completed. Before that, they needed the apostles with authority over many churches. The Jewish synagogues had elders, but a single elder was in charge even there. An organization inherently develops one person who is a leader. Even if a board rules, one of those men becomes, in the eyes of the congregation, the leader.

The pastor's authority is indicated by this background. It is also indicated by the titles. We looked at the title "elder" which stresses the pastor's rank in the local church. "Elder" means he is the final authority. "Bishop" stresses the pastor's work with his authority as executive head of that church. His job is described in the pastor-teacher gift. "Pastor" reflects and stresses his office of caring for the sheep. "Teacher" stresses the communication aspect of the pastor's job.

The pastor is appointed to one local church by God the Holy Spirit, and the congregation recognizes that the Lord has brought this man to be in charge in this congregation until such time as they divest him of the authority with which they have invested him.

**James 5:14**

I want to take up now the one passage that seems to create a difficulty for all that I've described to you thus far in the case that we have built that in the local church, there is one elder bishop who leads. Many other people assist him in any number of categories. That is James 5:14. It seems, as you read it, to be a clear declaration that in one local church there are many elders. This passage of Scripture is the one that causes disaster to churches who otherwise recognize everything else that is indicated for singular leadership. James 5:14 says, "Is any sick among you? Let him call the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

What this passage definitely does say is that a sick man has at his option to call the elders to come and pray for him. The man is to call "the elders" in the Greek; that is, it has the definite article. So it has reference to a specific group of church leaders. It does not mean just older men. That's one way out that some people take: "Well, this means that you call the older men of the congregation and ask them to pray over you. The Bible does use the word "elder" sometimes as "older men." You have this in 1 Timothy 5:16. However, there it does not use the word "the." The article is missing which means it's a general category of older men. In 1 Timothy 5:16, older people carry a certain responsibility and are to carry a place of respect in the eyes of younger people.

However, here in James 5:14, the definite article is used. This is a specific group of leaders doing a specific job of praying for this man. It is strange for James to use the term "elders" (plural) if what he was trying to say was, "Call your pastor-teacher to come and pray for you." He obviously would have said, "If anybody is sick in the church, call your pastor to come and pray for you." Or if he meant just that, he could have said, "If any are sick, let them call for the elders." At least that (again) would have indicated to let them call for their elders, wherever their elders may be in their own church. However, he doesn't do this. As he does state the matter here, what he is saying is that a man is to call for a plurality of elders from his church to come and pray for him. That's what it says, and we're not trying to deny that that's what it says. A person is to call for a plurality of elders from his church to come and pray for him.

The harmonizing of this passage with everything else that we've seen as indicated by the New Testament, may be done in two ways. It may mean, for one thing, that the sick man is to call for pastors from various churches within the town in which he lives. It may be that the situation in New Testament times was such that they were acquainted that much with one another. If they were meeting in homes, they were perhaps not all that scattered that they did not have some interrelationship. It may mean here that it is saying, "All of the other pastors of all the other churches may be called upon to come and visit you, and as a group to pray for you."

However the problem with this that would bother us is that it seems to violate the principle that a pastor's authority extends only to his own church. His authority does not extend to someone else. When people from other congregations come to another pastor to consult with him and talk to him, there's a certain problem involved in that they are talking to some other pastor rather than their own pastor. Frequently, they are talking about problems in their church or things they don't like about their pastor. It is unethical for another pastor to be discussing problems in another church or to be discussing another pastor in the eyes of this person who's got some difficulties. A pastor's authority is only over his own congregation. The congregation's responsibility is to that pastor alone, and the direction of shepherding is from that pastor alone--not from some other pastor.

If the man calls the other pastors, it's conceivable that he could ask other pastors in the city to come and pray with him. If he does, he's not calling upon them as pastors. He is simply calling upon them as individual believers. So the term "elder" would not apply to them. You're just saying, "I want you as a Christian; you as a Christian; and, you as a Christian to come and pray with me. This is just as an individual Christian, like you may call any number of individual Christians from the congregation. He would not be approaching them in their official office as pastors.

So, this solution, though possible, is not likely. It seems that there is a better solution, and that is to remember that, if you recall, we listed for you the progress of the New Testament books from the early Pauline epistles right down to the end of John writing the book of the Revelation, and what we saw reflected as the New Testament books came into being. Well it so happens that book number one, written about 45 A.D., is this book of James. James stands up here at the top of the list. In other words, it's the earliest book. Furthermore, because it is the earliest book, it was written at a time when the New Testament church was largely Jewish. So this book was written in a transitional stage of the development of the New Testament church.

The statement then that we have here in the book of James can be viewed as transitional--something that they did in the early Jewish stage of the church that they did not do later. We have this in the book of Acts, for example, in the matter of the baptism of the Holy Spirit today. How does a person receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? He receives it by trusting Christ as Savior, and immediately God the Holy Spirit baptizes him into Christ, and joins him into eternal union with the Son of God. But in the early New Testament church, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was sometimes brought about by the laying on of hands of apostles or their delegates. So we have a transitional stage in the book of Acts which is not the way things are going to be normally done during the church age. So, James was written as the earliest epistle in 45 A.D., early in the development of the local church organization, when there was hardly anything set up within the local church organization. The Christians still hardly knew up from down on how to conduct their business. They were still looking to the Lord to show them how to evolve and how they should handle the situation that was before them.

This book was written when the church was in that stage, in that condition, and when it was primarily made up of Jews. Because they were Jews, they had this custom. From the synagogue, they were used to having several spiritual leaders whom they called elders. In the Jewish synagogue, there was a plurality of elders, but (as we pointed out) one of them as the chief elder who was the ruler of the synagogue. Because they had this custom as Jews, it seems very natural that in the early Christian church, when it was made up of Jews, that they would have had established, as they were reaching out and searching for organizational structure and trying this thing and trying that thing under the Lord's guidance, it would have been very natural for them to have had several men that they called their elders, with a pastor-teacher as executive head. In that condition, because of their Jewish background, there would have been many elders in that church.

So what James is talking about here, in writing to a Jewish church, is very logical, and it falls right into place for them to call the elders of their local church, those who are in effect assistant associates in spiritual leadership with the pastor, to come and pray for them. James 5:14, therefore, probably applies to a Jewish Christian who is in a Jewish church and has a plurality of elders. You can make the same application today that if you are sick, you may call upon your pastor to come and pray for you. This would be a legitimate thing for you to ask, or for a member of your family to ask. It would be perfectly legitimate for you to say, "I would like the executive board of the church or the deacon executive committee or the group of elders (understanding them as a term of an executive committee under the pastor), or whatever the term you may use, I'd like them to come also with the pastor to pray."

I've had that experience here in this church. I've had exactly that experience. On the basis of this passage, it is perfectly legitimate for us to do the same thing--to call upon spiritual leaders to pray for us in heaven's name. If anybody should be able to pray, I would think that they should. Not that they're better than anybody else, but they should know enough about this to know how to go about it with some effectiveness. So the objections that are raised to this Scripture as approving plurality of elders is not an irrefutable objection. It is a certain transitional stage of the church, and one Scripture does not contradict the rest of the Scriptures.

We have shown, from the other indications of Scripture, the progressive revelation of Scripture. We have seen that when elders are described, it's singular; and, when deacons are described, it's plural, and so on. All of these indications are too overwhelming on the other side of singular leadership for one passage of Scripture to seemingly contradict it. It means that we don't understand something about this Scripture, or that we need some additional factors to see how it fits into the total picture. I think the fact that it was at a transitional stage of the church life is the best explanation for it.

Somebody might object, "Well, you're interpreting Scripture on the basis of the customs of a certain group of people." This is true, but this is exactly what you have to do with Scripture. That's isagogics--to explain it on the basis of the customs and backgrounds and situations of the time. This Jewish background is also seen in James 2:2 where it says, "For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring and fine apparel," and so on. The word "assembly" here is not "ekklesia" as your English Bible might seem to suggest. It is not the word church. It is the word "synagogue" in the Greek. So here again in the book of James you have again this Jewish background reflected. He's talking to these people. He says, "If a man comes into your synagogue." He's talking to Christians, but they used to meet Christians in the synagogue at the early stages before they were driven out.

So again the heavy Jewish background is reflected here. The information that we have progressively reveals that the New Testament normative pattern was for single leadership here. Here in James we have Jewish background which apparently in their situation, they had multiple leadership called elders. So James 5:14 refers to a local church organization which is not the norm. So no argument against the single elder leadership can be drawn from this.

**Local Church Administrator**

I want to look a little bit now at the pastor as local church administrator. The elder bishop is told in the Word of God to do the work of shepherding. We have this in Acts 20:28. The apostle Paul is speaking to the many pastors who had gathered from the city of Ephesus: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he has purchased with His own blood. The word "feed" is "poimaino." "Poimaino" means "to shepherd." This is an aorist which means at any particular point that he deals with the congregation--the sheep. It's active. He is to do it. And it is imperative which means it is a command. The pastor is commanded to feed the flock. The performance of this service of feeding requires the gift of pastor-teacher that we read about in Ephesians 4:11. The elder bishop serves as pastor of a local church, and he shepherds the flock by using his pastor-teacher gift.

1 Timothy 3:5 indicates to us another reflection upon the work of the elder pastor. His work is that of caring. 1 Timothy 3:5 says, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he care for the church of God?" That is "epimelomai." "Epimelomai" means simply "to care." It is the word which you found used in Luke 10:34-35 of the man who treated the wounded man. This is the Good Samaritan treating the wounded man. It says that he cared for this man. He provided for his needs. This is future. This is active. This is indicative. The pastor's job, continually in the future, performed by himself, is to care for the sheep. This implies watching over them and meeting their needs. It requires various means and various specific provisions.

The elder bishop cares for the flock basically by providing for its spiritual needs, and this is done in a variety of ways. The care consists of the pastor conveying God's point of view toward life, in all that is suited to a certain age and to a certain spiritual maturity, and doing it in a way that is clear and that they can retain. He has to do this in different ways. Don't get hung up on some technique and say, "This is God's way of conveying understanding of His point of view to the sheep. This is God's way of caring for the people."

Whenever you have a list of qualifications or responsibilities given of the pastor in the New Testament, the ability to teach is always stressed (Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:2, 1 Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:7, 1 Peter 5:2). We must admit that the basic duty placed upon a pastor is to be able to study the Word and to learn the Word. That means to be prepared by years beforehand to be able to study the Word. It takes preparation so that you can study the Word; to learn something from one source and another; bringing together all that is the movement of the day; relating it to the Word of God; and, then teaching the flock.

Beyond this, there is certain administrative responsibility. He has to change the ink on his printer sometimes. He has to go out and buy some paper. He also has to see that the deacons are doing their job toward the property; that there is a place to meet; that the distractions are minimized; and, that there is a nursery functioning, and of course it takes other people to do all these things. However, ultimately, as executive head, the buck stops at his desk. That's his job. The job is to see to it that the flock gets the Word. Don't kid yourself that all he has to do is study and teach it. As administrator, he has to have some help to do that.

If it's a nice big church with lots of people and plenty of dough, his job is very sweet because they hire people. They hire somebody to sit in the nursery. They hire somebody to take care of the holes in the roof. They hire somebody to see that the buildings are all in order. They hire somebody to take care of all of the functioning of an organization. They hire somebody to run the office, and they hire somebody to do this and to do that. However, it may not be a large church, and it may not have a great deal of funds (and God has not made a mistake in that). If it does not have available to it to be able to hire people, then it is dependent on how far the congregation itself will carry the ball. A pastor who has a congregation who will perform the jobs that need to be done, is to that degree freed of administration cares, and other people run the team for him.

To the extent that he has a congregation where he cannot hire people, and who will not participate in the ministry, but instead are running around handing jobs to him, he will be bogged down, and they will be shortchanged in their learning of the Word of God. It takes many hours a day on his part to be able to come up with an instruction in a particular service (if it is worth anything). So a pastor-teacher is to care for the flock. This includes setting the stage for teaching, as well as the content of that teaching. The congregation, with its boards, comes into the picture at setting the stage. The more the congregation sets the stage, the greater their blessing. However, it has to be done, and as executive head, he ultimately is the overall superintendent who must see that that is taken care of.

The final decision making power, consequently, in the business of the local church, is vested here in the pastor. His decisions are subject to review by the congregation as a whole, but not to review by a church board except as that board wants to review them through the congregation. The pastor has to make these decisions with maximum objectivity, obviously. He has to make his decisions on the basis of facts. He cannot make his decisions on the basis of some surge of emotions. That's why one of the qualifications of a pastor is a person who does not operate on surges of emotions. If a man reflects the fact that he's an emotional yo-yo, he is not called to be a pastor. That's one of the surest signs. His decisions cannot be made on that basis. He cannot operate on his emotions; on the congregation's emotions; or, somebody else who is very vocal. This is one of the favorite ways of getting church work done by somebody who is good with words to sound off in a board meeting or in a congregation meeting and raise a great emotional challenge and furor, and get people running off like scared rabbits in some direction because somebody has pushed them emotionally.

The person who wants to operate people that way just hates to hear someone say that. They'll talk about their emotions being squelched which means that their manipulation device has been scuttled. Once you warn people about that, people are going to be cagey of a character who treats them with an emotional challenge. They're going to think twice as to whether they are being stampeded, or whether they are being directed on the basis objectively of the facts.

The issue of the pastor is very simple. He is concerned as to what is OK with the Lord. He is not concerned with what is OK with his friends. He is not concerned with what is OK with his family. He is not concerned with what is OK with the big financial supporters in his church. He is not really even basically concerned with what is OK with the flock. He is concerned with what is OK with God. Israel is the most fantastic example of a group of God's people who were constantly against the very things that God was directing their shepherds to do. Moses is a classic example of a man who was moving in God's direction with a group of people who were moving in the opposite direction. Should Moses have been concerned with what the Jews wanted him to do, or with what God wanted him to do? It's a bad sign to see reflected in a pastor that he is more concerned with what his friends think.

However, be sure that you know that that's what he is doing. Pastors are often accused of being influenced by their friends, but nobody really can establish that. That's only what they think, meaning he's not influenced by what I think. He is not influenced by his friends. He's not to be influenced by his family. He's not to be influenced by influential people anywhere down the line. What is OK with the Lord?

The pastor, incidentally, happens to be in a position of having maximum insight concerning a problem. That's why he is executive head. Once he enters that position, there is an automatic intelligence system that God has inherently built into the local church structure. From the moment he becomes pastor, the intelligence information begins flowing. What you said to your wife in the kitchen, he gets to hear, in various ways. You send your children to Berean Christian Academy. Your kids comes to school, and we're sitting there we're talking about some kind of a Christian character like quietness, and some kid says, "Boy was my mother loud this morning at breakfast. My dad said something. You should hear her scream." So we know. Literally, I have to spend my time, and I kid you not, pushing people away saying, "Don't tell me. I don't want to know." I have a magnetic quality in many ways, and one of them is to draw scuttlebutt and hot scoop. There are people that I can see the glint in their eyes that they just can't wait to get to see me in order to give me their intelligence report because they talked to Mrs. so-and-so who talked to so-and-so who talked to so-and-so.

The pastor does get some information fantastically, however, not from this kind of a grapevine, but because God in His providence, I guarantee you from experience, gives him the strategic bit of information that he needs at a certain point. Sometimes something is going on that he's totally unaware of. Sometimes somebody's trying to make time in some direction that he didn't view in the light that he should have, and God says, "Here's a bit of information. I want to inform you on this person." Then he knows, and he acts accordingly. He is a constant depository of intelligence information on the local church operation. Therefore, when it comes to decision making, he is usually in the position to see the overall picture better than most anybody else. That's one reason that God has set this up this way. People outside--all of you in your individual lives--spiritually mature Christians as you may be, are not in a position to have the information on which to make your decisions.

So the right course if you think that the pastor is not doing the right thing or following the right course, the thing for you to do is to express your views to him. You are free to say, "I think we ought to do this. I'd like us to do this. I would emphasize and stress this." Then you let it lie there. Don't think that he doesn't take it into account. If he is a proper shepherd, everything that a congregational member tells him is put into his internal computer and he starts processing it. But he's not going to act before you as you're speaking to him.

I had a seminary student who got very very burned one time as a youth leader around here until he learned a good lesson. He told me, and I've seen him many times since, and he told me, "I'll never forget that lesson you taught me. When people come to me with a crisis, the first thing I do is nothing." I just sit there and smile and I do nothing." He said, "I've learned my lesson about being railroaded by somebody's crisis. Somebody comes along, and they've got a big problem, and all of a sudden I have assumed their problem, and I don't know what to do any better than they do then. And I have never again," he said, "on one occasion been railroaded by anybody coming to me with a crisis. I know that the first thing I do is nothing, so that God has a chance to give me some direction to do something." So you may, speak but leave it there, and then let it be processed.

Now there is a difference of opinion in local churches. These differences of opinion require an umpire--somebody who is a final authority to decide, and that final authority is, of course, the pastor. He has to be a final authority; he has to be objective; and, he has to be firm because there are strong-willed and pushy members who are unwilling to abide by his decisions. Consequently, they create dissension, and they seek to create groups and divisions. And there are always Christians who are dumb enough to assume somebody else's problem.

Here's a person who has some difficulty within the congregation, and there are always some people who are short-sighted enough to go to that person, and the first mistake you make is by listening, "Tell me your problem. Tell me what your dissatisfaction is." That could be the kiss of death for you, because you might be the kind of a Christian that does not have the discernment to be able to listen to somebody's dissatisfaction and walk off and leave it with them. You may assume their dissatisfaction, and then you have collapsed your own spiritual life because you inquired and got into somebody else's dissatisfaction instead of leaving it with them. You were perfectly happy until you went muddling into somebody else's problems. Often those problems were self-created and self-induced miseries of their own.

All of a sudden, here you are. You find yourself and your family suffering because you have assumed the miseries of other people instead of letting it lie with them, and between them and the Lord. Your right course is to pray that the Lord will enable the pastor and the congregation to see your views and to change their minds. If minds are not changed and if minds are not brought compatible to the mind of the Lord, then the resisters will be moved on. If the pastor's decision is wrong, God will not let it ride, I assure you. The pastor is not perfect, but neither is a board and neither is a congregation. A spirit-filled pastor will be the first man, I assure you, to change his mind and to say that this is a better direction.

Your views on a matter may not be accepted. You have promoted; you have spoken for; you have challenged; and, you have pushed for some direction that you are convinced is pleasing to the Lord. If it is not accepted, the reason for it is because up to that time, God is not for it. God is sovereign. God is omnipotent. If He was for what you are promoting, it would come through. If your views are not accepted, be smart enough to say, "God is not for this."

It is blasphemy for you to bemoan your frustration of being unable to change things to your viewpoint. This is an insult to God's ability. It's an insult to God's faithfulness toward his local churches. Remember that that's what you're doing. You're insulting our God toward His faithfulness to the local churches. You're in effect saying, "God, why in the world can't you get on the stick and change this thing and make this right?" If it isn't changed, it's because God is not for it. He does not share your viewpoint. You need not be a pious bemoaner because all it is reflecting is a frustration in your old sin nature. These kind of bemoaners, because they are pushy strong-willed people, usually move on to another church. They are not willing to leave it with God. They do not respect the sovereign faithfulness of our God.

**Can a Pastor Become a Dictator?**

So, we have an elder bishop. We have boards to help him. He is the final quarterback on the team. This does bring up the question of the danger of a single leader becoming a dictator. The answer to that supposed threat is in 1 Peter 5:3, where to a pastor we have the declaration, "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock." Here is a specific statement of doctrine which forbids a pastor from being a dictator over a flock. It forbids lording it over the flock. If a pastor disobeys this doctrine, he comes under divine discipline immediately, and potential removal from his office. If he violates this, and actually does play the role of a dictator, a faithful sovereign God will not tolerate it. That's the answer.

Unless you're willing to blaspheme and insult the integrity of God, you better not suggest that His arrangement of a single elder bishop directing a church is a potential dictatorship situation. Anybody who says that has not studied this Scripture very carefully. In the long run, no pastor can be a dictator unless God is no longer sovereign; no longer faithful; and, no longer true to his doctrine because his doctrine says, "You shall not do this." If you do you, you will be disciplined. If you persist and do not confess and change your ways, then you will be removed." Nobody in the pastorate can be a dictator. It is a blasphemy even to suggest that God has set up a system where local church members can be victimized.

**Qualifications of a Pastor**

So, if you were going to be selecting a pastor-teacher, you would have to look at certain qualifications. We have these in 1 Timothy, and we'll run through them in 1 Timothy 3:2-7. We don't have apostles to appoint anymore, so how do we come about selecting a pastor-teacher. Well, we do this by the qualifications that they left for us. First of all, he has to have certain qualifications in relationship to himself. I'll just run through these. These begin in verse 2 where it says, "A bishop (singular) then must be:"

1. First is "**blameless**." The Greek word is "anepileptos." This is made up of the word "lambano." "Lambano" means "to take." The preposition "epi" means "upon." So, what it means is "to take upon" or "to seize hold upon." Then it has the Greek letter "a" which makes the thing a negative. That means that he is not to be a person who can be laid hold upon. That is, a pastor is not to be one who can justly be carted off to jail. That removes the civil rights ministers who can rightly be carted off to jail. They disqualify themselves as pastors by that act. This word says that he must have a basic personal integrity.
2. Secondly, he has to be the husband of one wife. What the Greek says is "a one-woman man" or "**a man of one woman**." That's what the Greek says. A pastor is to be a man of one woman. The word "man" in the phrase of "a man of one woman" is not the word "anthropos." "Anthropos" is a general word meaning mankind, and it applies to men and women. We call this a generic word. The word that is used is "aner." "Aner" means only a male person. It cannot apply to a woman. Therefore, this requirement for a local church pastor clearly eliminates the women pastors which are so common in the charismatic movement (and certain denominations). One of the signs that the charismatic movement is under satanic direction is the fact that it is flooded with women pastors. Right here you can see that this would be a very difficult qualification for a woman pastor to meet, to be the husband of one wife. That would pose quite a few problems, though in some segments of our society, they seem to think they have solved even that.

In the heathenism of New Testament times, polygamy was a way of life. So, many came into Christianity with more than one wife. It depended upon how many you could afford. So, when the person was saved with that problem, it had to be resolved. We don't have polygamy today but in those days (perhaps because they didn't have such bad inflation) they could afford several girls around the house. And this created a problem. A pastor was not to have several wives scattered around the house. There is no definite article used here, so this is referring to the character of the pastor. In this respect, he is to be a one-wife sort of husband.

This does not imply that an elder bishop must be married. If he is married, he's got one wife--period. The one woman would hopefully be his right woman. It is almost impossible to do the work of a pastor if you are married to the wrong woman. One of the signs that you are married to the wrong woman in the pastorate is that people with the pastor-teacher gift leave the pastorate. They get into it; they try it; and, they cannot stand the guff. You will never be able to stand the abrasiveness of the pastorate married to the wrong woman. It usually ends in the man's departure from the ministry. The spiritual influence of a wife is seen clearly in that contrast before and after marriage.

Here's a man. He may be a very devoted worker among the Lord's people. He marries this woman, and pretty soon you discover he's no longer around. He's no longer engaged in a ministry. Or he may have been very much a nothing in the ministry. Now the Lord comes along and gives him the right woman, and she ennobles him, and all of a sudden he begins becoming increasingly a great participant in the Lord's work. He begins developing in his spiritual life. Or a woman may just keep him neutral. He doesn't go anywhere. He doesn't grow up. He doesn't go down. She has no ennobling influence. If you have your right woman in marriage, she will ennoble you spiritually. She will not drag you. You will never have the feeling that this woman is dragging me down spiritually. This woman is undermining my possibilities and my potential as a child of God. This woman is destroying my spiritual heritage. You can see how this is a problem for anybody, but it would be disastrous, to say the least, in the ministry.

Now this qualification does not eliminate a minister who has been divorced. If the divorce was done before salvation, he is still qualified to be a man of one woman. Or if the divorce was after salvation but on biblical grounds of adultery or desertion, he is still qualified for the ministry.

1. This man is also to be **temperate**. The word is "nephalios." The word here specifically refers to wine--to be temperate in the use of wine. It really connotes a quality of moderation. He is not to be given to excesses. He is not to be imbalanced in physical, moral, or mental tastes and habits. He is to be a balanced person.

We're going to need more time for these, and I don't want to go over these lightly because these are very basic important qualities. These lay out for us the qualifications for leadership within the local assembly. So we'll pick up the rest of these here in 1 Timothy next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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