

NEW START BIBLE MINISTRIES

COURSE NOTES – PASTORAL THEOLOGY 312

DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY

BY

DR JOHN C McEWAN

[BOOK 6 OF 12]

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CONTENTS

LECTURE	TAPE	SUBJECT	PAGE
1	268	2 TIMOTHY 3	2
2	269	2 TIMOTHY 4	7
3	270	1 TIMOTHY 5	12
4	277	THE CHALLENGE OF BIBLICAL EVANGELISM	17
5	284	BEING AN AMBASSADOR	19
6/7	291/298	BEING AN HONEST WITNESS	21
8	305	PRAYER POWER AND EVANGELISM	24
9	311	BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF EVANGELISM	26
10	318	SPECIAL EVANGELICAL CAMPAIGNS	28
11	325	GOOD MANNERS IN EVANGELISM	30
12	332	FREE WILL AND SIGNS FOLLOWING	32
13	339	FOLLOW UP EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH	35
14	346	THE PASTORS PRIVATE LIFE	37
15	353	STARTING A NEW CHURCH	39
16	360	THE WORSHIP SERVICE	43
17	367	SPECIAL SERVICES	45
18	372	SPECIAL SERVICES	47
19	381	WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS	49
20	388	VISITATION MINISTRY	53
21	393	GETTING TO KNOW THE JEW	55
22	394	HOW TO WITNESS TO THE JEW	57
23	395	SOME JEWISH OBJECTIONS ANSWERED	59
24	402	PASTORAL LEADERSHIP	61
25	411	LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING	63
26	412	CHURCH MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION	65
27	418	CHURCH BOARD RELATIONSHIPS	67
28	422	CHURCH STAFF RELATIONSHIPS	70
29	429	THE ROLE OF DEACONS AND THEIR TRAINING	73
30	436	CONSTITUTION AND DISCIPLINE	75
31	443	PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION	77
32	449	MINISTRY EVALUATION	79
33	462	CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING	81
34	468	COUNSELLING APPROACHES	83
35	475	COUNSELLING SESSIONS	86
36	482	COUNSELLING	87
37	488	COUNSELLING	90
38	489	COUNSELLING	92
39	495	COUNSELLING	94
40	507	MARRIAGE COUNSELLING	97
41	513	COUNSELLING WOMEN AND THE ELDERLY	99
42	527	PSYCHOSIS	100
43	398	APOLOGETICS	104
44	399	APOLOGETICS	105
45	400	APOLOGETICS	106

TEXT BOOKS :-

ECFS - Evangelism, the Church on Fire - Sumner
 SGF - Shepherding God's Flock - Adams
 BMMS- Broadman Ministers Manual - Segler
 BTB - Bible Topic Book

INTRODUCTION

Pastoral Theology may be defined as, "the art of surviving pastoral ministry". To survive as an officer in the Lord's spiritually armed forces, in the midst of the devil's world, you need to have all the facts for your survival. That means knowing your strengths in Christ Jesus, knowing the enemies' strengths and weaknesses and knowing his tactics also, so that you can fight with focus, purpose and success.

THE LAST DAYS

The intensified stage of the "Angelic Conflict" (Refer BTB), begins at the cross, resurrection and ascension of the Lord. This stage of world history is called the church Age, but also is known as, "the last days"(refer BTB). There are 18 characteristics of life of the apostates in these days; characteristics of the church, and of the type of people that you will meet in these last days. We must be knowledgeable about this, as this is our sphere of operation.

The church has therefore been in the last days for the last 2000 years. We should live in the sphere of the expectation of the "soon coming" of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rapture - Refer BTB). As our fathers in the faith have waited expectantly for the Lord's return, so we also wait, actively busy in his work, into the third millennium.

Paul tells Timothy, and us, to be ready as the people that he is going to meet are not going to be very nice people. Be ready for them, recognise them and protect your flock against them. Live in the truth and be strong against the evil one.

2 TIMOTHY 3 :1-5

The eighteen characteristics are a catalogue of the evils of selfishness, and self centredness; both characteristics of Satan, who magnifies self above obedience to God. They are;

1. Lovers of self. - To be self centred means that everything is interpreted in terms of selfish concerns; it is a moral relativism that centres on the self rather than God or others.
2. Covetous - Lovers of money so that everything has a price and what is of value is what can be measured in dollar terms.
3. Boasters. - We would say people like this are "full of hot air"; they have no substance nor heart but love to speak great words about themselves.
4. Pride. - Arrogance knows not bounds when the opinion of God is ignored and the self is the sole criteria for decision making.
5. Blasphemers. - When people think they know better than God they very quickly move on to directly insult God and his words, for they don't think they are bound by the rules that govern those who are, in their eyes, foolish enough to believe in God!
6. Disobedient to parents. - At heart a nation's strength is rooted in the strength and respect within the family unit. Where children grow up to despise, disobey, or ignore their parents they will grow up without a healthy sense of discipline. The society will then suffer as the child who does not respect its own parents will not often respect the life or property of others. This point applies equally to children and parents; parents must live so as to be worthy of respect and children must respect as far as they are able their parents.
7. Unthankful. - This term sums up a trait of people who are in evil that often baffles others. Why is it that you can do wonderful things for some people and they will despise you and insult you for the good you have done them, or they will use your very kindness against you? The answer is here. People who get into evil and false doctrine will lose all perspective and have as their character trait an ungratefulness that is destructive and nasty.
8. Unholy. - Holiness means to be set apart for God and his service, and unholiness means the reverse; to be set apart for self and evil rather than God. To be active in the service of the enemy.
9. Without natural affection. - No capacity for love is an indication of deeper and more dangerous aspects of a persons nature. When people love only themselves they are incapable of truly loving others.
10. Trucebreakers. - When people have morality that is rooted in self interest you can be sure of only one thing with them; that you cannot be sure of them at all. They will be as stable as the wind is! These are people whose word you cannot trust.
11. False accusers. - Malicious gossips will abound where-ever self is king. If people will not talk about the Lord and his word to them they will talk about everything and anything else, as if it were important.
12. Incontinent. - No self control. People who follow their whims and fancies as if they were truth and righteousness, where-as they are simply lust and desires.
13. Fierce. - Brutal men are Satan's men. Gentle men are God's. There is no place in the church for those who will tear another person apart with their words or their hands. We are not to be fierce like wild dogs, but gentle like our Lord. A fierce man is a false brother.
14. Despisers of them that are good. - A man is known by his company and by those he loves. No good man will despise good men, but every evil man will. Look at the company others keep and see where their hearts are.
15. Traitors. - If a person is dishonourable they will betray you without thought. Evil has no standards other than self gratification, and betrayal of the good for temporary gain is to be expected from evil men.
16. Heady. - Thoughtlessness is another trait of the evil man. They do not think about consequences, they are rash and foolish, lacking foresight and concern for others.
17. Highminded. - While being rash and foolish themselves they use such terms of others. They do not see any problems with their own behaviours, they are perfect in their own eyes.

18. Pleasure lovers. - Their God is their belly. Philippians 3:19. They do things to feel good rather than because they are good, and will be of benefit for them and others

WHERE DOES THE POWER COME FROM?

This terrible list is all too common in our day as it was in Paul's day. It is just another sign of the impact of evil upon the world. We must set our hearts and minds firmly against this way of living. In the fifth verse Paul identifies the central point about the apostates, for we must remember that these people were in the church and they are now claiming to be more spiritual than the genuine believers.

The big issue is the issue of power; they have the power and the life style than comes from the self we have the power and life that comes from God.

Satan's objective is not to make people into the town drunk, his real coup is to make them self righteous legalistic hypocrites. They have no real power except what pride can produce, and it produces the above list rather than the list of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 6.

Hendricksen notes, "these people lack spiritual dynamite. They have no love for God, nor for his revelation in Jesus Christ, nor for his people. Hence, since they are not spirit filled men, it is not surprising that they lack power", (IBID, page 286). They are great pretenders, phoney, and empty of both power and hope. In Jude 12 they are referred to as, "clouds without rain", promising much to a hungry land but delivering nothing of value nor meeting any real need.

Many in the world want a religion that does not require obedience, nor any change to sinful life patterns, nor anything that would disturb the Old Sin Nature. Genuine Christianity is not their choice but counterfeit faith is.

Robert Mounce is scathing but accurate when he says, "people want a religion that requires nothing and changes nothing. A bit of rustic tradition totally inoffensive to anyone. Keep away from people like that, is Paul's advice to Timothy", (IBID, page 134).

Paul is strong in his command to avoid such false brothers. He is to keep on turning away from any who are like this. At any point where such people are identified they are to be rejected and avoided, and this would appear to involve both the public and church social life and private life. Such people are to be seen as "anathema", 1 Corinthians 16:22, and are to be fled from as if they have the plague!

Let us all join with Ironside in his heart felt prayer. "God give us to be genuine, to be real, that eternal things may so grip our souls that we will live and do the work and be real witnesses for him" (Ironside, IBID, page 220).

VERSES 6-7

Paul builds on the list of evils he has already given us to assist identification of these false brothers. Here he notes the historic examples of Jannes and Jambres who Jewish tradition records were the magicians who acted for Satan and against God when Moses was in the court of Pharaoh. Exodus 7:10-12. These two evil men are the "type" of people we must be alert for. The picture Paul draws here is not flattering for the evil ones; they are portrayed as vile and slimy "worms" who will stoop to anything to achieve their self centred goals.

The verb translated "creep" is one that indicates the character and purpose of the false teachers. They are like thieves, and the analogy is a close one for they try to steal the stability and joy of all they target. They act like thieves and actually "target" those who are potentially weak and vulnerable.

UNSTABLE WOMEN

The term for "silly women" is a disparaging one and Paul makes no apology for it. It refers to women who are so emotionally unstable and vulnerable that they will allow themselves to be fooled by cunning and calculating men. No Christian woman should ever be in this category, and none need be if they hear, believe and apply the doctrines of the Word Of God.

If we fail to believe and apply the word we will believe anything, and the result will be we are "used" by those who are the religious "con men" of society. All who are conned are responsible for they have not taken the precautions that Paul has urged. Only the foolish are fooled.

MONEY HUNGER

The concept of money hunger on the part of the false teachers is clear also from the word for "captive", for it is a military word that means to take a prisoner of war and then use them for money when sold as a slave.

We are reminded by this word of two other concepts, one of the Angelic Conflict (or Invisible War), and the other the deliberate nature of Satan's targeting of those who are not walking as they should.

Peter warns of this by using the lion analogy for Satanic attack. 1 Peter 5:8, 9. Lions target the animal they wish to kill very carefully. They pick the weak, the sick and old, and the animal that is isolated from the rest of the herd. Any believer that is sick or weak spiritually is so because of failure to apply the Word to life, and they are isolated because they have got away from their brethren in the Lord.

VULNERABILITY

The things that make us even more vulnerable are spelt out in these verses. There are three characteristics of spiritual weakness mentioned here.

First they are laden with sins. They have not been dealing with their sins on a moment by moment basis in accordance with Scripture, 1 John 1:9.

The second issue is that they are being led away with their various lusts rather than resisting them. Strong desires are not to be heeded they are to be discerned! If a desire is good it can be followed but if it is wrong it is to be resisted and as James warns us we cannot blame God if we fall due to our own lusts being given power over us. James 1:13-15. The enemy will always have someone or something to lead us away from the truth, he specialises in alternatives to truth!

The third characteristic of the "victim" is that they are always learning new things yet never really gaining or growing in spiritual strength from their knowledge. What is the problem here? Is there something wrong with the word of God or is it a problem with the hearers?

The Bible makes it clear that the problem is mainly the forgetful hearer, James 1:19-25. As Hebrews 4:2, identifies the issue is that the word has not been mixed with faith in the hearers, and therefore not been applied to daily life. Without application there is no understanding and no growth. Without doctrine applied the people perish.

FALSE TEACHERS

The false teachers will be able to be depended on in one matter, they will always oppose all who stand for the truth! They keep on opposing (present active indicative) the truth. They cannot abide the truth and must oppose it at all points lest they are convicted by the message. The two men mentioned opposed Moses and for every miracle he did they counterfeited it with satanic power. They were totally convinced of their beliefs and even when the evidence of the superiority of Moses God came through they rejected it. They didn't want to know the truth!

Paul refers to them as, "men of corrupt minds". The word for corrupt indicates that they once had the truth and were intelligent but had let the evil within them get hold and the very strength of their mind became their weakness. This led to their being disqualified by God and declared "reprobate", or rejected by the potter as a bad pot. They are good for no worthy purpose and if they have belonged to the Lord they will be disciplined by him. God is in control and will deal with them finally but like Moses we may be called to stand against these people and we must be ready.

The trash can of history is full of men and women like these false teachers and evil miracle workers. God does not pay his accounts on the 20th of each month! Some times they survive for a long time but eventually the truth comes out and they fall, and drop from sight. Their folly is finally seen by all.

All believers must be ready to spot the false teachers as we have seen above, but even more than this we must all be "safe" from attack from them. We are safe when we are walking as we should, and we are in danger of being deceived when we walk away from the Lord. As the old song says, we must "trust and obey, for there is no other way, to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey!"

BTB - Christian Life and, Laws in the New Testament

VERSES 10-17

In contrast to the false teachers, who cannot be followed without spiritual disaster for the disciple, Paul repeats what he said several years before in Philippians 3: 15-17, "Timothy follow me and my example, I wont let you down!" As he faces his own death Paul draws on his own experiences with warmth and concern for his young friend and for all who will stand with him, in true doctrine, down the ages, and urges him and us to be wise not foolish, to endure not seek easy ways out of pressure, to hold to the truth not compromise or water it down.

As our Lord said in Matthew 7 , you can test a man's teaching by looking at what it does for him in his life. If a man has godly fruit in his life he may stand in the truth. Listen to what he says and test his words then with Scripture, but if he has no godly fruit in his life, save yourself the effort of even checking out his words for he is a false teacher. (Matthew 7:15-25, Luke 6:43-45.)

Christianity is a very personal thing, it depends on your personal relationship with the Lord through the Holy Spirit within and your personal instructional relationship with a godly pastor teacher who leads you into the word of God faithfully and systematically. The gift of Pastor Teacher is an important one in the church, and is meant to be the heart of the churches

growth as the pastor teaches the word and the people watch his life and heed his words and apply what they see and hear.

Paul reminds Timothy of this process in these verses. The verb *parakoluthéo* is a strong one to indicate the close study of the words and life of Paul by Timothy from which he both theory and practise of the doctrines Paul communicated to him. This is the biblical way of communication of doctrine, it is always to be in, by, and through relationship with the teacher, so that there is no chance for a phoney, or play actor (hypocrite) to ever get into a place where they influence others.

As the late professor Blaiklock said, "the defeat of falsehood is best effected by the demonstration of the truth", (IBID, page 113), and this is best done through the life and work of the pastor.

Dr Harry Ironside, ever the practical pastor, said, "we cannot lift men higher than ourselves. If one is not living for God, is not walking with Christ, then he cannot be a real blessing to other people", (IBID, page 222).

TESTS FOR A PASTOR

The tests for the pastor are clearly stated by Paul. The eighteen characteristics of the false teachers in verses 1 - 5, are balanced out and answered by the nine characteristics of the faithful pastor.

1. Doctrine. - Paul had no secret doctrines, everything was open and clear to be checked against Scripture and against his own and the Lord's life. Paul's teaching was plain speaking and all could see and hear it and assess it systematically.
2. Manner of life. - This refers to the way a person lives away from the pulpit, or place of teaching. In their daily walk do they live as they should? They must if they are to properly "adorn" the gospel message they give. Titus 2 : 10.
3. Purpose. - The word *prothesis* has a meaning that indicates Paul had a "guiding principle" for his life and it was to glorify Christ; he lived for that and so must Timothy.
4. Faith. - What he believed was seen by doctrine in practise in every decision of his life. We are to be tested as Paul was; when we face a decision do we apply "faith" to it, do we seek the Lord's will and apply his word, for it is in this that we see faith applied. It is in our decision making that we really see what we believe!
5. Long suffering. - The strong military word for gritting it out on a long campaign is one of the key fruits of the Holy Spirit. Being "big souled" is what we are called to and the mature believer will show this trait, it comes naturally to one walking in the Holy Spirit.
6. Charity. - Agape love is another fruit of the spirit that shows our status as believers and our right to speak as pastor. If we have no love we are a clanging cymbal (1 Corinthians 13:1-13); we have nothing of substance to offer people.
7. Patience. - Another fruit of the spirit which emphasises that we are waiting on the Lord's time for things to happen rather than telling God what and when to do things. To wait on the Lord does not mean we are inactive, but that we are ready to move at all times, but seek clear guidance as to when and where. We are in no human rush, but seek God's timing.
8. Persecutions. - When one stands for the truth there will be those who attack you and this happened with Paul, for he stood for truth and those who preferred the lies of the enemy persecuted him. We are known by our friends and by our enemies, and Paul was proud to be on the receiving end of persecution from the enemy, it meant he was dangerous to them!
9. Afflictions. - To suffer for the truth in the body by persecution is one thing but the faithful pastor will often be called to suffer mentally with anguish and concern for others in the midst of his own pressures. It is this inner torment of soul for others that is in view here, and it is the lot of all who love the Lord and his people. Paul's testimony in 2 Corinthians 11:23-33, spells out much of the above mentioning the things that had happened to that point in his ministry. Far more pressures had happened since he wrote that letter, although it is these first trials that he refers to, very likely as it was then he met and influenced Timothy so much as a young man. These early trials were etched onto Timothy's mind as he saw what it was to be a missionary pastor first hand.

PAUL AND TIMOTHY

Paul has a track record of service and his character can be seen from the things he has said and done. Paul reminds Timothy of the early events of Antioch, Lystra and Iconium, what serious suffering he endured, and from which the Lord delivered him. Acts 13, 14. The Lord's deliverance from each persecution in a triumphant manner was the Lord's seal of approval upon Paul, and in this last trial he will face, the triumphant way he will die for the Lord will be the final seal on his ministry.

Paul was confident in his Lord but not arrogant about his life and achievements. It is in this as in all things that he differs from the false teachers.

They are arrogant about what they have done, whereas no true servant of the Lord can have this mental attitude. Those who serve the Lord know it is he who deserves and will get the glory, the praise and the honour for delivering us from trial, or keeping our soul in dying grace through trials.

What a challenge to us is this portrait of a pastor! As Mounce observes, "If believers today are not meeting persecution it is not because the world has come to appreciate goodness. It is rather because so few believers have determined to live genuinely Christian lives".

"The nearer we get to the end the higher is the rising tide of rebellion against God", (Ironside). We must be ready to face these things, and all who would enter the pastorate must be ready for this sort of life in advance of their training. "It is only for those who are both in the world and in Christ simultaneously that persecution becomes inevitable," (J R S Stott).

VERSE 12

In verse twelve we have the principle of suffering spelt out, for all to see. All those who keep on striving to live (present active participle) a godly life will suffer persecution! All who seek godliness in the devils world will receive (passive voice of verb, dioko) the attacks of the enemy. It is no strange thing to experience attack it is "normal" in a war, what is unusual and strange is for a believer to have a life without incident. We are meant to be on "active service" and that means to be engaged in battle against evil and for the truth.

Simpson expresses this forcefully, "a Christian curled up on a bed of sloth belies his name. He is enlisted in a holy warfare in which hard knocks will be dealt with and borne. Piety and paralysis are false concords", (IBID, page 148).

VERSE 13 - 14

Verse thirteen reminds us that there will always be evil men and they will prosper for a time at all times in history, even getting worse towards the end of the age. They will mislead and they will be misled by others themselves, but what must be our response? These evangelists of evil will keep advancing on Satan's plan, but we must not get distracted from our part in the Lord's plan, for it alone will finally triumph.

Security for believers is determined by what is within their own mind. If they have their thinking garrisoned by the full knowledge of the doctrines of the word then they have strength and stability. Verse fourteen identifies this clearly. Timothy is to keep on (meno) continuing in his daily feeding on and applying the word of God. It is daily learning more and more of God's word and applying it in life that provides the security and strength that is needed when you face the enemy daily and often see them apparently prosper! With the word within the believer can have God's viewpoint rather than be distracted by what is apparently happening. In time the enemy may be more powerful politically, more wealthy, more popular and more successful as the world applauds success, but it is the last assessment that matters, it is what God thinks that finally matters!

Timothy is urged to keep to the familiar path as that is the place of testing but also of blessing, and there is no other way to please God, for only in doctrine is there any assurance, for it alone works in the life under pressure. Timothy has utilised God's word before and trusted in it's power and truth, and under the increasing pressures of the future he must continue so to do. He has a good track record too, having been surrounded by the truth since a boy and having loved it since early days.

"Note that learning is not enough. What has been learnt must be applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit, so that one also becomes convinced, with a conviction that transforms life," (W Hendricksen, IBID, page 295). It is only the word of God that is able to make a man truly wise and keep his heart and mind in the midst of troubles. The method for this is through faith, as the word is heard, believed and applied to life on a daily basis. The daily feeding on of the word of God will not only produce salvation for the soul but also the deliverance out of, or in the midst of the troubles that will come because of the enemy.

The Bible itself will save no-one, it is only when it's truths, which speak of Christ are taken and applied in love and obedience to him that there is power, growth and safety. As Wiersbe notes, "we are not saved by believing the Bible (John 5 : 39), but by trusting the Christ who is revealed in the Bible", (IBID, page 160).

Refer BTB - Holy Spirit – Teacher

APPLICATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

In verse 16 we are told that all Scripture is profitable, not all in the same way but it is all profitable. It was all written for you even if some was not written to you. It was given to us by God. It is God breathed. It corrects you and instructs you in righteousness so that you can be useful to Him. You need to read it, study it, believe it and apply it to your life.

BTB - Inspiration

If you do apply the Word of God to your life you will be thoroughly equipped "exartizo" which means to be fully kitted out. A boat was fully provisioned to do what it had to, the soldier needs to be fully prepared to fight. If you know God's Word and it saturates you then you are fully equipped. You are ready to march, you are ready to fight, you are ready to go into action for the Lord. Only as your congregation is fully equipped will the congregation be fully ready to follow you.

Many pastors bemoan the fact that they do not have their congregation backing them up. Have they equipped them?. You need to feed your troops as an army marches on its food. Those who are not fed go a little way on emotion and then fall apart.

King Harold of England lost the battle of Hastings because his men were tired and hungry and were working on emotion and when the Norman who had been well fed and rested feigned a withdrawal Harold's army charged and ended up being overcome by the arrows of the Normans. Just so will all who follow emotion perish in the spiritual battles in this world.

BIBLE TOPIC BOOK

Angelic Conflict, Last Days, Rapture, Christian Life and, Laws in the New Testament, Holy Spirit – Teacher, Inspiration

LECTURE TWO - 2 TIMOTHY 4:1-21

MINISTERING IN THE LAST DAYS

Because of the increased pressure on believers as things draw to a close there are certain things that need to be reinforced. These are the last words for ministers in the last days. We therefore need to pay very close attention to it.

In the light of the reality of the Judgement Seat of the Lord, before which we will all stand to receive reward for what we have done on earth, we are to approach our job as pastors of the Word. What does this mean?

It should mean that we commit ourselves to thorough faithfulness to the Word, care for the Lord's people, and toughness of mind as we face those who will oppose us. In these verses Paul appears to be clear in his mind that he is passing on the torch to Timothy as the representative of the next generation of pastors, and as with all "handovers", he is careful to note, even repeat, all the basic points he has made before.

The very language here is similar to the words used by Roman Officers as they passed orders to the next detachment relieving them of a duty before they went back to barracks for the night.

Timothy is to be, "a sentinel ever on duty", (E K Simpson, IBID, page 152). This is Paul's mental attitude as he faces death. He is returning to barracks and leaving Timothy and his generation to face the foe for the next years of the churches history.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING

Paul wants Timothy to preach, "the whole word and nothing but the word", (G Wilson, IBID, page 160).

As Ironside points out forcefully, "this is the charge of the Holy Spirit to every minister of the Gospel; preach the word! His one object should be to glorify God in setting forth his truth in the way he himself directs", (IBID, page 233).

"Let him apply himself, sparing no labour or trouble!" (Fairburn, IBID, page 384).

The military word, "charge", sets the tone. Paul solemnly commands Timothy to heed the instruction he is about to give, making it even more serious by stating that it is being given in the presence of God the Father and the Lord himself.

We will all stand before the Lord to receive reward for the things done in our body, and Paul is making it clear to Timothy that what he about to say is something for which great reward is at stake.

It is worth reminding ourselves that the doctrine of rewards does not focus on our enjoyment of rewards through eternity but rather on the glory our receiving them brings to the Lord through whose power we won them!

"Timothy is God's town crier", (R Mounce, IBID, page 147). We all are, as we preach the Word the "town criers" of our nations and cities.

The herald (Greek ; keruz) was the authoritative messenger of the king and responsible for changing nothing and covering everything that the king had ordered. This is our role as pastors, be it of a church or home group, to teach the whole counsel of the word in a way that covers the things the Lord wants covered, with the power and emphasis that is required.

"Above all else he must preach doctrine. He must not simply tell bible stories, relate interesting illustrations, or read a verse then forget it. True preaching is the explanation and application of Bible doctrine. Anything else is just religious speech making", (W Wiersbe, IBID, page 165).

As Mounce notes, "laymen are tired of oft repeated illustrations and well intentioned psychological tips under the guise of spiritual insight"(IBID, page 147). What is needed is the systematic teaching of the Word so that all may hear, understand, believe and apply it.

"Note the emphasis upon sound teaching, we need to know the great truths of Scripture in order that we may learn how to behave in accordance with the revelation God has given. Sincerity of purpose, (on the part of the preacher) is not enough, we are to be sanctified by the truth", (Ironside, IBID, page 235).

As Stott strongly affirms, "we have no liberty to invent our message but only to communicate the word that God has spoken and now has commanded to the church as a sacred trust, . . . , our responsibility is to be faithful in preaching the word, the results of the proclamation are the responsibility of the Holy Spirit, and we can afford to wait patiently for him to work, . . . , even if people forsake Timothy's ministry in favour of teachers who tickle their fancy, Timothy is to fulfil his ministry",(IBID, pages 106, 108, 112).

Some people will love the Word others will be convicted and hate it. Ironside tells as story about that from an old preacher friend of his. "You remember what Sam Jones said, 'if you throw a stone at a pack of dogs and one of them yelps, you know who got hit'", (IBID, page 236).

The aorist tense of the verb to preach makes it clear that the preacher is to use every appropriate time he has to proclaim the Word of God, and he is to do it as the policy of the king of kings! Without the whole counsel of God the church cannot be as it should be, for the people do not know what God thinks.

There will be appropriate times, but they are the times that there is opportunity, whether others think it is the "right" time or not. The pastor must be very spiritually sensitive to opportunity and take every one he can whether others see it as an opportunity or not.

He is to "take his stand", (be instant!) and really fight for the Word and strongly proclaim it. He is to see every preaching opportunity as a place for battle and is to apply himself to the task like a hardened foot soldier. Teaching must be given by the pastor, "when you feel inclined to and when you do not, whether men are anxious to hear or not", (A T Hanson, IBID, page 97).

USE OF THE WORD OF GOD

He is to reprove, rebuke and exhort with the mental attitude of patience. Let us look at each of these words:

1. Reprove. - This is a legal word that means to prepare a case and present it in a way that is sure to secure the verdict you want. It is a word that means there is no effort spared in the preparation of the work, nor in the delivery.
2. Rebuke. - Those who do not measure up to God's standard must feel the sting of rebuke and be corrected. The objective is to change the person from a place where they will be judged to a place where they can be blessed.
3. Exhort. - The two earlier words are negative in that they face people up to errors, and this word indicates that it is to be done with encouragement also, so that the person who is corrected might grow. This is the same concept as "telling the truth in love".
4. With all "long suffering". - Patient endurance under pressure is what the congregation should see in the pastor. If we preach about a thing we must be prepared to show it in our life, and given the nature of many believers this is a character trait of the spirit filled believer that you will have plenty of opportunity to show! As Mounce notes, "the ministry is no place for an individual with a short fuse,(IBID, page 148).
5. Doctrine. - Teaching systematically is the method for all pastors, for this alone helps believers grow.

"In every period of history . . . there will be a season during which men refuse to listen to sound doctrine, as in the past in Jeremiah 5 : 31, and Ezekiel 33 : 32", (W Hendricksen, IBID, page 311). It is this issue that Paul addresses in the next verse.

There are some for whom, as Guthrie notes, "what they heard merely scratched their eardrums without penetrating further", (The pastoral Epistles, page 167).

RECEPTION OF DOCTRINE

Some people are a law unto themselves, they are not teachable, for they accept only what suits them. They do not want healthy doctrine, for they are not interested in genuine spiritual growth for it takes time, and energy, and involves some

suffering! They are people who cannot take the heat that God's training involves for the believer. They want a easier route that makes them look spiritual without the energy that true growth requires.

Paul uses a certain amount of sarcasm here. These people are like those with fleas, they have an itch and they scratch it. Their attitude to the precious things of God is like that of an animal with an itch, they don't think, they just go for what feels good. They want instant gratification. The result is terrible; they turn away from the truth and turn towards evil and finally receive the judgement that accompanies it!

To turn away from the teaching of God's word is to turn away from the source of truth, and so all that is left is "fables"; pleasant stories that please the Old Sin Nature but do not produce growth in the soul. The real danger to the church is not from the alcoholic and the drug addict for they know they are in sin and may repent, the real danger is from those who believe they are spiritual and teach doctrines that put people into sleep, or fantasy land, and so make them useless in the Angelic Conflict.

PAUL'S COMMANDS TO TIMOTHY

Paul has clear instructions for Timothy regarding his role. The instructions begin with, "but you", reminding Timothy and us that whatever others do we must stand for God, and be different. Fairburn stresses this, "whatever others might do, and whether men will hear of whether they will forbear, this is what thou must do!"(IBID, page 388).

The commands are firm.

1. Watch! - The nightly order to all guards in the Roman Army was this. Timothy is to be alert, sober, self controlled, and ever vigilant, watching for the enemy at all times, and being ready to raise the alarm and fight.
2. Endure! - Endure evil as it attacks and as the enemy tries to wear you down with pressures. It means, as we have seen before, grit it out, be tough and robust under pressures, by depending on the Lord rather than on your own strength.
3. Do the work! - Timothy is to apply himself to the vitally important task of evangelism and teaching.

By fulfilling these things he will give full proof of his calling and will complete the ministry he is responsible for to God. We would say that Timothy is to stick to his job, do the basics, and so not get side tracked onto non-essentials.

"The answer to the new threat is simply to persevere in the old task. It will not be easy, therefore face hardships, better perhaps, accept hardship. ...these are simply incidental to the main purpose, work to spread the gospel", (C K Barrett, IBID, page 117). Hearing the Lord's "well done, good and faithful servant", (Matthew 25 : 21 - 23,) is what we must desire above all else as pastors and believers.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

The Lord is watching our concentration as we hear the Word and also our performance as we apply it. How much more fervent would we be if we remember that? The Lord is the judge of us, not any other person or power. It is his assessment alone that matters throughout eternity, it is his "well done" that we should desire.

He is coming again and is coming to judge the lost and set up his kingdom. We are part of this and yet few believers today even know about the doctrines of end times. Paul was only in Thessalonica for a few weeks and yet he covered the doctrines of the Rapture, the Tribulation and the Second Advent. We should know these things, for such things will assist us in focusing our minds on what matters now and what does not.

As others in the church seek easy teaching and pleasurable activities that do not require concentration and energy we must remain true to the Biblical standard and seek out the faithful teachers of the Word and hear and apply their words. We must set our hearts to avoid the "itchy ears" group and go for the Biblical group for our fellowship!

What is your gift as a believer? If you are an evangelist, are you doing what the Lord has called you to? If you have the gift of helps are you doing what you can in your local assembly or church? If the gift of giving is yours are you earning what you can and giving what you should? If you are a teacher, are you in the right place for you in the church? If you have the gift of counsel or encouragement, are you serving in small groups where you can exercise your gift to the growth of the believers there?

Remember the Lord's words in Matthew 25 : 14 - 30, where the servant who had only one talent felt he couldn't use it and so lost everything. Many in the church feel "under-gifted", but the Lord gives gifts to us all (1 Corinthians 12 : 7 - 11), as he wills (v 11), and according to our abilities (Matthew 25 : 15), and we must use our gifts or lose them and the rewards that would have been ours. The Lord's will for us is that each person functions as he has intended. He gave the gifts, and he intends us to use what we have received without trying to be something we are not (1 Corinthians 12 : 20 - 27). He holds us personally responsible!

B. PASTORAL

As Ironside reminds us, "it is a poor kind of Christianity that rejoices in the fact that Christ has purchased for us eternal life through his death on the cross, yet refuses to identify oneself with him in suffering and persecution", (IBID, page 231). Timothy, and all who would stand in the battle line against the enemy as pastors, must heed the orders in these verses. They are our daily orders and must be actioned fully and completely.

Note the two groups of orders, with the warning that opposition without and apathy within the church may be our "battle zone" for teaching. We are to, preach, reprove, rebuke, exhort, teach doctrine, be watchful, alert, endure attacks and reverses, and do the work of evangelism and follow up.

We are held responsible for our ministry and only by completing the full course will we be approved by our Lord as a faithful servant. It is only completion of the job that gives "full proof" that we have done our best. Anything short of the best is not good enough for we are in a battle for the souls of men, and eternal reward or judgement are the stakes we fight for.

Paul has called Timothy and all of us as pastors to do our very best, and complete our calling, and here in these verses he gives his mature testimony that he has completed his task and is now ready to lay down his burden knowing the job, for him, is done. He uses this testimony to remind each of us that this, that he is saying, should be the words for all to say at the end of their service.

The image he uses to start this section is that of the libation, or drink offering, that was poured out to the gods, or God, as a symbol of service offered. In the pagan world, as Hanson notes, "when a ship slipped her cable the custom was to pour out a libation to the gods just before it weighed anchor", (IBID, page 99, also refer Hendricksen, IBID, page 314, and E F Scott, IBID, page 132). The word for departure was used for the weighing anchor of a ship and Paul sees his coming death as just that, a moving on to another destination, not an end but a beginning of a new and wonderful journey to meet his master face the face.

While this is a good picture, it is very probably not what Paul had in mind. "The metaphor is either from a sailor loosing his moorings or a soldier striking his tent; the next words make the latter the more probable", (W Lock, IBID, page 114, also refer Fairburn, IBID, page 390, as E Simpson notes, "a sense of combat predominates", IBID, page 155).

Paul has been speaking using military metaphors and this is the best picture to keep in mind through these verses. He has been fighting and leading the attack on the enemy for many years now and he is at this point withdrawing from the field of combat for the last time to receive his eternal reward, leaving the next generation to carry on the fight.

This is "crunch time" for Paul, as death is for all of us! This is the time when people see how much we believe our testimony, and how strong our hold on doctrine really is. It is here that we see the final application of the things he said in Philippians (1:23 2:17, 3:13, 14). It is as if Paul is saying to Timothy (who was the amanuensis for Philippians), "what I dictated to you then, that I was willing to depart and to have my life blood poured out, is now come to the test, I am face to face with it now!" (Lock, IBID, page 112).

Paul knows that the time for his execution is near, there is no hope of release now except the ultimate release straight into heaven itself. Of the five meanings of analusis (departure) one refers to the release of a prisoner from jail to full freedom, and this certainly is in view. As he waits he is enjoying and using every minute. He, with Peter in his second letter (written about this time also, as they were in the same jail awaiting death), is the best example we have of the doctrine we call "Dying Grace" in the New Testament record.

Like all who are facing their end he reviews his life and states the things he is certain of. While some, like the liberal commentator Hanson, (IBID, page 99), feels Paul's confidence is so different than his early letters as to be a strange thing, most see it as the evidence of the genuineness of the letters for this is what one would expect of the old Apostle as he sums up an eventful life with God. Paul is as Ironside notes singing here, "this is Paul's swan song, . . . but Paul did not wait until death to start singing. From the time he was saved by God's grace, he had a song in his heart which he continued to sing all his life" (IBID , page 240).

He sums up his testimony by three statements, drawing on three metaphors for the Christian life, soldier, athlete, teacher-priest:

1. I have fought a good fight! - He is saying here, I have no regrets, I have fought to win in every battle and I look back with pleasure at what God enabled me to do. So may we all one day!
2. I have finished my course. - The athletic stadium is in view here. Paul is bringing together all his early athletic metaphors here, noting he has not only run well but he has run according to the rules and now he can claim his prize. He has finished the race, he has met the standard set by the judge of all.
3. I have kept the faith. - He had preserved the faith "once delivered" and he was able to pass on his message to Timothy intact, with no doctrine lost or diluted, but each pure and powerful as the Lord had taught him through the Holy Spirit. Paul had guarded the altar of his soul and everything stored away there was intact, safe as a temple treasury.

He has perfect confidence in the certainty of eternal rewards for service rendered, and is trusting in the righteous judge that he will receive gracious blessing in eternity as he has had gracious provision in time. His reward, like ours, is laid aside in heaven for us. The way Paul expresses this it would appear that the rewards we are to receive are already there in heaven, as it were with our names on them, waiting for our arrival. Paul is expecting the "Crown Of Righteousness", one of the victors crowns that is set aside for those who serve the Lord with distinction in time.

The Lord's return is when the crowns are given. 1 Corinthians 3:9-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10, Hebrews 6:7-12, 2 Timothy 2:12. It is only at the end of the age that things are summed up on earth as also in heaven, so Paul has been waiting in heaven with all the other saints for nearly two thousand years now, yet he "felt" the reality of this event so strongly, for it will be the climax of this age. His focus was on the realities of the Lord, and the fact that there was time between when he would die and when he would receive rewards was of no concern to Paul. He was seeing the Lord face the face (1 Corinthians 15) and that was enough until the plan of God had run its course.

In the churches the communion service reminds us that we remember the Lord's death, "until he comes", 1 Corinthians 11:26. We are told, like the men in the parable, to "occupy until he comes!" (Luke 19:11ff), and to be ready for his appearing! (Luke 21:32 -36, John 21:22). Jesus told his disciples that he was going in order that he might return again to bring all who love him into a new place of blessing forever with him, (John 14:3-28). The issue for us is that we express our love for him appropriately, and that is by obedience to what he tells us to do, John 14:15, 21. John, in his first letter goes even further reminding the churches that to truly love him we need to be daily, moment by moment occupied with and abiding in him in our hearts, and that only as we let him fill our daily lives are we really ready for his appearing. John calls us to "abiding" fellowship with him moment by moment, so that we are able to resist sin and bring glory to him in all we do. 1 John 2:27 - 2:3.

It is the daily purification from sin that is the Lord's objective for us in our loving him. Purity of life and witness will always be the result of loving him. 1 John 3:3. Harry Ironside told a good story to illustrate this. "I will never forget, as a boy, how I used to be amazed as I heard an old preacher say in public prayer, 'Oh Lord, keep my eyes on the Lord Jesus, don't let me become a wicked old man'" (IBID, page 244).

It is our service in time that counts for the winning of rewards, and yet so few believers are gripped by either the desire to receive reward or the necessity to serve. For Paul it was a drivenness that he could not control, "woe to me if preach not the gospel!" 1 Corinthians 9:16-19. We all need such a spirit within us for it is the mark that we are true sons and daughters of Christ.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Are we ready for our own death? This is the final and great test for all of us, and one we will all face unless we are part of the Rapture Generation. Why isn't it spoken more of in our churches today? This is the last taboo subject in many places, and for believers it should not be. A society is sick when it talks of sex openly, the pleasures of which last for a short time, and refuses to talk of death, the consequences of last forever!

Paul was able to look back with great satisfaction and few regrets for time spent as a believer. This must be our goal as believers for it is in the end of a life that we see the true value of it. One of the ancient philosophers said, "call no man happy until he is dead". By this he meant, that it is only in the moments before death that you see whether the choices he made really worked out for him and he was truly satisfied and happy with his lot. Paul is very relaxed with his place with God and the role he has had, and he has great satisfaction seeing it completed.

Our final days are often simply a reflection of the whole tenor of our life. Paul had poured himself out in service throughout his life and so the last pouring was just the natural continuation of that. Paul was not faced with any death bed changes or confessions, he was going to die as he lived, consistently occupied with Christ and what he wanted done. Paul appeals to us for consistency, to live each day as if it is our last, and so please our Lord every moment.

Paul was a warrior for the Lord and so are we all as members in his army, engaged in a daily battle against an enemy that hates us. Daily to put our armour on, daily to receive our orders through prayer and Bible study, and daily to set our guard against evil and sin in all its forms; all this is our task as soldiers of Christ. It is the fulfilment of this that wins the Lord's praise, it is forgetting our place as soldiers that brings discipline to us in time and loss of reward in eternity.

Each of us have particular gifts and a place where these are to be ministered, and our job is to find this and be obedient in our service. We are not to try to usurp the place of others but to fulfil our own commission from the Lord. We are to "play by the rules" and not cause disruption or distress within the body of Christ but to work together with others to bring glory to the Lord who laid down his life for us. Our focus is to be on heaven not earth; we are to be heavenly minded rather than earthly minded. As we have seen in a previous chapter this is an important test for us all; do the things of time preoccupy us or do we keep our heart set on the things of God?

Are we awaiting his coming? Do we look forward to his rule over this earth? Are we showing this eagerness by and in our service now? For that is the way such anticipation is truly shown!

There is certainty in his return and there is certainty in the reception of rewards for all who will serve him now as they should. Ironside reminds us of this point. "I do not know of any Scripture that promises rewards for post mortem gifts for the work of the Lord, . . . it is far better to give what you can while in the body, for if given as unto the Lord this assures reward in that day", (IBID, page 249). So many leave things in their will to the Lord's work that they could have given while alive, and shared then in a work and its achievements. It is a good thing to leave things in a will to a work but there is no benefit to the person involved in time or eternity. Why wait believer, give your time, prayer, and if the Lord has blessed with money, give that now so that you may share in the work now as well as the blessings throughout eternity of being part of a great work.

B. PASTORAL

The testimony of Paul must be the testimony we seek as pastors. Can we say now in our ministries that we are;

1. Fighting the fight that the Lord has placed us in with a whole hearted commitment to winning for him?
2. Striving by his rules to complete everything that is before us to do now, looking to satisfy his demands on our life?
3. Obeying all orders received and guarding the truth we have received as the most precious thing we have?

Rewards are there not for us to glory in but for more glory to come to the Lord as throughout all eternity we will be visible reminders of what the Lord's power was able to achieve with a mere man or woman who was simply committed to him.

This is a great legacy to leave us. A great way to go into eternity.

BIBLE TOPIC BOOK

Judgment Seat of Christ, Rewards and Crowns, Grace

LECTURE THREE - 1 TIMOTHY 5 : 1-16

INTRODUCTION

This deals with fellow workers in the church. This is major topic for ministers. It is divided into three, the older people, the younger people, the prayer warriors and the widows. We need to look at this in the Jewish context. Apart from Luke all the Scripture was written by Jews. In Jewish culture of the day, the older person is over 40 the younger is under 40. You are genuinely old over 60. Be careful in the way you deal with people in the congregation. The over 40's and particularly the over 60's are going to be a source of strength in the church. It is the older people not the youth group which is your strength, if well used in their appropriate role. A strong older group is a sign of a strong church.

There were no chapter divisions until the Bibles were printed. In verses 13-16 of chapter 4 Timothy as a young minister must be an example of study, teaching and behaviour. He must teach and meditate on God's Word. Make sure that you are right with the Lord, Paul urges. Do not be intimidated by the older people in the church, simply give the word systematically as well as the gospel. He is to raise the flag high and to teach. When he is in the pulpit he is to use his gift and not to be concerned by the grey hairs. Many people with grey hair have grey hair covering a baby soul. They have never grown in the Lord.

ATTITUDE OF THE PASTOR

The mental attitude of the pastor is under the spot light here (Verses 1-2). The pastor must not look down on nor speak down to anyone in the church. He must not arrogantly say anything, nor treat the Lord's people as if they are serfs to be ordered; they are members of the Royal Family of God to be led!

Pastoral authority is spoken loudest about by those who have no business holding it! True pastoral authority is the authority to teach, to lead, to set an example, and to suffer first for the faith; it is never authority to tell others what they are to do other than by direct teaching of the Scriptures.

Authority and power, even the legitimate teaching authority of the pastor can have an effect on vulnerable people, and stopping abuse of this is in view here. Paul lays down very strict guidelines, or protocols, for the exercise of correction by the pastor.

The pastor may see sin or disobedience in a person's life and if this is so he must stand up for the Biblical truth and verbally correct the person but it must be done in a spirit of love (Ephesians 4 : 15), with concern for the other believer's spiritual growth. The objective of pastoral discipline/authority is always that the person being disciplined changes and grows spiritually to become more useful to the Lord for advancing his work.

The other vital principle here is that the pastor must never come between a husband and his wife, a child and their parents; his role is to enhance marital and family relationships, never to replace them with dependency on himself.

SEXUAL TEMPTATION

Sexual infidelity is a major cause of men leaving the ministry in Western countries today. In a theological college known to the author over one third of the graduates of five years ago have left their ministry because of marital infidelity! Paul lays down guidelines that if taken seriously would protect the pastor from danger. "Many a person has ended up in sorrow or disgrace because no-one was willing to say a word of caution", and in this area of inter-personal ministerial relationships caution, humility, and care is required. (R H Mounce "Pass It On" page 65)

The first protocol is directed towards men who are older than the pastor. He is not to "bawl them out", or verbally talk down to them in any way. He is to show respect and there is to be no hint of arrogance. To the younger men he is to behave as towards his own brothers with equality of dealing. The pastor is not to "pull rank" on people.

Towards the women he is to behave in a dignified way with respect towards the older as to his own mother, and with purity of mind from sexual sin towards those who are younger or the same age as him. Keeping up his guard against sexual temptation is the major focus here.

As A T Robertson noted, "nothing will so easily make or mar the young preacher as his conduct with young women". (quoted in G B Wilson page 71). As Fernando states, "the story of the church is tainted with innumerable examples of the fall of ministers who presumed that they were exceptions to the rule in the area of relationships with the opposite sex" (page 124).

A. PERSONAL APPLICATION

As members of the Royal Family of God we must have an attitude towards other believers as towards brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers. We are all equal in God's sight and there is no-one who is to lord it over anyone else. No putting on what used to be called "airs and graces", or abuse and arrogance. Humility, love, wisdom, tact, and tenderness should characterise our dealings with other believers.

B. PASTORAL APPLICATION

Pastoral authority is, at its heart, the responsibility to tell the truth in love to all under your pastoral care and to treat all with respect and with ultimate concern for their everlasting well being. There is no room for yelling, screaming, hatred, envy, abusive language, high handed and arrogant tone of voice, or any other power based approach to God's people. The pastor is to preach and teach and exhort and correct in plain speech with love that is clear to all. If discipline is to be applied it is to be applied with calm words and a quiet and prayerful spirit. If people are disobedient they are to be removed from the church but this is till done with an attitude that is open to their return after repentance.

The ministry is no place for a power hungry person. The "hunger" God seeks from us is the hunger to serve him and worship him, and teach others to do the same.

VERSES 3-16

This section, has one central phrase which sums up Paul's concern. It is the phrase, "widows indeed", and indicates what Paul's point is here; it is to ensure that the widows of the church who really need the help get it, and that there is not one piece of money spent in an area where it doesn't need to be. Paul is talking about the very modern concept of targeting relief to the needy, and the equally vital aspect of this, which is family responsibility. The church did not and must not pick up the monetary responsibility for those who have families that should! Once again the concept that the pastor must not come between a family and it's members and their responsibilities. Nothing the pastor does is to undermine marriage or the extended family unit.

For a woman who had lost her husband life in the ancient world was tough and dangerous. If she did not have help from her relatives she could die of starvation, as there were few opportunities for a woman to earn money to support herself. The danger that she would be driven to prostitution was a real one then, as it is still today in some places.

The church was to meet the needs of the believing widows; it was to "honour" them by providing them enough money or food to enable them to live and support themselves. In Acts 6 as we have already seen the early church at Jerusalem established the deacons to administer aid to the widows. It is here that the rules relating to them are given.

RULES INVOLVING WIDOWS

The rules are clear;

1. Widows with children who should be able to support them are not to receive any money from the church, the children are to meet their obligation to support their mother.

2. Widows with any other living relatives are not to be supported, because any living niece or nephew, brother, or sister has an obligation to their kin.
3. A genuine widow, is desolate (monoo), that is she has been left alone with no fault on her part. She has not divorced, or killed her husband for example. She does not have anyone to assist her at all.
4. The true widow trusts in God and is known for her faith, resting in the promises of God's Word. It is her faith and confidence in God that brings its reward with the churches support.
5. The money she receives comes with a responsibility for her to meet in return. She must commit herself to daily and nightly prayer for the church. To receive money means you are "enrolled" in the churches prayer warrior team and must pray for the ministry. The word here is the same one used for soldiers being "signed on" in the army, and it is clear that this is what Paul had in mind. The receipt of money involved an obligation.
6. A widow is not to live in self centred gratification and personal pleasure. There is nothing here against enjoying yourself, but the widow is to be using her money for living and opportunity for the Lord's work not for personal pleasures.

There are further qualifications in the next verses. The clear intention is to establish a "roll" of widows and co-ordinate their prayer warrior work for the benefit of the church. By the third century there was a formal order of widows who ministered to the church in prayer and good works.

As W M Ramsay was to note, "Paul felt that the reputation of the church in pagan society as well as its future development depended largely on the conduct of it's women." ("Pictures of the Apostolic Church" page 349). The prayer work and the social work able to be done by the older women was significant for the church.

Fernando notes, "they were like the batteries of a torch, inside, unrecognised, but the source of power. Dare we then despise the aged!" (page 57). W Wiersbe goes further, "it has been my experience that godly widows are the spiritual powerhouse in the church". (page 69).

If a believer does not support his family's widows he is to be publicly rebuked and shamed into meeting his obligation. To be called "worse than an unbeliever" would be a great insult. The standards we live by are higher than those of the world and we have a solemn obligation to care for our own family and for them not to be a burden on anyone else. This is a part of our witness to the world.

A. PERSONAL APPLICATION

A true "widow" trusts in God alone, verse five, and practises the faith rest life in daily living. A godly woman can be given money to support herself so that she can better serve to Lord in deeds of works of prayers. It is service that is in view here.

There is a challenge to us all here in our self centred cultures that place a high value on pleasure, feeling good, and "meeting our own needs". The Lord and Paul call us back to the true moral ground which notes that the believer is to fulfil their obligations before they seek to meet their own needs. Self centred pleasure is not to be a goal for the believer of any age!

To fail to meet our obligations is to come under the heavy judgement of God. When Paul refers to such people as "worse than unbelievers" he is indicating that such people are outside God's purpose, plan and provision, and are thereby in the place of judgement. It is a serious thing to fall short of God's standards.

B. PASTORAL APPLICATION

Each pastor is to keep a list of approved widows and he is to ensure they are cared for, through the work of the deacons. Their relief is to be co-ordinated by the pastor, and they are to be briefed on the prayer tasks so that they might intelligently support the work. This requires co-ordination by the pastor but in this writer's experience it is an administrative task that repays tremendous dividends.

VERSES 9-10

Here we have further rules to be applied, in addition to the previous ones, before a woman is entered into the list of widows to be supported by the church.

As we go through this it becomes clear just how far many of our churches have strayed from the standards of the early church. The challenge of these verses is to return to our roots and establish any aid program we run on this basis and on this basis alone.

1. The widow had to be 60 years of age or over. Until then she was expected to be able to look after herself with the support of family and friends.

2. She had to have been a "one woman man". If she had been married several times, or been unfaithful or immoral, she was not to be supported. Paul is going to order the younger widows to remarry, thus under this rule making themselves ineligible for later support. Paul's reasoning appears to have been thus; if she has remarried she has a wider circle of family who can be drawn on for her support, both in the short term and later in her life.

There is another possibility here; that the real emphasis is, as with the pastor, on "faithful to one person", not on whether she had been married several times. It is clear that Paul has immorality as his major target; no immoral man or woman is to hold a position of authority and responsibility in the church. The church was not to support immoral women who, "tidied up their act", just in the last years of their life either. It is a persistently moral life that is required to qualify.

3. She had to have had a reputation for good works. Her name was to be associated with works of charity and love and this had to be "witnessed" by many. Evidence had to be gathered before widows were supported.
4. She had to have been a good mother and to have completed her role well. Her children would have died, or they would be supporting her, but they were brought up well.
5. She had to have had an "open home" to other believers in need.
6. Washing the saints feet, refers back to our Lord's act in John 13, especially verse 14, where we are all encouraged to follow our Lord's example in humble service to others, even being prepared to do the service of a common slave for another believer.
7. To relieve the afflicted means she aided those under great pressure, even possibly risking her life to assist the families of the martyrs. She was a person who would assist where-ever she could.
8. The fruit of her life was all good. She had good works to back her verbal testimony. Matthew 7:16 -20.

A. PERSONAL APPLICATION

This is the standard for all Christian behaviour and we are all obliged to meet this. Paul is not listing a hopelessly impossible criteria for the widow so that the church would not have to enrol anyone. He is reminding us that this is the standard for all Christian life and service and there is no support for anyone not reaching this standard.

B. PASTORAL APPLICATION

Application of these rules is the responsibility of the pastor and one can imagine that there may have been some argument in some cases. The criteria had to be applied and applied consistently. The church was not to become a social welfare agency, where all needs were met. If a person was in need because of their own immoral life and choices they were left to face the consequences of their acts; the Lord's money was not used to support a person who violated God's standards, nor to protect them from the consequences of their actions. The pastor had to be ready to publicly justify the decisions made in these issues and to warn the people that their lives now set them up for their old age, for blessing or for judgement.

We have become very liberal in the way we apply welfare help, and we are not scripturally right in so doing. The Lord's money is never to be used to support a person who has lived an immoral or wasted life. The only aid the church should give is towards those who have served the Lord well in word and deed, and who will continue to do so in prayer in response to the aid received.

VERSES 11 - 16

It appears that the promise made by the widows when accepting the churches support was akin to a marriage vow; to commit themselves to the Lord as to a husband and that they would spend the rest of their lives to serve the Lord and the church. All such vows within Jewish society were looked upon very seriously and to break them was to bring judgement upon the person who had fallen short of the vow / oath they had taken.

All oaths / vows were voluntary but once they were taken they were deemed to be binding for life. Paul was a very practical man; he saw that a young widow would be initially full of desire to serve the Lord and want to be enrolled as a prayer warrior but that her own natural and acceptable sexual desires would re-assert themselves in the months and years after the death of her husband. He didn't want to have Timothy or any other pastor in the position where they had to turn away a keen young woman from service because of this issue, as they would be insulted and offended by it. To avoid this he makes a blanket rule that excludes all young women knowing that if they are keen on serving the Lord He will provide a place in a new marriage where they can serve without sexual tension.

The phrase "wax wanton" has no negative association in the Greek, it simply reflects a normal return to sexual interest. Paul makes it clear that no promises are to be made after a time of grief, for normal sexual desire will probably return and if it does it is God's way of saying, there is a person out there for you. Refer 1 Corinthians 7.

As C K Barrett notes, "the desire for marriage in young widows is natural and is not condemned, celibacy is asked of none, and is discouraged, save in those, who by reason of age, could find it no strain." (page 76) Paul tries to ensure that no young woman is placed in a situation where she could be under the Lord's judgement for breaking her word/promise.

Fernando expresses it this way; "we see Paul's realism. Knowing the make up of younger women he showed that it is unfair and unwise to make demands of them that are unnatural to their physical desires." (page 126 - 127).

The dangers mentioned here are those that occur when people have time on their hands without a clear focus and mission for each day. If a person, be they male or female, lacks clear focus, and receives financial support for doing nothing, they will soon drift into the behaviours mentioned in verse thirteen. Without clear daily work goals people quickly drift into idle activities and gossip, where their attention is focused on things that are of no real consequence at all. The major problem with inaction is that things that busy people have no time for the idler is pre-occupied with.

Paul has no time for those who are wilfully unemployed, as he notes in 2 Thessalonians 3: 6 - 12, and orders all believers to be busy in their chosen work, or what is available in the area. No believer is to be idle! The message is clear; if we can work for our meals we should and no-one should help an able bodied person who is capable of working for themselves.

Paul orders that the way out of this dilemma is for the younger widows to remarry. Paul is operating, as noted above, on the doctrinal principle that if we are alive and have sexual desire then the Lord has someone out there for us and our role is to wait until we find them. If a young widow does not, or is not prepared to wait for their new mate, then they are likely to fall into even greater error. Paul notes that some of the widows have already got into trouble because of Timothy's previous policy and the enemy is able to mock the church because of it. Some widows may even have left the church under sexual temptation and gone of with pagans; this is what may have happened, and clearly it is what Paul feared would happen.

Paul's last point here is to reinforce the point that the Lord's money, given to the church, is not to be used for any purpose other than that authorized by the apostles or the Lord. Especially is not to be given to people who are able to care for themselves, or have others who should care for them.

A. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Believers witness by their words but the door of opportunity is opened by the life and those who do not work, when they can, do not have a witness. If we cannot work the Lord will provide for us, as we are obedient, but if we can work at anything we should. Believers who do not care for their own also close the door for witness also, and Paul reminds us all that we must meet our responsibilities and care for our parents, and our uncles and aunts in the Lord. The Bible is clear that our responsibilities go to our extended family not just to our nuclear family.

If we are without a marital partner through death, we are to seek the Lord's guidance for another partner. If we are young and we feel sexual desire we can be sure that the Lord has a person for us and that we are to wait for them prayerfully.

B. PASTORAL APPLICATION

The church is not to spend the Lord's money on any person who is able to support themselves, or find someone who is able to support them in a marriage. There is no support in Scripture for the "do good" schemes that many churches operate today where the Lord's money is given to alcoholics and drug addicts and criminals before they have even given themselves to the Lord!

This is a shameful thing and will draw the Lord's judgement. Our responsibility is to give the gospel to the unbelievers we meet not money; money is to be given to those who preach the gospel, and teach doctrine and to the widows who back them up in prayer.

Paul moves from this subject to the subject of paying the pastor. There is no accident in this, for if we spend our money in social work that we shouldn't there will not be enough to fully support and reward the faithful preachers of the word.

The pastors job is not to select partners for the widows, nor to allow anyone to come in with "words of knowledge" telling them who to marry. They are to simply wait on the Lord and listen to their own heart and the Lord will guide them. The pastor is not a match maker he is a doctrine teacher, to encourage them to faith and confidence. The Lord will provide for all our needs. Philippians 4:19.

Refer to BTB - CHARITY - WIDOWS, WORK

LECTURE 4 -: INTRODUCTION - EVANGELISM

INTRODUCTION

Evangelism the Church on Fire by Sumner is the main text. [ECFS] that I will use, and quote from. If you have a copy, you should read a chapter a week.

There are two basic premises in this study, the first is, "what saith the Scripture" Galatians 4:30. Guidance for evangelism as well as all other things in the Christian life are delineated in the Scriptures. If you cannot find it either the Lord has not given it or you have not looked in the right place.

The second principle is found in Philippians 3:17 - "be followers together of me". God's servants who formed the early church should be used as an example. It is the Acts and letters of the New Testament that we should follow for our example. We follow the Apostles rather than modern evangelists.

Scripture is our source and resource for study. A lot of what goes on as evangelism today is not Biblical. We start with the Scripture, we finish with the Scripture and the other books are supplementary; so while I will quote from some books, the only true "text" for evangelism is Scripture.

ROMANS 10:1-17

We should read this chapter and meditate on it. Here Paul desires the salvation of Israel. Paul does not however pray that the Lord save Israel, for he knows how God works; so must we if we are to be evangelists. God has told us how to pray in evangelistic situations. If we are going to walk with Him we need to pray in accordance with the Scriptures.

Look at Paul; he says "Lord open their eyes that they might see". He prayed that those he met would be under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and be saved. He asks that they might be convicted of sin, righteousness and that the way of human good, apart from God's will, is not the way to be saved. He prays in accordance with John 16:8-11, so should we!

BTB - Human Good - Divine Good.

Paul is concerned about the self righteousness of Israel and asks the Lord to show them that their righteousness is nothing and that if they continue in that regard they will be judged in the company of Satan. He gives the message of salvation in verse 8 and prays that the unbeliever may hear the message when he gives it to them. We should also ask that the Lord use us to save the lost.

If you are a soldier of Christ you need to go out and find the battles. The fisherman goes to where the fish are. We need to pray for the salvation of the lost Paul's way. You must be willing to talk to the lost and be where the lost are. You therefore have to be out there in the world. Jesus said that as a lamp on the hill we need to be seen. Let your light shine. Paul seeks the lost and is asking for others to follow him in the quest for the lost.

Verse 4 shows that only saving faith will deliver them. They must hear the truth and respond to it under the Holy Spirit's urging. Christ is the only object for saving faith, he alone saves. Romans 8:1-4.

Verse 9-13 - He is the message and we lift him up in evangelism. There is no other subject other than Christ; he alone gives the unbeliever hope.

Verse 14-17 - The challenge for us all is that there be enough preachers out there doing the job of evangelism. They must have the right spirit of prayer, the right message, and the right focus; to lift him up that all might be drawn to him and in Holy Spirit empowered faith believe to salvation.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF EVANGELISM

Paul gives us basic principles for evangelism here:-

1. All evangelists must feel a burden for the lost, their own people and others.
2. Prayer must take that burden to the Lord for his Holy Spirit's moving upon the lost.
3. All fellow believers should join together in prayer for the lost and for the evangelist 1 Timothy 5. Every evangelist recruits others to join them in the work.
4. The evangelist must tell the truth. There is one way alone for people to be saved.
5. The evangelist must use God's Word alone. You must use the Word of God and that alone. It alone, has the promise of Isaiah 55:11.

ROMANS 1:14-17

Romans 1:14-17 shows the burden Paul feels as a debtor to all men; he believes he owes the unbeliever the gospel. Evangelism is not an optional extra. These people are going to go to hell therefore they need to hear the gospel.

First he says, I feel the burden for the lost.

Secondly he notes the training issue. Paul notes that he is ready to preach; sadly most are not today! You can only give the gospel when you know the gospel. Many Christians do not know the gospel well enough to give it.

Thirdly, we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It does not matter what people say you are to give them the gospel. It does not matter if you are shy or embarrassed you give the gospel as you are dealing with eternal issues. If you get a person who is committed to a product you cannot shut them up or kill their enthusiasm because it is their product. Paul says that he knows the product and that it is the only one that saves.

ROMANS 10:18-32

Here Paul was realistic in his understanding of those to whom he was giving the gospel. In these verses there is a tremendous catalogue of evil, perverts, thugs, and thieves. Paul says that he is committed to them all and will give them the gospel if they will listen. There are as lot of people who are put off by some obnoxious unbeliever. A hell doomed sinner is not going to care about what you think. You should not be offended when the unbeliever takes the Lord's name in vain. These people are going to hell because they reject the Lord Jesus Christ. You have the remedy.

We should not get sidetracked trying to get them tidied up before you give the gospel to them. These people are sinners who Christ died for; nothing must come between you and that person and the gospel. You are not here to be an ecologist you are here to be an evangelist. You are not here to clean up fishponds you are here to fish in the fishponds. Matthew 4: 19.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

Turn to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and read the passage. These people no longer practise their sin but the sort of people they were is eye opening. There are those who used to be one or other of the two types of homosexuals, those who take the female role and those who take the male. They are classified as effeminate and those that abuse each other.

Here we have a church which is made up of people who were extremely unsavoury characters, thieves, thugs, robbers and homosexuals but they have all been transformed by the fact that they have believed in Christ. It does not matter how bad people are they are candidates for the gospel. We should pray that we be given opportunity to give the gospel to people. Show them they need a Saviour.

These people were very wicked but they had been transformed. The believer has good news for the unbeliever but often believers giving the gospel try to make people give up things prior to receiving the gospel. This is not biblical!

Let the Holy Spirit transform them; it is he who leads them to saving faith, and he can lead them to holiness also. Remember the Lord's words Matthew 9:12,13, Mark 2:17, Luke 5: 31, 32. "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

CHURCH GROWTH

The Biblical principle of starting a church is to preach the gospel and build your church on converts not sheep stealing. A good example was a Salvation Army fellow who went to the Gold Coast in Queensland and started building the church on converts. After a while he asked the locals for a list of the worst ten men in the area and them systematically set about praying for their conversion. Within a short number of years they were all converted and when that officer went to China as a missionary one of the ten took over as leader of the church.

Church growth is not based on public relations. Church growth is related to evangelism. This is what you see in Acts and the Epistles, the people giving the gospel in a prayerful manner and people coming to a saving knowledge of Christ and multiplying the church.

HOLY SPIRIT - REGENERATOR

The Spirit is the executive power in evangelism - refer to Ephesians 2:1-5. The unbeliever is dead in trespasses and sins. You walk with the Spirit in this area. Only the Spirit can break through this Satanic lie. A believer can talk to an unbeliever until he is blue in the face but it is the Holy Spirit which does the conversion. This is why prayer and evangelism go hand in hand. Evangelism is praying and saying. Our job is to give the facts from the Scriptures but only He breaks through. Candidates for evangelism are all in Satan's camp and are under his control, they are spiritually dead.

If the person does not respond pull back and pray. Give the gospel but if you see the shutters come down pull back. You give them the gospel (or pray) until you or they die. While they are alive there is hope. You will sometimes find that when the unbeliever dies slowly over a long period that they will respond at the end. Once they die however there is no chance. We must recognise that we are called to be evangelists and are called to work in accordance with God's grace. You do not do the work, he does.

FIRST PRINCIPLES

Let us revise the "First principles".

1. The Bible is the text book, the apostles are our role models.
2. The Holy Spirit converts, the Holy Spirit within you will give a burden for the lost. You must follow the guidelines, walking and talking in the power of the Holy Spirit and must be sensitive to His moving on the unbeliever so that when you see the door open you walk through it. Many people are harangued out of heaven.
3. The mental attitude of the evangelist is that they are debtor, not ashamed and ready.
4. Evangelism is giving them the answer to the pressing need in their soul.
5. Evangelism is about grace; God has the power, God does the work, God gets the glory, and we (and the saved ones) get the blessing.

REFER TO BTB - HUMAN GOOD - DIVINE GOOD., EVANGELISM

LECTURE 5 - BEING AN AMBASSADOR

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5

Read this passage and see Paul's strong point. We are God's ambassadors. We are to make full proof of our ministry. There is no way to avoid this. We must be evangelists. If evangelism in the church is dead it is because there is a problem with the minister. If the church is cold it is because the fire has gone out in the pulpit. When D.L. Moody was asked how to revive a cold church he said build a large fire in the pulpit.

Dr Robert Sumner says, "Brethren, let's quit alibiing ourselves, and face our sins. The whole matter comes down to this. Each member must consecrate themselves. Generalities will not do. When the church members stop talking about what they think may, can, must, might, should, ought would be done, and begin to ask, "Lord, what will you have me to do?", then the revival will come with power.

1 TIMOTHY 4:13-16

Read 1 Timothy 4:13-16. Here Paul made it clear that Timothy was responsible for those who heard him. As an evangelist and a minister we need to be obedient to the great commission. We need to take the Word seriously. The revival will come when people are willing to say, "What do you want me to do Lord?" Here am I Lord send me. We have to win the battle against ourselves before we can win the battle against Satan. Having stoked up the fire you encourage people to be followers of you.

The Sunday School is the biggest field of evangelism in the church. It is most important and should be a major importance in the church. The children in the Sunday school should have chairs and desks rather than the congregation. They should have priority. Many of the children are from unbelieving homes and are unsaved and must be treated better.

You must put emphasis on those children. Put you heart and souls into it. You are sowing the seeds of their awareness of the Lord Jesus Christ. If your organisation is chaotic and you have not got your lessons well planned and are not ready to start when the children arrive you are saying that you do not care enough to get organised. Children pick up your expectations and attitudes and if you are enthusiastic and organised you will get through to them.

Evangelism is not restricted to the young but can also be very effective at the other end of the scale. Go into old peoples homes and talk to people about doctrine. The people in there are waiting to die in Christ. These people need to know God's Word. We must be committed to it. The old people are the power of the church if they pray. Feed them doctrine and get them praying for you.

ECFS on page 16 states that an analysis of the church revealed that in evangelical churches in the USA 20% of people never pray, 25% of the people never read their Bibles, 30% never attend church, 40% never give to any cause, 50% never go to Sunday schools, 60% never attend a Sunday evening service, 70% never give to missions, 80% never go to prayer meeting, 90% never have family worship, 95% never win a soul to Christ.

What is your motive for evangelism? That you love Him and you want others to see the person that you love. You should not get into evangelism because of embarrassment. There are some who will evangelise because they want to have a relationship with someone else on the team. We must have the right motives. You must have the Holy Spirit burning in you with love for your Lord and wanting others to know about it as well.

Chafer in his systematic theology volume 7 says that evangelism is, " The act of presenting to the unsaved the evangel, the good news, the gospel of God's saving grace through Christ Jesus".

ECFS - page 26 - Evangelism is getting the Word of God to the people. The Bible has the answer to every problem. The answer is to get the Word to the people. Evangelism is an active thing. It is the church obeying, it is the church following, it is the activity of the church doing the will of God, bringing glory to God by magnifying the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Evangelism is the responsibility of every believer although there is a specific spiritual gift of evangelism.

BTB - Evangelism, Spiritual Gifts, Witnessing

AMBASSADORS

Look at 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 . The Holy Spirit through Paul is expanding on the great commission of Matthew 28. The starting point for evangelism is our becoming new people - verse 17. Unless you are made new and the Holy Spirit is having His way with you, you are not going to ever see the Holy Spirit having His way with unbelievers you talk to.

Look also at Romans 8: 9-11. The Holy Spirit's work is initially upon you to effect a change. Secondly it is the work of God on others. If we have not been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are candidates for evangelism not evangelists! All things are of God who has reconciled us. It is because the Lord Jesus Christ has reconciled us that we are changed. We must deal with sin in our lives, and ensure we are neither grieving nor quenching the Holy Spirit in our life. Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19. If we have sinned then we must go to 1 John 1:5 -10 and confess.

Now go back to 2 Corinthians 5:19. We have a message of reconciliation in making God's plan clear to others. Evangelism is the taking of the message of God to others who need it. You are an ambassador for Christ to declare his policy.

BTB - Ambassadorship.

We should have the same attitude as Andrew had when he took his brother Simon to meet Jesus. You are under a higher law than those of the nation that you are serving in.

We need to have a real commitment to our job as an Ambassador. We must walk in obedience to the instructions found in God's Word, walk in fellowship with Him and depend entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit as it is only Him that can break through the blindness.

Doctrine of Total Depravity - you cannot win anybody to Christ, it is only the work of the Holy Spirit that can change things. 2 Corinthians 4 : 3, 4 (Read this.). Before Paul talks about ambassadorship he talks about depravity. The problem with the unbeliever is sin and spiritual blindness. You cannot break through that but you can pray that the Holy Spirit will.

John 16:8-11 - you have to claim this promise and also John 6:44, 63.

BTB - Election and Predestination

We need to walk and work in harmony with the Holy Spirit otherwise it will be wasted effort. Biblical evangelism must be totally Holy Spirit dependent, constantly in fellowship with God through prayer. We must be a changed person with a Biblical message, the message of reconciliation. God only uses pure, holy clean, vessels. Evangelism brings you into holiness of life and prayerfulness of walk.

REFER BTB - EVANGELISM, SPIRITUAL GIFTS, WITNESSING, AMBASSADORSHIP. ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION

LECTURES 6 AND 7 - BEING AN HONEST WITNESS..

Witnessing is evangelism. The topic is being an honest witness; being personally prepared for the work of evangelism.

LUKE 24:44-49

Turn to Luke 24:44-49 and read this passage. Note that between the resurrection and Pentecost the early church was studying the Word and praying daily, at times with the Lord there amongst them. Note that the resurrection appearances, these miracles, did not stop them opening the Bible, rather the reverse, the miraculous appearances of the Lord drove them into deeper and more fervent Bible study. They did all this while they waited for the power of God in accordance with the lord's promise to them (verse 49).

There is a need for power from God to be able to fulfil the great commission. They were told to wait to receive the Holy Spirit's power before they were to go out. We as believers must witness in the power of the Holy Spirit or we are wasting our time. Prayer and evangelism are inseparable, and they are directed by the power of the Holy Spirit for effective witnessing.

The Lord is a fulfilment of the Old Testament. The one who had been promised since the Garden of Eden had come. He not only came but he came to suffer for the sins of the world. Note the content of the apostolic evangelical message. (context of Luke 24)

1. He came to fulfil the promises made through the OT prophets.
2. He came to teach, heal, do miracles to prove who he was; the unique person of the universe, God become man.
3. He came to deal with the sin problem of mankind.
4. The cross was not a defeat, but a victory over sin, and the resurrection was the victory over death itself. The resurrection proved for all time that what he did was both successful and acceptable to God as the final sacrifice for sin.
5. Repentance and remission of sins is to be preached to all peoples everywhere; He is a universal saviour.

Having seen the message and the source of power for the message, how are we going to be worthy to take the message? We are sinners, however in Christ we have been justified, we have been given the job of ambassadors. In our own strength we would never be worthy, but in his power we are ready and enabled to do the job.

It is GRACE all the way; in grace we were saved, in grace given a new position, and in grace empowered to be ambassadors for the one who loved us and gave himself for us.

Turn to Romans 7:14 - 8 : 2. Read this passage. Note how Paul felt unworthy, but that did not stop him preaching. Believers are saved sinners going to sinners who are not saved telling them that they can be saved. I have a solution, you can say. They have a disaster on their hands, you have the only remedy. As we have an answer we should use it in our own life moment by moment to ensure we are holy and pure vessels. We need to be clean. The cleansing work of the Spirit allows us to be fit vessels for his use.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:5-7

Turn to 2 Corinthians 4:5-7 Read these verses. We, in earthly vessels, have nothing in ourselves, to offer others other than that which is poured into us. This is a verse of hope to all of us, as we live in our all too "earthly vessels". In the ancient world many of the lamps were made out of clay pots filled with oil and with a wick out the spout. This is the "vessel" that Paul has in mind here.

If it ran out of oil the wick would burn up and the light would fail whereas with oil in the lamp the oil burnt and the wick remained. Paul says that we are, as believers like these old beaten up clay lamps, but oil filled (Holy Spirit filled), we can give forth a bright light, and do so all our lives. Our challenge, as the Lord made clear in Matthew 25:1-13, is to keep oil in our lamps; that is, to ensure we are daily filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Lord also said that a lamp should not be hidden. Matthew 5:14-16. If you preach it must be in the power of the Spirit. This makes witnessing, of course, a true fruit of the Holy Spirit. Turn over briefly to Galatians 5:15-26, and read this. Feet shod with the gospel of peace! In other words we are to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

BTB - Holy Spirit - Filling of the Spirit, Spirituality, Attitude

We are to be examples which others are to follow. It is therefore of great importance that the teachers life is right. If your thinking is based on God's Word the rest of your life will fall into line. Practice what you preach!

If you do not go with the right mental attitude it will not be effective.

EPHESIANS 5:18-21

Turn over in your Bibles to, Ephesians 5:18-21. This sections is just one sentence in the Greek. You cannot as an evangelist be drunk with wine. You cannot evangelise if you are drunk or on drugs, or under the influence of anything other than the Holy Spirit! You are however told to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. If you are, you will hum God's music and not the devil's. If the Spirit is controlling your life you will not be miserable you will have a joy about you. This will be in the form of a "serious" joy; we are not to be frivolous and stupid but joy filled in the Biblical sense of deep joy of soul in what the Lord has provided.

A true evangelist will have an attitude of thankfulness which is the basis for true witnessing. You are so thankful for what the Lord has done for you that you want to share it with others. There will also be a spirit of submission as you are not trying to get one upmanship going with others. If you are mutually submissive there will not be problems in the group.

There are many evangelists today acting in their own strength and they are obscuring the message with their "techniques" and "sales pitches". Those who witness for the Lord must know the Lord, and magnify him alone, as well as being under the control of the Holy Spirit and therefore in loving fellowship with the Lord.

Evangelism is introducing someone to Christ, who He is, what He has done, what He will do, and what He can do for them, both now and forever. The number of people walking in the Spirit in a church probably varies from 1% to 10% normally with it going up to 50% for a short period of time each week. Is it any wonder why so little evangelism occurs from our churches? Our first challenge, after ensuring we are walking in the power of the spirit is to get our churches also walking in the power of the Holy Spirit.

When believers are Holy Spirit filled they will have the overflowing love for the Lord whom they represent and this will be seen by those who are lost. They will enjoy sharing the gospel, and their loving concern will be seen by the unbeliever. We should not want to see anyone in hell. A lot of the unbelievers know they are going to hell and are worried about it, and we have the only remedy.

Many enter our churches without hope and we have the message of hope. No-one must leave without hearing that message! Our life should be a song of praise for what the Lord has done, is doing and will do, and every church service should be filled with opportunities for people to praise God, so that the believers present can praise and the unbelievers see from where their hope must come.

Witnessing then becomes the overflow of public praise and testimony of transformed lives so that our witnessing activities are the same as our worship activities. Worship is your overflow of praise to God for who He is, what He is and what He has done. Witnessing is your overflow of praise to unbelievers telling them the good news. Motivation is the same, content is the same. What you find is those who cannot witness cannot worship either.

SUMMARY

Let us sum up the points so far:(9 Points)

1. The Spirit filled life is demanded of all believers who would serve their Lord. Holiness of life and an abhorrence of sin is a part of this. Be holy for I am holy says the Lord. Jude 23, 1 Peter 1:15,16. Holiness means consecration, set apart for God's service. It does not mean purity straight off, it means consecration and dedication to living as God requires. Sin needs to be dealt with.

Dr Robert Sumner tells a story regarding a Baptist preacher who was asked by a dying woman if he was God's man, for in dying she wanted to speak only to someone who knew God. We have to ask ourselves that question as well. Irrespective to whom or where you are giving the gospel you need to be absolutely sure that you are giving it as a holy saint. A transformed man or woman has a witness; for those who know them will ask, what makes you as you are? Romans 12:1, 2.

2. You need to have a prayer filled life. D.L.Moody said that he never made long prayers but he never went long without a prayer. 1 Thessalonians 5:17. We are to pray with the frequency of a hacking cough. The Acts of the Apostles could be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles, and prayer saturates that book. Days of power were preceded by nights of prayer. The Holy Spirit's power is released by prayer.
3. Bible saturated students is what God wants. We must be students of God's Word. As you are diligent students you become a diligent servant but you cannot be a diligent servant without much study. 2 Timothy 2:15, 1 Peter 3:15. These are two passages that bring these together. In order to remember things you need to study under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. You cannot recall what you have not learnt or studied at some stage. You have to draw close to the holy things of God before you can go out and minister them to people.

The preacher is literally the herald of the king. You need the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to evangelise to the souls effectively.

There are a lot of people in ministry who have taken out a degree in the university of men but have not learnt the alphabet in the school of God. Just because a person has a degree in theology it does not mean that they know more about the Scriptures than you do. God does not look at the framed degrees on the wall but on the holiness and love in the heart. He wants us to take the gospel out in the same love with which he gave himself for us.

John Wesley said, "be a man of one book". Leyland Wong, the Moody of the Orient used to read the Psalms and Proverbs every month and the Gospels and Letters every year. Dr Chafer also did the same. This is what made these men able to be greatly used by God. Wesley's words state the formula for revival; all the revivalists were men of one book. Moody said that he did not read any book that did not help him understand the book. Study, preach and teach one book. Search the Scriptures.

4. Be zealous for God, be an example of enthusiasm. Men who possess the truth should be possessed by it. Gospel evangelism is no place for cowardly or lazy men. John Whitfield said that he wanted to die fighting, and he did. Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley were "dry preachers", but every word came with zeal from God.

He was dedicated. The secret is not in oratory, it is in your commitment to Him. You must have been changed by the Word of God. As you are faithful in the little things so you will be allowed to serve in the more important ones. Look at 2 Corinthians 7:11 .The Corinthians had zeal for the Lord and dealt with sin in the church, and the lord's blessing(stopped by sin) flowed out upon them again. 2 Corinthians 9:1, 2. So it is with us.

5. Walk close to God and deal with sin, 1 John 1:5-10. You have not got spiritual resources if you are not walking in the Spirit. We need to confess our sins and walk close to Him.
6. Passionate commitment to the Lord. We should speak as dying men to dead men. Every day should be lived as if it is our last. You should be a person of passion like Moses, David, Paul Stephen and the Lord himself. We need to commit ourselves body and soul. You need to preach as if you will never preach again. We must always be ready to go into action as a witness to the Lord. We need to be a blessing, not an embarrassment. How do you prepare for an opportunity. You should be walking with Him and filled with the Holy Spirit. The unexpected is then something for which you can look for.
7. We are called to be ready to answer the call to action. As a soldier, we are to be ready to march, or use our sword at a seconds notice. We are to be looking for the opportunity to serve the Lord by witnessing. Turn to and read, 1 Corinthians 9:13-27 . Here Paul looks upon those who are ready for God's service. As the Corinthians you should be in training all the time. The Lord may ask you to fight at any time. Any time you pray, any time you study the Word, and time you meditate on it you are in training. Opening in prayer is a warm up exercise, reading the Scriptures is getting into exercise. When you exercise you put on the heavy weights to stretch yourself. You take on your doctrines to test your spiritual capacity. The trainer is the Holy Spirit. When you have an opportunity the gospel becomes a reflex action and as natural as anything you do.

The Roman soldiers, when they were not fighting, which was most of the time, were constantly drilling in sword play, so that their sword became a natural extension of their arm. The Word of God (the sword of the spirit) is to be the natural extension of our mind in just the same way. The Roman manuals for military training have survived, and they called for daily exercises to keep the soldiers fighting fit at all times. Just like the apostles, we are in training or in action. At church you are in the spiritual gym(or parade ground) for a workout which is given by the pastor (the gym or military instructor). You concentrate when you are in a gym, you should concentrate in church. This gives you life, meaning and mental attitude.

Evangelism is not learning a patter, not having a good tract and knowing a good way to get it into the hand of an unbeliever. Preparation is essential so that you know the word of God and you know the texts that apply to salvation. In the Corinthians passage Paul uses the runner as the example for us. This example identifies the need for the body to be under control. We should control our bodies and dedicate them to God's service and discard anything that can slow you down.

All the athletes in the ancient world were naked so that nothing would impede them. If there is a social or other area in your life which is causing you problems deal with it. Make sure also that God approves you and that you are not becoming a castaway. This is probably why many do not see the Lord working in their life. They are not walking as they should. People get hurt in sport because they are not physically fit, or not properly trained and skilled; just so, we can get spiritually hurt if we are not spiritually fit.

A good example of the mental attitude of the prepared servant is the great musician Toscanini who memorised whole operas so that when the regular conductor was taken ill suddenly he was able to take over. He had the whole thing in his head. At the age of 19 he gave away playing the cello and took up the conductors baton, as he saw that was his role. He was prepared for the opportunity, and waiting for it. Are we?

As a pastor or even young keen believer, start preparing expositional messages so that when an opportunity comes along you can take it, in the Sunday School or the church.

Even if you never get to preach them you will be blessed. Prepare them systematically and store them away. You will be greatly blessed. If you have nothing else give your old sin nature a sermon every day.

8. Know the power of God. - Matthew 22:29. Here they were told that they erred, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God. If you know his Word you know His power. You must not only know about God's power but you must experience it in your life. "That the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4 : 7. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 - the power that we have must come from God. It should be done not with enticing words but with the Word of God and with power. He is not a power which we should use but He should take over our lives and work through us. This power is set loose by prayer, and many great evangelists took men and women with them to pray for meetings just to ensure they had this power there. Cowardly men became powerful through Holy Spirit empowered prayer.
9. You must be willing to sacrifice. It may be hard, a humbling thing, a pressure and a suffering that will come to you will be hard to take but keep eternal life in perspective. You are not only dealing with God in time but also in eternity.

Romans 12:1-2 You have something to do for the Lord - 2 Timothy 4:6-8. The pressure of this world is not to be compared with the rewards of eternity.

We therefore have in summary

1. Holiness of life
2. A prayer filled life
3. A word saturated life
4. A zealous life
5. A life that is in close walk with God
6. A passionate life which is committed to Him
7. A life that is committed to Him for service
8. A life which knows the power of God
9. A life that is ready for sacrifice.

This is the type of person that the Lord will use mightily as an evangelist, as a teacher and as His faithful servant. His well done must be all we seek. Matthew 25:21-23.

REFER BTB – GRACE, HOLY SPIRIT - FILLING OF THE SPIRIT, SPIRITUALITY, ATTITUDE

LECTURE 8 - PASTORAL THEOLOGY - PRAYER AS PART OF EVANGELISM

INTRODUCTION

The process of soul winning does not begin with you as a believer talking to an unbeliever about the Lord Jesus Christ. It begins with you as a believer talking with God. You need to walk in the Word. We need to realise that God has a plan here and that you are part of that plan until your death.

You need to walk close to Him for the sake of the evil that is out there. If you are not walking with the Lord you are walking on a very slippery path into danger.

Evangelism is the moving into a high gear spiritually to meet the need of the unbeliever with whom the Holy Spirit has lead you to come into contact. It is leading the normal Christian life and answering questions that they may ask. In order to evangelise you need to apply the Word of God that you know to your life and allow your love for the Lord to be seen to be effective in your life. The battle against sickness, depression and problems in your life are all problems that you have to face.

When you give the gospel you are walking into the enemy's camp, approaching one of the enemy's soldiers and saying to them, "Why don't you join us. This is called espionage and is dangerous. When you are evangelising you are trying to recruit Satan's soldiers from under Satan's nose. This is why evangelism is more special than other things. Because of the danger you need special spiritual protection.

Evangelism is using the sword of the spirit under His power to fight the enemy. Prayer is, as we have seen, needed in the area of evangelism. It is of course required in all areas but even more so in the area of evangelism. The victory is not going to come because of your physical abilities it is going to come through the spiritual realm. With this it does entail prayer at the highest possible levels as we must go in prayerfulness and meet others prayerfully.

You need to be like a boxer, quick on your feet and looking for openings which will be provided by the Holy Spirit for you to open into evangelism. You are a person under the control of the Holy Spirit talking to another person who has been prepared by the Holy Spirit for the Word of God.

You have to remember that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4. This gives confidence for the conflict, but it is still a conflict. Whether it is your special spiritual gift or whether you are just a believer without the specific gift of evangelism you need the Holy Spirit to empower and guide you in evangelism.

Pastor Michael Cocoris, noted in 1983, "perhaps if we prayed more we would win more. In Acts 1 and 2 the disciples prayed for ten days, Peter preached for ten minutes and 3000 were saved. Today churches pray for ten minutes, preach for ten days and three get saved."

PHILIPPIANS 4:6,7

Turn to and read, Philippians 4:6,7. This passage brings out the need to go into an evangelistic situation in prayer. It is our daily prayer life which prepares us for the intense prayer in evangelism. If you are relying on prayer you can get what God provides rather than your own natural abilities, which will only produce what your human strength can provide.

Also in 1983, Pastor A C Dixon said, "when we rely on organisation we get what organisation can do. When we rely on education we get what education can do. When we rely on eloquence, we get what eloquence can do. Nor am I disposed to undervalue any of these things in their proper place, but when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do."

Turn to and read the central passage for the work of the Holy Spirit upon the unbeliever. John 16:8-11 This describes the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the unbeliever.

The Holy Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment. He convicts the unbeliever of the sin of rejection of Christ as Saviour, convicts the unbeliever of God's righteousness being the standard to be reached, and convicts them of the judgment that they with Satan deserve to be in the Lake of Fire. If you are praying for an unbeliever you ask that the Spirit will convict them in these three areas.

Turn also back to and read, John 6:44, 4:63-66. The Holy Spirit not only convicts of sin He enlightens the Word of God on the unbeliever and gives them the power to respond.

A LIST OF UNBELIEVERS

Make a list of unbelievers you wish to evangelise and pray that you may have the opportunity to have access to them and to talk to them about the Lord. Pray for them by name specifically once or twice a day. Look for opportunities but do not force them. By thrusting the gospel down their throats you will magnify the offence of the Cross, but worse, you are out of step with the Holy Spirit.

If you witness for Christ you will walk with the one whom the Lord sends, the Holy Spirit. Find out what the Holy Spirit has done with that person first before you open your mouth. When you have ascertained that, the Holy Spirit will reveal what Scriptures are to be used. Evangelism is you walking with the Spirit not you walking with yourself.

Prayer must always precede witnessing as shown in Luke 10:1-24 where we are told to pray verse 2 before we go in verse 3. In Acts 4:29 they pray for boldness followed by speaking with boldness in verse 31.

In Colossians 4:2-4, Paul tells us that he did not talk to everyone in the ancient cities he went through, he walked through and talked only to those whom the Spirit was moving.

If someone does not want the gospel do not force it on them. If you approach them and you say that you would like to share Christ with them and they say that they are not interested you withdraw. Do not batter down the doors but let them know where they can come if they want to hear. Many people think that by ultra aggressive evangelism they are doing great things for God but by their attitude they are bringing discredit to the name of Christ.

Have a group of prayer warriors set aside for prayer, this is a function that the older people can do much better than the more physically active as seen in the Pastorals. 1 Timothy 5:3-16. It is far better that they are praying than sitting up awake listening to talkback radio or TV, morning noon and night.

When prayer is answered we can all be thankful, for we are all part of the work. Every church member should have a list of church members for no other reason than they might pray for them. They should all know who the elders and deacons are. They should each have responsibility for a certain groups within the church. By having groups praying for the church you will see the place prosper.

PRAYER AGENDA FOR EVANGELISM

So, our prayer agenda for evangelism is clear. WE are all to pray for:-

1. Conviction upon specific unbelievers John 16 : 8 - 11.
2. Enabling and empowering upon all who hear the Word. John 6 : 44, 63.
3. Opportunity to witness. Colossians 4 : 3.
4. Boldness for all giving the gospel. Acts 4 : 29, Ephesians 6 : 19.
5. Peace and security to enable witnessing to occur. 1 Timothy 2 : 1- 4.
6. Deliverance from evil people who oppose us. 2 Thessalonians 3 : 1- 2.
7. For more labourers to join the work. Luke 10 : 2.
8. For all believers to grow up in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. 2 Peter 3 : 18.
9. For all to grow the fruit of the Holy Spirit that all might see their lives and praise God for them. Galatians 5, Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12.

LECTURE 9 - THE BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF EVANGELISM -

ACTS 5:42

Turn to and read Acts 5:42 - This passage gives the church's activity on a normal day. Daily there was preaching and teaching of Jesus Christ. This was a regular function of the early church. If you have a church which has one teaching session a week it is not following the Biblical pattern.

Preaching means explaining what the Scriptures means by application to the individual. Preaching follows preparation and prayer. They studied with the Lord for three years and they were now ready to go out. They are preaching with power as they know who they are talking about., they know what they are talking about and they have a message which is prayerfully relevant to their hearers.

TEACHING IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

There were two spheres of teaching and preaching, in the early Jerusalem church; the area of the Temple courtyard and the home churches. In the area of the Temple mount you had a large area where the rabbis were able to teach. It was in the outer court under the colonnades that the Gentiles were able to come and listen, and it was there that the apostles taught all who were interested. They went where people would know to come to hear; they met where those with positive volition would come.

We can learn from this. Where in our society do people go to find the truth about God? That is where our public teaching should be. In Greek towns the market place or local synagogue were the places for Paul to target as places where serious seekers would go.

The second area was the private houses of the wealthy members. Large houses in Palestine had walls and a central courtyard where quite a number of people could meet in semi privacy which was important for teaching and worship which was for the fellowship of the saints, rather than the evangelistic emphasis of the public venue.

The private house became the only place to meet once the access to the Temple and synagogues had been denied by the religious Jews who were threatened by the Christian message. This was quite late, about 63AD. Saved Jews looked on their houses as individual evangelical worship, and Bible teaching and prayer centres. So should we.

The early church grew from the big meetings in the Temple with 3,000 saved in Acts 2 and 5,000 saved in Acts 4. Within weeks there were 8,000 new converts who dispersed in most cases to places throughout the Roman Empire. As they returned home after their period in Jerusalem celebrating the Passover and Pentecost they took the gospel with them. The big meetings lasted for only a couple of weeks or so before the Jewish authorities commenced persecuting the early Church. But even as late as 63AD they continued to meet and teach in the Temple when they could.

HOME BIBLE STUDIES

The home bible study meeting became the main thrust for evangelism in the early church. This led to real growth in the centuries to come. It was going to be 200+ years before church buildings themselves were going to be erected. For those 300 years it is going to be generally unsafe for Christians to "go to church". At places for up to 50 years it was possible to come together but mostly the authorities persecuted the Christians.

There was a period just before the last great persecution when some of the churches grew quite large, but the home fellowship was the back-bone of the early church. In addition to meeting in houses the people used to meet in forests, cemeteries and in the fields but meeting in private homes was considered the most preferable, for obvious reasons of comfort and protection from the elements.

There were two meetings on the Lord's Day; the first before dawn was a worship and praise time, before they all went off to work as the sun rose. The second was a more leisurely meeting. At the second house church meeting everybody had a shared meal. The food would be brought in and the women of the house would co-ordinate its division. In the evening as they came together, after the working day, they would share the love feast (shared meal).

The meal would be accompanied with water and wine. If you drank the water without wine you would get sick. Timothy had become somewhat ascetic and had started drinking water without wine and had become sick so Paul asked him to mix some wine for his stomachs sake. Ephesus in Timothy's day was built on marshes and sinking and the water was bad.

The early church tried to meet centrally in one place, to mutually strengthen each other in a hostile environment. As the church grew, other home churches were formed under the town pastor (later, in larger places, under the city Bishop). Each home group had an elder and if the church grew they would divide and grow. Eventually you had one man who supervised the churches in an area. He was called the bishop and was the one acknowledged by the elders. The bishop would also co-ordinate relief measures where a group had been persecuted and perhaps some fathers martyred leaving widows and children.

They had, in effect, two mottos, in the early church. The first motto was that every home was a recruiting centre for Christ, and the second, each one win one each year. Neither of those are impossible, they are still the standard, but few achieve it. If you do this you double the size of your church each year. We need to pray that each year we will be led to one person who will be converted. The target for Christian growth is 100% per year.

When you take over a church you teach them where they are. At the end of the first year you give them a challenge of a 100% increase this year. We must be constantly reminded of the God given task as Christians to be ambassadors for Christ. In Mark 1 Jesus calls us to be fishers of men, we are told to fish for souls.

REFER BTB - EVANGELISM.

EVANGELISM - NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN SUMMARY

1. The pastor of the local church must practice a Bible saturated, spirit controlled life. By his systematic teaching of the Word he must encourage people to apply it in their life. The vessels that the Lord uses must be clean.
2. You must have a co-ordinated prayer life in the Church. This consists of the mid week prayer meeting and organising your prayer warriors. You need specific weekly prayer sheets.
3. You need to have weekly meetings with your deacons and elders to plan strategies for the church. You need to have that for a prayer plan for the week. It is good to have this on Sunday morning over breakfast so that the prayer points can be noted down and duplicated by the pastor for the morning service. This gives current material. You plan your visitations, your speakers and how it can be co-ordinated in with the overall preaching plan. There also needs to be a home fellowship strategy and a strategy for the Bible class and Sunday School.
4. In the preaching everything must tie into the evangelistic, witness function of the church. He must emphasise that they are ambassadors and evangelists.
5. The minister encourages the people to find the fish. Every week they should be reminded of their work in this area.
6. Every believer should have his own list of people who he is praying constantly for. He should have a list of ten unbelievers and as one is converted a new name should be emplaced on the list.
7. The church contacts should be followed up as part of the strategy. This is the importance of a Sunday School. The Sunday School should be well known in the area. The unbelieving parents who send their children to Sunday School should be followed up by the minister to show friendliness towards them. You may be their only Christian contact.
8. There needs to be a church service follow up. Every visitor should be made to feel welcome but not embarrassed. Never ask a visitor to stand up. After the service have a coffee time and a special room set aside for visitors. It is an advantage to have a service which finishes a bit earlier. The minister follows up the visitors and lets an elder go on the door.
9. Organise visitation and be visible with walking through districts and greeting those you meet. This is far better than driving and parking. The morning should be in the study. Have a meal at home to have time with your wife or family, after lunch visitation.

With walking you get exercise and are away from the phone. Plan to visit three or four locations only. Drive to a central location and walk. If you are seen on the street people get to know.

You have raised the profile of the church. You are swimming in the sea with the fish. Sit down with street kids, help an old lady. The church needs to draw on the local area. You need to be decently dressed but not suit and tie unless that is expected. To the Jew as a Jew, to the Greek as a Greek! 1 Corinthians 9 : 20 - 22. By this Paul means, be appropriate to whatever social and cultural context you find yourself in, so that by your dress and manner they say, "here is a person from God".

LECTURE 10 - SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS IN EVANGELISM

THREE AREAS OF EVANGELISM

There are three areas of evangelism; the Christian home, the gospel service and special evangelistic projects. While evangelism is a very present part of the church's life you cannot have a gospel service every week in the sense that you allocate a complete service to a gospel appeal. However the gospel must be given every week so that all visitors who come into the service, without Christ and without hope and without eternal life, leave having heard the good news.

It is of critical importance that you do not get away from your systematic verse by verse bible study. If you have two services on a Sunday and one during the week you only have three opportunities per week to teach systematically.

Christians need to hear the whole counsel of God in the form of a wide area of Bible doctrine not just the gospel again and again. It is important that there is a gospel appeal at the end of each service however so that the unbeliever who comes in might know what they need to be saved.

THE GOSPEL IN THE SERVICE

There are three ways around this problem:-

- [a] At the end of each service you commit the final moments to those who are unbelievers
- [b] Where the gospel comes up on a verse by verse basis you teach it thoroughly. You can make your Sunday evening service a gospel service in the sense of a verse by verse analysis of the four gospels. This will give you a number of salvation passages. Such a regime would take probably six to seven years at which time you could return to the beginning.
- [c] The third way is to have a gospel service in the traditional sense.

It is probably best to have a combination of all types. If people know what you are going to be teaching on they can be doing some pre-reading or invite people along to the service with some confidence as to what the subject is going to be. You must teach verse by verse as the benefits far outweigh any perceived problems with the method. The Holy Spirit can use a systematic approach, through the value it has to the people, far easier than any hit and miss approach.

If there is going to be a special evangelistic gospel service it is important that there are people praying especially for the salvation of unbelievers. If you have a gospel service you follow it with a fellowship time for follow up. Some people will accept in the church but more will afterwards with quiet fellowship and challenge from believers.

A fellowship time allows the unbeliever to reflect on his/her situation. The critical question is how to maximise the time with the unbelievers in an unthreatening but challenging way.

In addition to this there is often an opportunity for a Holy Spirit gifted evangelist to conduct a rally in the church. The best modern day example would be Billy Graham who was set aside by the church for evangelistic purposes. The Biblical pattern of evangelism is not to bring in the expert because the church has failed.

You bring in the gifted man when the church is doing the other things right, for only then will there be the lasting results. We must not shy away from using the gifted, set apart, evangelist, nor make them the replacement for the church doing the other things regularly.

Get your week by week evangelism going and verse by verse teaching, then you must stress the need for prayer in the believer's life, and the fact that they need to make their houses evangelistic centres. Once you have your church running spiritually you are in the best position to bring in the specifically gifted evangelist. If the church is spiritually dead the evangelist will be facing a very difficult task trying to stoke a fire that has gone out.

REVISION

Let us revise the eight principles here again.

- [1] You need to handle the saints before you wrestle with sinners. The church needs to be prepared, and consecrated to the task of reaching the lost.
- [2] There should be a group of prayer warriors praying for the evangelist, and their work upon the lost. Every believer in the church ought to be targeting ten unbelievers to come to be confronted with their need to be saved. This should be done 3-6 months before the proposed rally. They must have their friends, people who they have regular contact with informed of what is going to happen.

The church should be praying and the individuals should be praying for, and visiting people in their own area. The prayer, "Lord send us a revival", is far too general; decide exactly what you want the Lord to do, who you want touched with the message and prayer for that specifically! God likes prayers that are specific and likes answering such prayers specifically. He is a God of detail; he is into solving practical details. The church must be consecrated, focused, and prepared. The church needs to be praying for the unsaved people at least six months in advance.

NOTE: It is necessary to plan in the church. If you are a pastor you must have a planning conference every year and work out what you believe the Lord wants you to do. You need to train prayer warriors, ushers and get lists of people to pray for. All need to start speaking to those who are to be asked to come along. We are to prepare them for the offer you are going to give them in the future.

It is no good sitting around and then arranging a series of evangelistic meetings for the following week and expect some startling results. This is emotional nonsense, and you will not find any precedent for it in Acts. The early church planned and prayed and set aside people for the tasks.

- [3] How long should the special outreach be?. Moody, Billy Sunday and Finney had evangelical crusades which lasted several months. A two week campaign would appear to be a minimum. If believers have a dozen people on their list for prayer, let them ask them individually to dinner and take them to the meeting afterwards.

You show them concern, you show them fellowship. You show them love over the table so that when they go to the meeting they are in a receptive frame of mind, the Holy Spirit having had the opportunity to work upon them through the fruit of the Spirit in and through your life first.

Every member must be willing to attend every session. Nothing short of total commitment is required

- [4] Choosing the evangelist. God the Holy Spirit uses all sorts of people. It must be a Spirit gifted person with a proven track record, someone who is known by his holiness of life and accuracy to the Scriptures. We should not dictate to God as to who the evangelist should be, we must approach the issue prayerfully and see who the Lord leads to us. It is not the man in the pulpit that is important, it is the message. While the evangelist himself is not important it is important that he is consecrated and filled with then Holy Spirit. Go for the Spirit of God and holiness of life, rather than be impressed by the "big names".
- [5] Logistics - you need a venue and seating arranged. You need to think in advance. Make sure that there are counselling rooms or places. Make sure that you have all the portable items needed in a box and ready to go before the day. Check the lighting and sound system.
- [6] Make sure that the music is co-ordinated in with the message and appropriate. Choose the hymns carefully. The Spirit works with all things "in order" rather than hit and miss or chaos. You often find that the music group is the centre of rebellion in the church; you must be sure of their devotion to the Lord. Make sure they have got so involved in their own area that they have forgotten what effect there music has on the doctrinal teaching of the church service.

Sometimes you can have people sing with gusto false doctrine, so ensure the words of the songs are true biblically and powerfully sung. It is not "musical amateur hour"; if a person hasn't got a voice for singing, no matter how keen they are they do not sing! The Lord will provide the skills and gifts needed, pray and expect to discover the right people to do the right things.

A hymn is a poem written by someone to express doctrine and should complement the Bible teaching. The key element in the service is the teaching of the Word of God and not the singing. The purpose of music in the service is not to entertain or attract attention, although good music will do both, it is to prepare the way of the evangelist or the preacher.

The music can make a tremendous contribution to the revival. It is therefore important that it is done right or it can ruin the whole thing. It is critical that the director of the music is a spiritually mature person.

Get the tracts printed. Are you going to have Bibles or are you going to give tracts out?

Advertise the meeting with several billboards with changing messages as you get closer to the time. Advertising is the saturating of the consciousness of the unbelievers that something is going to happen and that it is of enough importance that you are willing to do a lot of work for.

- [7] The Appeal. You need to let the evangelist know what the church policy is and agree with him as to what form of appeal will be used. There is a private appeal, a public appeal and a congregational one that was used to a great effect by Spurgeon. He would give the gospel message most weeks and no appeal was given, rather he expected the congregation to look around, notice any person clearly moved by the Holy Spirit and approach that person, pray with them, and lead them to the Lord. He preached God's Word five or six times a week for several years to get to the stage where he had trained his congregation to that level. believe that is what we should do as pastors!
- [8] The Preaching. The New Testament evangelist has a definite ministry said Finney. Like the early preachers and evangelists, the modern evangelist's preaching should be practical, direct, hunting after sinners, the sinner should feel the guilt and not feel that he is unfortunate. Sinners must be told that there is something that they can do, which is repent, and fall at the feet of their only hope. Any excuses of the sinner should be annihilated and any objection to the gospel dealt with in the preaching.

It is important for the evangelist to make their point in the first five minutes of the address. During this period you have to convince these people that you care for their souls and their criticism will be deflected. We are told in Hebrews 4:12 that God's Word is the sword. A preacher must use it efficiently and effectively. You should not baffle them with great words. You want them walking away saying how great the Lord is not how great an orator you are. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-4. Let the Holy Spirit loose upon the people, through prayer saturated Bible teaching; lift the Lord up and he will draw those to himself who will be saved. John 3:14, 8:28-32, 12:31-33. Read these verses and let them be at the heart of your evangelism.

Remember, when God wakes up sleeping sinners they often wake up cross. Do not expect everyone to thank you for giving them the gospel. Preach about sin, its penalty, and magnify the saving sacrifice of the Cross because faith in Christ alone saves.

LECTURE 11 - GOOD MANNERS IN EVANGELISM

LIFE AND WITNESS

If we are to be God's servants, we must set ourselves a high standard in our speech, our manners and behaviour and we should be known by our gracious life. The answer is in the life moment by moment controlled by the Holy Spirit. Prior to talking in any particular situation you have to ask, regarding what you might say, is it true, is it necessary, is it honouring to Christ. If you cannot say yes to all of them you should not speak at all. Read Matthew 12:33-37, and reflect upon your life and witness.

When we do not control what we do or say we are dishonouring to the Lord. We are not talking about something that is cheap we are talking about something that was bought by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are heralds of the King of Kings so the Word should come out of the mouth not words of dishonour. We are always, at every moment ambassadors for Christ, we must live like it.

It is easy to lose control and live like a pagan but if you are going to be an evangelist you need to be in control. You need to be thinking as to what you are going to say in the light of His Word and the Holy Spirit in you. As Christians we have liberty but total freedom for ourselves may enslave others. We have to use our liberty in such a responsible manner that it does not infringe on the liberty of others. As Christians we must act responsibly (Ephesians 5:15), and our central responsibility is to the Lord and to stand for him in the midst of the devil's world.

BTB - Ambassadorship, Laws in the New Testament

1 CORINTHIANS 10:22-33

Open your Bibles to, and read, 1 Corinthians 10:22-33. Note that the standard of the evangelist is that you put everything secondary to serving Christ. All your attention is on him so that you do not offend those to whom you speak, and that nothing you do might ruin your chances of talking to them about Christ. You have to stop taking things personally and take them, "as unto the Lord". You are here to serve him not meet your own needs.

Paul said that whilst he could drink some wine and eat meat he was willing to forgo that for the opportunity of winning a person to Christ. I have liberty in Christ to do anything that is not prohibited by God, but if it interferes with our witness we do not go ahead with it.

Spurgeon said that if a thing that you can legitimately do is causing a problem with a person who is lost you should give it away so that you are able to approach them with the gospel. If there is something in your life that you enjoy doing but is a stumbling block, you stop it for the cause of Christ. Galatians 5:11, Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:8.

You do not put a lamp on a hill and then cover it over. We are the lights of the world and the gospel should shine through with clarity. We are talking about a holy life, a man who will trim his wick to ensure that there is no smoke in the flame.

This means the elimination of anything that might stop our light shining purely for the Lord. We are to be sanctified and remain under the law of the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. We are to make sure that there is nothing in our life that might "blind" the unbeliever to the truth.

AGAPE LOVE

In 1 Corinthians 10 we have in verses 31 through 33 this truth expressed; the function of the believer is that the Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified. The basis is agape love, a concern for the other person and not yourself. Our "rights" are secondary to our responsibility to the Lord.

It is this agape love that is calm and focused on the Lord's work. When someone insults you, you do not insult them back, you give them the truth, insight and doctrine back. They have given you hatred, you give them love. Whatever you do you do it unto the Lord. Do not expect to be patted on the back in the Lord's service. Do not wait for it from man. Our job is to encourage the unbeliever towards salvation and the carnal believer to sanctification. We need to fight back with the truth in love, not by being bitter or vindictive.

This is illustrated in, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. Turn to this passage and read it. It shows our motivation is to be with love. Is this your testimony? If not make it so by confession and dedication. Remember, for the unbeliever the stakes are high; if they do not repent they are going to spend eternity in hell and you should not wish this on them despite what they may have done to you.

You see, that the Biblical definition of "good manners" is far higher than the world's standard as the world's books teach you to be a hypocrite. You love the unbeliever enough to give them the gospel and enough to stop anything in your life in order to give it to them. As a minister you must have this as your motivation. In the church you will find ugly saints to whom you give the Word of God every Sunday. As a minister you give and give out of love. We should forgive them until we lose count. Matthew 18:22. When people offend you do not take it personally, take it to him and cast it on the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-10

Turn to and read Paul's words in, 2 Corinthians 6:1-10. Paul goes through all the things he endured willingly while still not taking any offence. He had his back cut to ribbons many times he was beaten and imprisoned. At Philippi he ended up singing hymns in the prison, and by his witness, in the midst of suffering, he led many to his Lord, for his eyes were on his Lord rather than on his wounds. Let this be our witness.

You need to be neatly and appropriately dressed, to the culture we are witnessing in, you need to show people that you care about your dress, meeting people where they are.

You should always be polite, if a person has a title you should always use a title.

Your language should be wholesome, building people up rather than pushing them down to the lower standards of man. Be careful of telling jokes, this is the technique of man, you don't find it within the Scriptures. You should be concerned where that person is in their culture, finding out what sensitivity they have, so that you do not unknowingly offend. For instance if you are going to have fellowship in a Samoan house you always take a plate of food. If you come with just a Bible under your arm you will be received politely but you will have offended them.

You must not add to the offence of the gospel by your attitude that you do not add to the natural offence of the gospel. You must not get into sin with them nor disobey or compromise God's Word.

Many churches fail the visiting evangelist because of their bad manners against him. Visitors must be treated in the best possible way, you treat them with good manners.

PROVISION FOR THE EVANGELIST

1. You make sure that there is accommodation. Do not put people up in a home, unless there is space for them to work there. Having the prophets chamber is a good thing for a visiting minister, that he has a bed, a desk, light, privacy and time.
2. Make sure that you give him things that he enjoys eating. Many people kill ministers with kindness.
3. It may be better to put him up in a motel where there is eating available.
4. You need to ensure that the evangelist's expenses are covered so that he is not out of pocket coming to you. You can also give him a love offering to give him a bit extra. Organise it without embarrassing him.
5. You take up offerings from the believers only, the Lord wants the unbeliever not his money. It has to be given in privacy as unto the Lord.
6. The payment of the evangelist must be done in a dignified way. If the evangelist is coming for the money he is not the Lord's servant.
7. Never take money for the church in a revival campaign.

If there is an evangelistic campaign in the church every church member should attend. If the evangelist requires support in a particular area the church should be willing to give it. If he has come to save souls you should do everything you can to assist him.

ATTITUDE OF EVANGELISTS

Good manners should also be seen on the part of the guest speaker. If you are the speaker remember these points.

1. You should not criticise pastors or churches in their meetings. You may not like the way that they do their business but it is not your concern.
2. Do not complain about your accommodation - Philippians 4:11-13. Use your good manners even if you have to relocate to ensure you can sleep.
3. Do not be eager about love offerings, dropping hints about how much you need. You do not ask for money, you trust the Lord alone to provide through his people.

4. If you are doing the Lord's work you will be all right and he will provide the money. The reason you will be short of provisions is because you are short on spirituality. Philippians 4:19
5. Do not write back to church members to obtain funds, always communicate through the pastor..
6. Always honour the pastor, he is God's man in that place and to be honoured as such.
7. Sometimes an evangelist will split a church and pastor a portion himself. This is an evil and the lord's judgement is upon such a man; stand well away from such a person lest the Lord strike you with him!
8. The visiting team should get up early in the morning and be seen in the community. A puritan from the last century said that he wanted to have the light going on God's Word by the time that his first parishioner made his way past his window on the way to the mine in the darkness.

REFER TO BTB - AMBASSADORSHIP, LAWS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, LOVE

LECTURE 12 SIGNS FOLLOWING AND FOLLOW UP WORK

FREE WILL

There are two final areas, those of free will and signs. The Hyper Calvinists do not believe in free will. They have a strict view of election and they do not believe that anyone can accept Christ. They are often opposed to evangelism. If you are in a church which has hyper Calvinists who reject free will you will have a lot of trouble getting the church mobilised for evangelism, but it is possible and you should use the approach of someone like Spurgeon.

The Calvinist has a very complex system. Internally it is consistent but it does not cover all Bible truth. It takes one part and magnifies it, stressing the Sovereignty of God rather than the whole Character of God. Every part of God's character is important, and all is to be taught and all applied to the subject of evangelism.

It is acknowledged that man is totally unable to save himself. That is why God sends His Holy Spirit to convict of sin, righteousness and judgement. This is why the Holy Spirit is required to break through the Satanic blindness caused by all people being born in sin and being slaves to sin. This is why Biblical evangelism requires a concerted prayer campaign before and during the preaching of the gospel, for only the Holy Spirit breaks through and leads the soul of the lost to the saviour.

In grace God uses us to pray and preach, but it is He who brings the soul through to salvation. For a person to get to hell they have to reject the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, reject the Father's plan, and reject the Saviour. God has set the world up in such a way, and the gospel within it, that the unbeliever really has to set their mind to rebellion to go to hell. Our role is, in one way of looking at it, is to ensure they have no excuses.

The Bible teaches both the free will of man and the responsibility that goes with it, and also the Sovereignty of God over all things. God's plan to provide salvation combines the two things, that to us appear contradictory. We have not all the answers in this area.

What we do know, however, is that the Lord would not command us to go into all the world and preach to all creatures unless there was a chance for all men to be saved. Man rejects God despite the evidence that they have received a legitimate offer of salvation. There will not be one unbeliever before the Great White throne who can say that they did not know, and that the Lord did not die for them. They have been convicted at some time in their life but they turned away.

You have to know how to deal with the hard (Hyper) Calvinist in your church. The hard Calvinist does not believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for the whole world but only the elect (The Limited Atonement). They say that the blood of Christ is so precious that every person it touches is saved. The Bible teaches however that the blood covers all sin, and that this is the heart of the gospel and also the grounds for the condemnation for those who reject the saviourhood of the Lord.

The unbeliever will be without excuse when they stand before God. If anyone will hear, then you talk to them, and boldly tell them that the Lord died for them. The gospel is good news that Christ died for all. This was the practise of the early church and it should be ours also. If you live out your true doctrine it will make you evangelistic in your endeavours and holy in your life. With the Calvinist you say that the Lord told you to go out and preach the gospel to every creature and that is what you will do.

BTB - Atonement, Heathenism and God Consciousness

If we take Stephen and Paul as examples. In Acts 7:60 Stephen gives no indication that there is an elect or non elect to his listeners. In Romans 10:1, Acts 26:29, Paul clearly believes that people are held responsible for what they have

heard and are guilty of rejection. Both of these apostles obviously believed that, whosoever will may come, and that if you are a, "whosoever wont", you are guilty.

It is not a case of being non elect. God does not condemn people from eternity past. That would make God unjust, and that is blasphemous. Men and women are in hell because they have made a choice, to stand, like Cain, on their own righteousness rather than accept God's verdict on their life and respond to the movement of the Holy Spirit. They reject and sin against the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38-40, 16:31, 24:24-25, 26:25-29, Matthew 12:31 .

These passages teaches the doctrine of election and the doctrine of free will. We need to go after souls believing that they have a potential to be saved, and seeking the Holy Spirit's conviction upon all who hear the Word.

SIGNS AND MIRACLES

What of the subject of Miracles? -We have today the growth of power evangelism which is evangelism with power signs and miracles. John Wimber is one of the major proponents of this. He followed Peter Wagner who is Professor of Missions at Fuller Theological Seminary. He believes in what others call, "easy believism". They believe, some argue, that all you need is for the unbeliever to have a "power experience or encounter", they just raise their hand and that is it, they are saved. Once again, I refer you back into the Bible. Is this what you find, for if it is, this is what we must do! But if this is not what you find then we must approach this new movement with caution.

What is saving faith? It is not ticking boxes in a questionnaire. Saving faith is being obedient to the Lord as your Saviour and Lord. The Lord says, "follow me". You, under the Holy Spirit's conviction, cast yourself on him as you Saviour and follow him as your Lord. This places the new believer as His servant for the rest of their life. What is the true sign of a person being saved? I would argue it is the sign of a Holy Spirit transformed life.

MATTHEW 7:15-23

Turn to and read, Matthew 7:15-23. Note the lord's words, by their fruits you will know them not by their gifts or great signs, for both gifts, and signs and wonders can be counterfeited, but holiness of life cannot be. This is a picture of people who thought they knew Him, had done works in His name and yet the Lord said I never knew you. There will people, this passage teaches, who will go to hell having done signs and wonders in His name. The Lord will condemn them to the Lake of Fire, because they never knew him as their Lord and Saviour. This is a most sobering passage. If the Holy Spirit is present there will be a holy life, there will be the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their life, Galatians 5, they will not work iniquity.

Many high profile evangelists from the signs and wonders movement have fallen in the last few years. Their lives were unholy yet they were doing apparently great things. The fruit of righteousness in the life is the proof of the Holy Spirit's ministry.

The great commission is given in Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:44-49, whereas the "Signs and Wonders" type of ministry tends to quote from earlier in the Lord's ministry, especially they like to refer to the sending out of the seventy as given in Matthew 10, Mark 6 and Luke 9. This is about two years earlier than the Great Commission passages. In the army if you have two orders the latter takes precedence over the first as the second order modifies the first. The first order deals with signs and wonders.

After the resurrection he gives them a second order. In neither Matthew or Luke is there mention of signs following whereas in Mark's there is. The Mark passage itself is queried by a number of scholars as to its legitimate inclusion in the Canon, as it does not appear in the oldest manuscripts. But even if it is legitimate, the principle of Matthew 7 still applies. Whether there are signs following or not, the key "sign following" the gospel's reception should be the legacy for the local church of Holy Spirit transformed people.

What do the Scriptures say about miracles in Acts? What we see is that sometimes the gospel is given and miracles follow, but on other occasions they do not, but in both cases people are genuinely saved. The gospel saves because it is the work of God whether there are miracles or not. And is not the greatest miracle of all, the saving of a soul, and the transforming of a life, right under Satan's nose?

BTB - Salvation, Gospel Of Salvation, Holy Spirit - Ministry In The New Testament

HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTS

As we go through Acts we see the different ways in which the Holy Spirit works in different circumstances and locations. Let us look at two passages in Acts. The locations under examination are Antioch and Iconium. These passages clearly show that the outworking of the Holy Spirit varies from place to place. (Acts 14:1-7) (Iconium), (Acts 15:22-35) (Antioch). Read both these passages and note the following points.

1. In Antioch there was preaching only. At Iconium there was preaching and miracles.
4. Believers cannot base a system of procedures on one successful operation.

- 3 Because the Holy Spirit permitted miracles in Iconium it does not follow that there will be miracles everywhere.
4. The same success was obtained at Antioch by the preaching and teaching of the word without miracles.
5. The ministry of the believer must be related to the Holy Spirit. Such a ministry may be communicated by doctrine or verbally and may or may not contain accompanying supernatural phenomena.
6. The believer cannot compel the Holy Spirit to a type of procedure as at Iconium such as the tongues and healing that was used in the ancient world. Because God permitted these things in the past it does not follow that they will be used in the present.
- 7 The demand for healing miracles and tongues is tantamount to dictating to God and this places the believer in opposition to the plan of God.
8. Miracles were always used to focus attention on the message from the word and were never used as a sign of spirituality and power:
 - (i) - The message and not the miracles was always the important factor.
 - (ii) - By emphasising miracles we either detract from the message or have no message at all. The Holy Spirit always emphasises the message.
 - (iii) - Today emphasis on miracles, tongues and healing may obscure the issue of God's Word.

SIGNS FOLLOWING

Turn back to Acts 2:41-42. Peter speaks with signs having together with other converts at the initial meeting spoken in tongues. It is of interest that the converts on the day of Pentecost do not speak in tongues.

Also turn over to Acts 10:44-46. Peter preaches and signs follow. With Philip in Act 8:7 there are signs but when he preaches in the villages in 8:25 there are no signs. When he talks to the Ethiopian eunuch in 8:35-39 there are no signs but there is a miracle in that he is saved.

With Paul there are signs present in the following places, Cyprus Acts 13, Lystra Acts 14, Philippi Acts 14, in Acts 16 Paul did many miracles in Ephesus, in Troy in Acts 19, in Miletus in Acts 20 he gets bitten by a poisonous snake and survives. However in Acts 13 in Antioch, in the Philippian jailers house Acts 16, at Thessalonika in Acts 17, in Berea and Corinth Acts 17, 18, there is great evangelism done but no miracles.

It is therefore not true to say that when the gospel is preached it is accompanied by miracles. It is true however that people are miraculously changed by the gospel. God is in the transformation business. If you are looking for a miracle it should be the one you are looking for.

PAUL'S TESTIMONY – ACTS 19:11-20

Paul's testimony of his work in Ephesus is interesting. Turn to, and read, Acts 19:11-20. Here the handkerchief is a sweat band which the Apostle wore while he was making tents as he did not take wages as a missionary. These sweatbands would be removed and taken to a person who was ill and they would be healed. This is clearly miraculous, and occurred many times. No money changed hands, but people were healed.

Contrast this with a so called "divine healer" in the USA, who will send you a handkerchief that he has prayed over for \$50. They say it will heal you but basically it is a money making device. Paul however did not charge for his sweatbands. Freely he received, freely he gives. God did the healing not Paul. The healing that the Lord provided was not "marketed" and the church did not become a den of thieves and robbers.

When God heals He heals, and does so thoroughly. It was only in Ephesus that God did this through Paul. It did not happen at Corinth nor at Philippi. Paul's attitude was to preach the gospel, and relax about how the Lord did the work of saving the people, and the signs and wonders that might occur. He was not asking people to pass the plate. In his time the Jewish exorcists would exorcise your house for \$100. The sign of the Lord working is that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified. What is the sign of the opposition. The sign of the enemies work is that a man is magnified. If you look at a so called healing movement that is not of God, you will find that a man's name is there.

In this passage (verses 13-20) the false teachers try to use the name of Jesus to make money, and the demons say, Jesus I know and Paul I know but who are you? Leave the false "healers" to the demons to deal with, our job is, like Paul, to do the Lord's work.

ACTS 20:17-35

Paul's policy on this matter is stated in Acts 20:17-35. This passage makes it clear, showing that if the gospel is accompanied with signs, miracles and wonders that is an addition. Paul never preaches or magnifies the "signs and wonders", but Christ crucified, resurrected and ascended and coming again to judge, calling everyone to repent. It is easy to get excited about signs and wonders but it is important to get excited about the cross, the resurrection, session and coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is of great note that later in his life Paul was unable to perform a miracle that he desired greatly - 2 Timothy 4:20 - he is not able to heal his most trusted servant. God did healing through Paul in His own time, for His purpose, and when the role of miracles was over they stopped in Paul's life. But Paul kept on preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the necessity of saving faith. We need to be a vessel of God, we need to be holy, and focused on the message not the occasional signs and wonders we may see. It is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives which is the test of the evangelist and not the gifts they appear to have. The greatest miracle remember, is the miracle of a transformed life.

BTB - Holy Spirit Baptism

Like Paul we should be occupied with the person of Christ and not be demanding from the Lord that he provides miracles, signs and wonders that occurred at times in the early church. If they occur we simply praise God and keep preaching the truth, if not we are not disappointed, we keep preaching the saving gospel anyway.

REFER TO BTB - ATONEMENT, HEATHENISM AND GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, SALVATION, GOSPEL OF SALVATION, HOLY SPIRIT - MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, HOLY SPIRIT - BAPTISM

LECTURE 13 - FOLLOW UP OF EVANGELISM

2 PETER 3:8

Turn to 2 Peter 3 : 18 and read this verse. Young converts must be treated as babes in Christ. There are many people in the church into obstetrics (evangelism) but few in paediatrics (Christian baby growth). You need to nurture, feed, protect and care for them.

FOLLOW UP WORK

Follow up work (6 principles)

1. The new convert should be encouraged to join the local church. A coal taken from the fire will gradually lose its warmth and become cold, and lifeless. The new convert should be encouraged to join with other Christians in the church in the local area.
2. Believers should be baptised. Acts gives us the principle. Acts 2:41, 8:12, 36; 10:47,48; 16:14,15. Delay in the baptism of young converts has no basis in the Scriptures. Nowadays it is the norm rather than the exception for a person to be baptised a long time after conversion.

If you follow the apostolic approach you should be baptising believers by full immersion soon after conversion, perhaps in the very day. As soon as they understand what it means and believe it speaks of their commitment to Christ they are ready. In Acts they were led to Christ, they had the doctrines of the Word explained to them and they were baptised the same day. After baptism they were taught all the other doctrines that they needed to know.

In Acts 10:43-48 we see that as soon as Peter recognises that the conversion of Cornelius and his household is genuine he baptises them after saying to the other Jewish Christians that he will do it unless they have objections. The Lord commanded them to be baptised in his name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28 : 19.

There is therefore evidence that the baptism of new converts occurred on the day of their conversion. Baptism identifies the believer with the lord's death and resurrection, new life in Christ, death to sin, commitment. It is a tremendous testimony if it is in front of those from whom you have been converted.

In the ancient world when you did this you were putting your life on the line. They then asked Peter to stay with them for a number of days so that they could be instructed in the doctrines of the Word. He established a church of these baptised believers.

3. Establishing the young believer should be in the form of a short doctrinal course commenced immediately. The new Christian is teamed up with an older Christian to take them through the basic doctrines of the Christian life. The day after conversion they should be with a person and every day that week. Failures occur if they are not followed up.

Peter stayed with these people and talked to them for a week. If you get two or three people converted get in there with them and do it. You should have Bibles available for new converts. You should stay at church all afternoon and evening teaching them. Ground them in the faith for a week. Every day for the week after they have been saved they should be pouring over God's Word.

4. The provision of a Bible Class or Sunday School structure into which the new convert can slot irrespective of age. There needs to be an adult Bible Study going as well as a youth Bible class. If there isn't you start one. A church without a Sunday School is a naked church, a church that does not care.

You have a church service which is Bible teaching, you have Bible classes so that every age group is catered for. You as a pastor should start the adult one and train the adults and pray that people will look after the young people. You may have to look after them all initially.

People concerned about youth groups should start the youth group. Take the young people and start studying Proverbs. Teach them what Solomon taught his son but teach it better than Solomon did.

5. Get a church teaching programme in place. What you teach in the pulpit is designed to help believers grow. There is a responsibility on you as a pastor-teacher. Your Bible teaching must be systematic in the Bible services bringing the congregation many things to grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you go through it systematically you will find that the messages will be appropriate as the Holy Spirit will co-ordinate it. Do not sit up at midnight on Saturday wondering what you are going to preach on Sunday, be working to a plan each week.
7. You have to look for the gifts that these new converts are going to demonstrate and how they can be used. You have to be a good spotter of gifts and an encourager of their development. As they are active in the church so they will be enthusiastic. You do not lose people who are active in the Church. Those who are not active tend to drift off and be ensnared back by Satan.

Some may have gifts in the way of music, youth work. Do not put the new convert in charge of something but as an assistant in a work. Let them assist on hospital and sick visitation. Make them put into practice their Christianity. Do not over do the experience side and undervalue the teaching though, they need to be trained as well as have opportunities to serve. It is necessary to train the new converts as you send them out.

There is a value in a decision card and baptismal certificate if it encourages and instructs one on the Christian way. The Golden rules for the Christian life is daily Bible reading, daily prayer, open confession of Christ, fellowship with Christians and service for Christ.

We need to look to God the Father and live in His presence. Your church grows by evangelism, by having a teaching programme that uses those who are saved in the church and strengthens them in the local church. Your church should be doubling in size every year. Anything less than that is not acceptable. Keep feeding the sheep. Sheep with malnutrition do not work very well. Feed the sheep and they will work for you.

STAGES OF GROWTH

If you enter a church that is dead how do you get it growing? Teach God's Word systematically. Start with James and Galatians and the gospels. In a dead church you have sin and malnutrition; both must be addressed.

1. Teach them verse by verse. This may take a month, it may take a year. You need verse by verse Bible study to get the church going again. As people come spiritually back to life organise your prayer warriors.
2. Challenge them to think about evangelism. Give them enough time to observe you. Have a real out and out challenge for them to evangelise the lost.
3. Once the church has become burdened for the lost (which is not the case with most churches), get them praying for the lost in the local area. Prepare them for an evangelistic push which will take 6 to 8 months.
4. Emphasise the need for their home to be an evangelistic base for approaching family and friends. Begin local home Bible study groups in every area of the city/town.
5. Once you have got your home groups going bring in the evangelist and have a campaign. You need a six to eight month lead in time for this as well.
6. The new converts then must be brought into the teaching area of the church and become a regular part of the church and the cycle recommences, ready for more outreach.

This is Biblical evangelism, a cycle that is always going on. In two years you should go from a church which is dead to one that is doubling in size annually. No gimmicks, just the work of the Holy Spirit on your people. As you as a pastor are

obedient you will be able to co-ordinate the church in a Biblical way. This growth will be a natural outcome of applying Biblical principles to the situation.

You do not get church growth by haranguing your congregation, you do not have a roster system for evangelism, a roster system for prison visiting. You have to do it in God's way, by God's power with God's Word. You do that so that all the people of God might be convicted, that they all might get involved in the work, and so receive the blessings of obedience.

One Christian leader said to a graduating class at a seminary. "I wish you great joy young men. Great fields are opening for you. Be praying men, be holy men. Remember that you can only lift your people up to the height that you are. Consecrate yourself, body, mind and soul to God. Have high anticipation in the ministry, there are great solemnities, trials and hardships. Where there is hardship there are five hundred compensations in consciousness of doing the Lord's service. I know there are many things written in books about the trials and hardships of the ministry and they are all true. I would like someone to write a good vivacious, enthusiastic Christian book about the joys of the Christian ministry."

Let our attitude to evangelism be a Biblical one, structure it so that it might be geared to the evangelisation of the unsaved and the instruction of the saved. If you get that both together the Lord will bless with growth. If you do not get it right you will find it an uphill battle as it is you doing the work and not the Holy Spirit. Where growth has occurred in the United States, and in other places, it is where there has been systematic teaching of the word combined with evangelism. Here the teaching ministry and evangelistic ministry of the church is held in absolute balance, and with this balance there is spiritual growth and joy abounding.

LECTURE 14 - THE PASTORS PRIVATE LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The next 17 messages in this series is specific to pastors but has application to all who would serve the Lord in the ministry of the Word.

The money given to the Lord is not yours but is the Lord's. As such we need to use it efficiently. If you do not address the practical issues of administration you will not have time to teach the Word. You will be too busy trying to sort out the problems that occur because you have not got your administration right. If you get your administrative structure right you will have more time to study and as a consequence more time teaching.

THE PASTOR'S LIFE

As a pastor we need to get our own life organised correctly before we can expect blessing to flow through our ministry. Follow me says Paul. If you are going to be a pastor you need to be able to say to your flock, follow me. When you say this you indicate that you know where you are going, you indicate that where you are going is a good place to be and you know what you are about; that is, you are safe to follow.

In order to succeed you must be spiritual and growing. You must be walking in the spirit and growing spiritually. You must be a student of God's Word and have the attitude that I am studying the Word, you should study the Word. Your people will not study the Word any more seriously than you do. You need also to set the example and be a prayer filled person. If prayer is not important to you it will not be important to your people and the church will be robbed of its power.

Read through Philippians 3:17. By being an example it does not mean that you need to be in a three piece suit throughout summer, it will involve being tidy and well presented, but it is the spiritual characteristics that matter. Your family also needs to be an example and you need to make time for that. You have no ministry if you lose your family to sin.

1 TIMOTHY 3:2-6

Turn over to 1 Timothy 3:2-6. Here Paul gives the qualifications for the ministry. It talks about the office of the pastor teacher. This passage starts with the statement that it is a good thing to desire to be a pastor, to serve God in accordance with the gift that He has given you, but it is a serious thing.

Verse 2 - Note the qualifications - the number one requirement is his relationship to his wife. He is said to be the husband of one wife or literally a one woman man. Fornication is a major problem in the ministry. He should have eyes for his own wife only, he contacts others in the work but he is not after others. There is a need for absolute obedience in this area. He must be vigilant and must not be able to be blamed for anything.

He must be a good example, not drunk, not given to much wine, not a striker of people, not hungry for money nor fighting over things all the time. He must not be jealous and must have his children under control. Finally in verse 6 he must not be a new convert as they need to grow spiritually before they can handle the responsibility of the ministry.

The number one priority is the pastors wife. To be the husband of one wife is to be occupied with your own wife and not other peoples, giving time to your marriage. Many churches do not appreciate that but as a minister you have to set out family matters in accordance with God's Word.

The wife of the minister is there to support him and he is to give her time. He should not allow himself to be at people's beck and call twenty four hours a day. Many ministers starve their wives of attention. Many ministers do not love their wives as Christ loved the church, and so open up an easy way for Satan to destroy their ministry .

If you do not spend time with your wife you are disobedient to God. This is quality time, time to talk to you without children. You can respond to her counsel her, encourage her. Many great ministers are not great in their home. You need to budget time to make sure you are. You can tell your people not to phone you on certain nights as they are your nights at home with the family. Do not let anything other than a major crisis interfere.

The number two priority is to the family. Parents need to be seen at home. Children need to see their father. Many ministers lose their children who grow up to be pagans. They are leading people to Christ on Sunday and leaving their children to hell during the week. Time has not been budgeted to the family. A special family tea, at least once a week is important. There are pastors who will put everyone in their family out so that someone in the church can be looked after; this is not biblical!

The people who will tie you up and keep you from your family are ones that are ruining their own family at home. They often cannot be helped as they are disobedient to God's Word and do not like to be told about it. You can spend five hours a day with them and it will be no good, you are likely to feed people's neurosis. There are some people who do not want to be helped. They want to have constant problems and upset you and everybody else. Apply God's Word to your life, honour your wife, honour the family and then serve the lord's people.

REDEEMING THE TIME

Time is very precious; it is a disappearing commodity. Turn to and read Ephesians 5:14-17, also 1 Timothy 3:14-17, and Colossians 4:5. We are to redeem the time. Look at time as a thing of great value and make every minute of the day count. Do not be a fool, be wise. If you timetable yourself and stick to it you will be able to use every minute as unto the Lord.

The greatest people in the past were up early in the morning and they were going to bed between 9 and 10. They were up at 4 or 5 in the morning studying God's Word, they honoured their family, they honoured God's people and honoured the Lord. People like Spurgeon and Wesley did this. Wesley would read as he rode. We need to have books on hand. A tape deck or recorder in the car is essential as you can have Bible studies in the car. You need to think what you are doing in the day and what you can do to maximise your effective use of time. You should strengthen yourself with spiritual food.

You should be up by 5 to 6 in the morning. If you are a family man you have to get up early or you wont have quiet time to pray without interfering with family time. A lot of men piously lock themselves in the study for their morning devotions while the rest of the family is having breakfast leaving the wife to deal with the children. This is wrong. You should be up early studying the Word prior to the children getting up.

You do it on your time not on the family's time; they are your responsibility to look after. Do a devotional study early in the morning, and then read your way through the Bible, three to four chapters a morning and a time of prayer.

Breakfast time is family time. Work together so that it is a family time if possible. The children go off the school from 8 to 8:30. From 8 to 12 the time should be spent in the study. Get there as soon after 8 as possible and study preparing messages for the services and Bible classes. If you have a teaching plan you know what books you are doing. Go through verse by verse preparing your notes for the passages you are teaching in the weeks to come. One message will take 4 to 10 hours. You need to spend 5 to 6 mornings at 4 hours a time to get 4 good messages a week.

Go home for lunch and have lunch with your wife. From 12 to 1 or 2. It is a good time to talk about things that matter while the children are not there.

From 2 to 4 there is visitation. Walk to you visitation if possible. You need to be seen and greet those who you meet. Ministers in recent times have got into the car and have lost the visible contact with the people in their area; if you have a city church with a city wide ministry then your area for being "seen" will be different, and may involve speaking at public places. You need to be a minister in your local area, whatever that is. To those you greet you make small talk seeking opportunities for the spiritual conversation later. Do not push people but be sensitive. Get to know the young louts who may target the church for attention, and target them for evangelism.

Get to know the old people, the lonely, the depressed, those who think that God has forgotten them. Let them know that He hasn't. If you do that every afternoon you will have covered your area without too much trouble There are also hospital visits to be made as well as the ministry to the elderly. There may be a youth detention centre. Afternoons are very sleepy and not conducive to study. By walking you will get exercise.

Between 4 and 5 head for home. Parents should be with their family at tea time so between 5 and 7 you should try and be home for family time. Stay at the table and talk. Between 7 and 9 is your meeting time. You should never allow a church meeting to go much after 9 as everybody should be home by 10. You are not a very good example if you are bleary eyed at work. Working early in the morning is more efficient.

Set aside days of the week for church meetings and do not expect people to be out five nights a week. It should be a maximum of 3 except for special evangelistic campaigns. At least 50% of parents time should be at home in the evenings.

You can also have such things as a breakfast Bible class. Have a breakfast on a Sunday morning with your deacons and elders before church. There should be regular deacons and elders meetings to encourage each other and share regarding the church. Keep the evenings free.

Always carry a pocket diary around with you as well as a New Testament. You can be seen to be efficient. Be punctual. Never trust your memory, write it down. Use the TV as a tool, read periodicals to keep up with what is going on in the world. Spurgeon said that you are what you read. Set aside an area in the house for the family to read in. The fitter you are physically the better you will perform. Get both rest and stimulation. You need to run the church efficiently and effectively.

LECTURE 15 - STARTING OUT IN A NEW CHURCH

SGF - Page 56

First impressions are lasting impressions. If you are a new minister in the church the first days weeks and months are vital. Most people expect a new broom to sweep clean. It is therefore important that you have your thoughts and aims clear in your mind as you come into a ministry, and apply the key principles immediately.

If you are asked to become a pastor of a church you should put in writing that as a pastor, "I practice these things". Here is my list from my handout that I would give to a church :-

As a pastor I practise

1. PRAYER as the lifegiving power of the spiritual church.
 - a. I take time to pray.
 - b. I will organise a prayer warrior group in the church to pray.
 - c. I believe that congregational issues should be prayerfully considered. If the item is important we should pray about it for two or three weeks and then if there is not unanimity we should put it off and decide later after further prayer.
2. SYSTEMATIC BIBLE TEACHING to feed the church.
 - a. I practice study and teaching systematically, verse by verse, book by book.
 - b. This means that every morning I will be studying God's Word in my study and will not want telephone calls that can be delayed until the afternoon. I want to feed on God's Word so that I can feed the flock adequately, so you receive the teaching that is only possible if the pastor is alone with the Holy Spirit and the Word. You must give me time enough to achieve that.
 - c. Every service will be a teaching service, my desire is to saturate you with God's Word. There will be a teaching programme in the church, with each meeting devoted to a book that is taught through.
 - d. I believe in letting the Holy Spirit loose in the church through the Word of God being taught in a way that the believers hear the whole counsel of God for them, and see the Holy Spirit take different passages and bring them together his way for their lives. There is power and spiritual production only where the Lord is lifted up as the Word is taught. I do not seek signs and wonders and strange miracles; I seek the greatest miracle of all, the transformed lives of the saints in holiness with spiritual fruit that is visible to all and acts as a sweet smelling savour to God and attracts men to the gospel.
5. WORSHIP as the expression of our position as believers. The Holy Spirit works through the Word and my desire is to set the Holy Spirit free amongst you through the worshipful teaching of God's Word verse by verse, and the natural overflow of that is praise and worship to the Lord by all.

The teaching and hearing of the Word is worship, as is free will offering giving, songs and hymns that reflect the truth of the Word, and the fellowship of the lord's table, the shared meals we will have, and the uplifting counsel

we will share in the filling of the Holy Spirit. All activities done in the filling of the Spirit are worship, and the focus of the church will be to provide opportunities for expression of all spirit filled activities that will uplift the brethren.

a. Services must provide an atmosphere of privacy where all can express their love for the Lord, their appreciation, thankfulness, and dependence on him.

b. Congregational participation is essential for worship, it is an active process. The only passive thing is the hearing of the Word of God where we must be quiet to let the Holy Spirit speak with our heart. Our response to the Word must be active, in the service and in our service in life itself.

c. Members will be invited in advance (so they can prepare) to participate in all aspects of the church services, in accordance with their gifts and abilities (no embarrassment or anxiety will be caused). Men and women will be involved in this as we are all to be involved, as the membership was in the early church, in accordance with their gifts.

d. Service format will be flexible, but every service must have the elements that we have received from the apostles; prayers, Bible reading, teaching, spiritual songs, communion weekly, confirmation of what we believe, and must be prepared to die for (creedal statements read by the pastor or recited by all).

4. EVANGELISM AND SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILY as the heart of the mission of the church.

a. I am a visiting and evangelistic pastor. I believe in visiting and evangelising the family. Every afternoon I will be on the beat. You will see me out and about in the afternoons, or I will be preparing for services.

b. I believe in the "Gospel service", and will teach through a Gospel, for one service every week. There will be an appeal, as I invite all who have experienced the call of the Holy Spirit on their life through the passage covered to consider his claims on them and come forward and surrender their lives to him.

c. I believe in calling for repentance and for believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is the only Saviour. I do not have an exclusive "method". I am happy with the "Keswick" people as I am happy with the appeals given by C H Spurgeon. I do not believe in "easy believism", but in a thorough understanding of the truth and a complete surrender/commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.

d. I will challenge everyone to be an evangelist and an ambassador for Christ, and for each home to be an evangelistic centre. I will challenge the family to be a centre for evangelism but I am committed to the family and will not over stretch them either. Families must have times for themselves, for that reason there will not be either business or worship meetings every night, for families need time together through the working week.

5. CHURCH GROWTH IS A MISSION. I am committed to church growth, each one win one each year is my motto. This should give a 100% growth each year.

a. Prayer is the start for any revival, the root of growth.

b. Sunday school is an essential tool for growth also, a harvest point for souls, and the contact point into the community with unbelievers who otherwise would not be touched.

6. THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

a. The Holy Spirit has not left the church short of any gifts that are needed for all legitimate church activities.

b. The correct way for tasks/roles to be filled is therefore by the Spirit moving upon those gifted moving them to make themselves available for roles and tasks. As the leadership prays the Lord will lay upon them the appropriate people for tasks and they are to be approached and asked to pray. As the Lord lays upon their hearts the need to do the work they will approach the role with a committed worshipful attitude.

c. I will not get into the rostering business, nor will I take on tasks that others do not do. If the Lord does not move upon people to do the work, then that particular "work" will not be done. If the Lord moves upon people to do tasks, then there is blessing all round, but if rosters are put in place there is frustration and no blessing. For every task there is a believer who can be blessed by doing that work; anything that stops the matching up of task with person by the Holy Spirit is wrong.

d. God can be trusted to lead HIS CHURCH. I will not get into any "demarcation dispute" with the Holy Spirit; he is in charge. A church must be rooted and grounded on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ for us, and that is a GRACE work. THE CHURCH founded on GRACE and it must run and be administered BY GRACE. That means God does the work through spirit filled people, anything else is not bone fide, for it is not spiritual.

7. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT.

Give a full doctrinal statement of your beliefs which should cover perhaps four to five pages so that they know where you stand on every key point of doctrine. This will need to change at times as an issue becomes more important to distinguish yourself from liberalism or extremism.

You need to know what you believe and be able to justify it before the church in the future. You should expect people if they mean business with God to grill you, to question you thoroughly about all you believe and practise. They know now where you stand and what you are going to preach. It is up to you to ensure that you do not let them down.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

Before you arrive for your first interview for selection, and then take the appointment, there are five things that you need to address:-

[a] Before you arrive request the last three annual reports together with the financial statements so that you know where they are and where the problems are. What sort of funds are they getting in and where they are spending it. You may need to deal with the board and challenge them over their use of the Lord's money. The annual reports should record what the Sunday School and other departments are doing. You will be able to assess what is and what is not important as far as God is concerned.

[b] You should meet with the elders and deacons. You should have a weekend retreat with them, once you are selected. This should allow for Bible study, prayer and sharing the burdens, desires, dreams etc. Start with two or three hours of prayer and then a solid Bible study.

[c] Prepare a prayer request list for the prayer warriors you are going to establish.

[d] Prepare a church file in your home. This should include general observations, where it is now and where it should be. Have a card index on all your church leaders. Start recording your impressions on each person you meet to build up a personality profile from a spiritual viewpoint. Are they embarrassed when you talk about the gospel, what are their desires and dreams. Some may need to have encouragement, another may be lazy whilst yet another has a purpose for doing things. You cannot treat all people exactly the same.

[e] Visit the church office and start moving your books in and meet the secretary of the church. Get to know your people so that you can help them to perform at their maximum benefit. The relationship must be a working relationship not a social one. Find out what happens to the mail.

THE FIRST SERMON

The first sermon should have:-

[a] Begin as you intend to go on, do it from the first day. Start with a verse by verse study of James on Sunday morning, Mark on the Sunday evening and Galatians on Wednesday. You should deal with short books to start off with.

You could use Nehemiah, the man of prayer, David the man of action, etc for topical studies in the Old Testament. The minister should preach four times a week including an adult Bible class before the morning service. The job of the shepherd is to feed and protect the sheep.

[b] State your policy on prayer at the first service. You should have several prayers through the service.

[c] You should show your congregation the peace, joy and wonder of the Christian life when it is lived as Christ wants you to live it.

[d] Hold up in front of them what it is to follow Christ and encourage them to follow you. They should want to follow you into God's Word.

Emphasise your loving care for them as sheep of the Lord. The minister is the under shepherd not the shepherd who is Jesus Christ.

BTB Church Government

SOME THOUGHTS ON SHEPHERDING

1. The Shepherd as Christ appears in three successive Psalms.
 - a Psalm 22 - the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep (John 10:11). He is the Door (John 10:9).
 - b Psalm 23 - the Lord is my shepherd - the great shepherd of the sheep. (Hebrews 13:20).

- c Psalm 24 - the chief shepherd appears as the Man of Glory. (1 Pet 5:4).
- 2. We therefore have, in chronological order, the shepherd dying for His sheep, the resurrected shepherd tending and caring for His sheep and the future shepherd ruling over His sheep.
- 3. The Shepherd hood of the Lord
 - a. Sheep are used throughout Scripture to stand for believers. Matthew 25:34 - they are contrasted with goats.
 - b. Sheep are helpless, they need to be led, fed and protected. They cannot defend themselves.
 - c. In the Old Testament Israel were called sheep of his fold Psalm 74:1, 79:13, 95:7, 100:3 Jeremiah 23:1
 - d. The Lord Jesus Christ came to the fold of Israel and while some responded most rejected him and the Lord called out a flock to establish a new group - John 10:16
 - e. Judaism is the fold out of which the Lord led his sheep to form a new flock on the hills in freedom , the contrast between the fold and the flock. The fold no longer exists it was Jewish and legal and is gone, there is neither Jew or Gentile but we are all in Christ Jesus. This is the theme of the book of Galatians, Romans and Hebrews, the just will live by faith. Our church should be a place where we learn to walk with the Lord under the control of the Holy Spirit. In the fold the sheep are within four walls under the protection of the man in charge of the fold whereas the flock is moving, feeding and are under the control of the shepherd. This is where the walk in the spirit occurs. Christianity is a relationship and is active. Galatians 1:6-9 - here Paul says we must walk in the spirit not a lot of rules such as in Judaism. We are to fight the enemy on the hills and be in the world but not of it.
 - f. The Lord himself is the true Shepherd and his credentials are the Cross John 10:10-16. He is the only door to fellowship Acts 4:12 John 3:36, John 10:28,29
 - g. There is only one flock and all sheep should know it. Believers show their character as sheep by how they respond to the shepherd.

In the first few weeks you need to see what gifts they have for use in the church. Seek prayer warriors from amongst them. You should begin a, whole church visitation programme, trying to meet everybody in the first few months. If it is a small church of up to 150 members you should try and visit everybody on the roll. You should be able to have two or three short social calls each afternoon. Timetable them so that you can tell people when you will be coming. Allow them to talk.

As a minister you should be seen on your beat. Do not drive, get to know unbelievers. Introduce yourself to the neighbours of the church. Embarrass them with kindness. You lay a foundation and build a bridge.

You should have a card system on all your members, their birthdates, anniversaries. Do not visit on an anniversary but send them a card. This shows that you are interested in people, they need to know you care. Do a demographic study to see whether your church fits the demographic ratios. If it does not you may have racism in the church. Let the people express their love for their own culture but keep them together in the church.

Develop a resource file in the area of needs and counselling. Get legal advice and financial expertise within the church. It is important that those people are spirit filled. Check out the counselling services in the area and find out which ones are suitable and can be recommended. In a similar way check out the medical practitioners. In relation to schools what is their attitude to sex education and other curriculum, establish a church school.

The gloves are off in the world. You as a minister must be prepared. The Christians come to you so that they can be trained and sent out. You are to be a light in the community and salt in the nation. As such you need to have training courses such as counselling, a bible school. You make the policy with the elders and deacons so that they are involved. Check out other churches. Find out which ones you can work with and which you cannot.

REFER TO BTB CHURCH GOVERNMENT

LECTURE 16 - WORSHIP SERVICES.

Turn to and read - Psalm 29:2 –“ Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness". This is our starting point when considering worship.

Worship means learning more about the Lord, learning to love Him more and praise Him more that you might serve Him more. If your worship does not include these things then you are not fulfilling Psalm 29:2.

Giving glory to the name of God is worship. If you are having a worship service it must provide for those elements. It must provide for the teaching of God's Word, there must be the opportunity for people to praise Him and to serve Him. If any of these elements are missing you have not got a worship service.

Turn to and read - Matthew 28:5-10, 16-20 - here after the resurrection his disciples fell at His feet and worshipped Him recognising His Lordship. Some doubt, some hesitate but they are convinced by what they observe and worship Him. Worship involves recognising who God is, committing yourself to His Word and casting yourself on Him in total dependency to Him.

Turn to and read - John 13:12-17, 15:7-15 - from these verses it is clear that we are His friends if we do whatever He tells us to do. Worship involves friendship and fellowship to the Lord and service to Him in obedience to His Word as well as our relationship to others in the light of the Word. If there are not the opportunities for these things to happen you need to change the service. You need to lead the service initially to set the tone and example. You might do this yourself later or have another conduct each service as part of their ministry training. It is important to have people involved but as the pastor you have to do the planning.

WHAT MUST YOU CATER FOR?

- [a] Your service must firstly lift up the Lord, the Cross and the resurrection
- [b] There must be time in the service to spend time at the Saviour's feet. People need to be able to praise Him verbally and non verbally both in what they say and do.
- [c] There must be prayer. Prayer must be central in the service. Silent prayer so that each person can come privately before the Lord as well as public prayer where someone leads the service in prayer. There should be several; prayer times through the service.
- [d] Songs of praise and dedication should be part of the service. In song you express worship and adoration, praise and commitment to the Lord.
- [e] God's Word must be central in the service. People must be drawn to the Lord through His Word
- [f] There must be a stressing of doctrine in service, it involves loving Him more, serving Him more, knowing Him more. We are saved to serve. Even if there is not a chance to serve in the service there is a chance to serve on the streets.
- [g] There must be a possibility of provision of the gospel; we must preach salvation. We cannot praise Him without remembering that He saved us and that there is a possibility that all can be saved. Present your bodies to the Lord as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual service. We need to commit ourselves. Worship is dialogue between yourself and God.

SUGGESTED FORMAT

You need to have balance with a good amount of variety.

The first part of the service should be a settling activity, it can be either passive or active. The passive form is the pianist or organist playing quiet thoughtful music where people can calm themselves and pray and music that does not encourage chatter.

The other is active where choruses are sung. There is a place for both. The call for worship should come after the quiet time and before the active.

In the call for worship you (or another) stand up and say "Hear the Word of God" and read the passage. The church service should start with God's Word, with a little meditation that this is the theme for the morning.

This is followed by the hymn of consecration or choruses, they can be happy or serious but they set the tone. This is followed by the reading of God's Word and prayer. Public prayer should be short and private prayer long. If someone prays for five minutes he has prayed for four minutes too long. They should be short sharp and to the point.

There needs to be an opportunity for an offering to be given as that is also worship.

There needs to be a message from God's Word with a mix and match of hymns. The sermon should be followed by hymns of praise with a benediction taken from God's Word and you close in prayer committing the people to the Lord. The service concludes by exiting to music. People should leave with the call of battle in their ears.

The service should be an hour to an hour and a quarter. Beware of marathons. People can only concentrate for so long, young children can only be kept quiet for a short while. You find that people have not heard anything because they are worried about their children making a noise. If you are going to have a somewhat longer service make sure that they are catered for.

THE SERMON

Keep to your sermon notes and do not go off on long ad libs. If the Holy Spirit has given you a message stick to your notes. Make your sermon count.

The pastor is a teacher - Turn to and read - 2 Timothy 4:2 - go out of your way to teach God's Word. In your teaching there are three points to remember:-

[a] Perspiration and prayerfulness in your study will prevent perspiration of embarrassment in your pulpit. Turn to and read - 2 Timothy 2 : 15-16 - a minister should not babble on. Busy and stressed people come to hear a man who has been with God over the Word, not the ideas of men from books.

[b] Use the kiss method - keep it simple and sincere. Do not try and be academic and erudite. Do not take a pile of books to quote from, use the Scriptures. If you quote put it in your notes. The Bible is what man needs to hear not the thoughts of man.

[c] Do not over promise and under perform, do not promise to cover something and then not do it. Do not try and cover too much, do not get out of your depth. Wait until you know what a passage means before you teach it. Do not use base or gruesome details. Sometimes people need to be shocked but do not use it as a matter of course. You do not have to get into blood guts and fornication. Do not be a coward at large and a lion in the pulpit. You should not say something from the pulpit that you are not willing to say face to face with some one.

[d] Do be biblical, stick to the Scripture, be alive with illustrations make the Scriptures alive. Do be enthusiastic.

If it does not mean something to you, you should get out of the ministry. Be clear and simple. Be concise, you can repeat yourself but be concise. Be practical and show where the principle applies in the everyday life.

THE MIDWEEK SERVICE

This should be the power house of the church. The theme is prayer and Bible Study. Start the service with a Bible reading followed by a time of prayer for consecration, a lot of time for silent prayer. You will have a teaching session, great prayers of the Bible perhaps. Make the study short, under half an hour.

On a blackboard or overhead projector have the prayer points of the people. Having been asked what the prayer is ask what do the people want to pray for. As a result some of the prayer points can be put into action by the deacons or others. There are therefore practical areas which can be sorted out. If you are concerned about people do not pray about it do something about it.

Do not discuss sin in the prayer meeting. If they know that their sin has been discussed it makes it very hard for the people to come back into the church again. Such an act is the last step in the discipline process

(BTB - Church Discipline).

Divide your group up into small groups giving each person something to pray for. This allows for everyone to pray in a small group where they are not over awed. With this method each person concentrates on one subject. Circulate from group to group. This allows you to see how people are praying. Limit your group size to ten people each.

When you finish your list share with one another and then when all have finished you call them all back together. You can then end with a time of singing praising God for what he has done and challenge people what they have been praying about and the specific jobs that they have ahead of them. There is no need to separate husbands and wives.

MUSIC

Music has a great effect on a service, it should not be a dirge nor a jive. A rock band has no place in the church, unless there is a well thought plan, and carefully selected music and lyrics. You need to plan your music to uplift God so that they can concentrate on God with rock music.

BTB - Music

The use of songs is bona fide in the form of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual songs - Ephesians 5:19. Stick to the apostolic pattern. We have our Psalms which should be light and wonderful. If the tune does not lift you up you should change the tune. Do not let others choose the hymns. Music is a factor which ploughs the soul making it ready for the Word. Work closely with your music director.

Beware of choirs and solos. Some churches have had terrible problems with choirs. Some people get so hyped up on their music that you have to control them. The New Testament pattern is no choirs which was different from the Old Testament times. The New Testament pattern is Congregational singing, not items or choirs. Make sure, if you use them, that with their great singing ability they have the fruit of the Spirit in their life.

Prayer is absolutely essential, praying often ; and carefully, and thoughtfully. Remember prayer involves, Confession, Intercession, Petition and Thanksgiving. Set an example for the young people, they will follow it.

Pray more, believe more and so receive more said Spurgeon.

REFER TO BTB - CHURCH DISCIPLINE, MUSIC

LECTURE 17 - SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES

Special services can be an opportunity for evangelism although, as we have seen, all services should be gospel services. The services that we will consider over three sessions are ordination and dedication, communions and baptisms, weddings and funerals. The first four are for believers only whilst the other two can be for either believer or unbeliever.

ORDINATIONS

Turn to and read - Acts 14:20-23 - Here we have Paul founding churches and ordaining elders in each church. There is a plurality of elders in each church. It is done through Prayer and Fasting.

Turn to and read - Titus 1:5 - 9. Paul gives Titus the authority to organise the church in Crete. In this he says that there will be certain people ordained. The bishop and the elder are the same with the pastor being the elder who rules.

Appoint or ordain is in the form of two Greek words "cheirotoneo" which in the Greek culture involved a show of hands. Appoint is "kathistemi" which is also used in Acts 6:3

Turn to and read - Acts 6 : 1 - 6. What is happening here is a group of church members are looking at men who have these spiritual gifts, you vote for them and we will appoint them.

There is a group in the church that appoints people but the congregation themselves have a part in doing it. We do not have a dictatorial situation. The church is involved but it is the people in charge who will eventually ordain.

Titus as the apostles delegate was the one in authority so he ordained the elders and deacons.

What is an ordination service? It is a formal recognition by the church that the person being ordained has the gift and qualification for the ministry. That person is being set aside for the job for which they are qualified by both gift and fruit. Ordination is not giving people authority from a bishop but it is the church recognising that the person has the gift and is demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit in their life. A person with a gift but no fruit in their life is not qualified to hold that position.

BTB - Church Government - qualifications for holding the offices.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

If they are an elder, deacon or deaconess they have entered into a position of authority in the church. This was signified in the early church by the laying on of hands.

There are four things that the laying on of hands signify. It was a specifically Jewish custom and was brought into the church by Jewish people, who were the majority in the early years.

[a] It recognised the new authority that was being given to the person that was the recipient of it. Sometimes the whole congregation did this to show that the person had authority over them.

[b] It was setting someone apart for that task. When Paul and Barnabus were set aside for a missionary journey they were set aside in the church one Sunday morning and hands were laid on them.

[c] You were delegating your power to them. In some places it was appropriate in others it was not. If you are an elder and appointing a new elder you are saying to the person that you are going to be in authority over this church as we are.

[d] Blessing, the Lord bless you. When you are ordaining an elder or deacon you want the Lord to bless them. It is still appropriate for the church to do this today as it is an apostolic practice. We do not recognise apostolic succession The elders at least should be involved with the ordination.

In addition they set aside deacons to do a job. We are ordaining them and they are responsible to the elders. They are in obedience to them. Here the elders tell the deacons what to do not the members.

When there is a specific job to be done in the church people must be set aside showing what the job is and what the issues are.

There is always a spiritual qualification for all tasks that involve authority.

There is an act of commitment when the whole congregation stand at the end of the service to pray for the elected officers. In their standing they commit themselves to follow those people. As elders, deacons, missionaries, if you are establishing a daughter church the pastor should be sent out with a special service.

Once a person has been ordained they should lead an exemplary life. It is an advantage to be publicly ordained but if they do not measure up they are for public discipline. If a church officer falls into gross sin they must be publicly rebuked and publicly stripped of the office. An ordinary church member can however be dealt with privately.

The office of elder, deacon and the like is not necessarily a permanent thing although in the early church it probably was unless sin cropped up in the person's life. It was often common to be appointed deacon and then go through to elder. The deacon was often an evangelist as seen by the life of Philip and Stephen.

Procedures for ordination services - BMMS and SGF page 88 - ministry - an examining council meets - a candidate for ministry should submit his doctrinal position in writing and can be questioned by the whole congregation on it. His views concerning the church, his knowledge of the Bible, his knowledge of the denominations history and practice, his personal attitude to the church.

His acquaintance with contemporary thought and affairs, his skills of preaching and teaching and pastoral visitation. His ability to relate to others, his team ship, his evangelistic and missionary commitment, stewardship, his attitude towards the community and what do unbelievers think of him. If unbelievers say that a person is no good he is not fit to be a minister.

The service itself - SGF page 91. It should start with a hymn of affirmation, the Scriptures, a sermon, a challenge to the candidate, the laying on of hands, a hymn of commitment, benediction and the right hand of fellowship. There should be an entire service set aside for that man as it is extremely important. It may be on a Saturday but preferably on a Sunday followed by communion.

In Acts 6 where the deacons were appointed they had seven deacons for seven thousand members (although the local Jerusalem congregation may have been only a few hundred)! If you have a congregation of fifty you will probably find that there will not be seven deacons provided by the Lord. You need one deacon per twenty five or fifty members. The job of the person is a social worker and counsellor. The jobs of deacons however are often expanded. The deaconess is a social worker, working with the women. Deacons should meet in their own gatherings and share the social concerns of the church which will allow them to coordinate matters.

The elders meeting under the chief elder has the spiritual concerns of the church. They should receive reports from the deacons and respond to them. Eldership is an Old Testament function whereas deacons only occur in the New Testament.

DEDICATION OF INFANTS

Turn to and read - Matthew 19:13-15 - the Lord laid his hands on the little children and blessed them. The Protestant churches practice the dedication service not as an alternative to infant baptism. There is no Biblical basis for infant baptism. Baptism is for believers only. You become a Christian as you accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord.

BTB - Baptism

The idea is that there is a commitment by both parents and church to bring up the child in the knowledge and admonition of the Lord. You are praying for those children and teach them to go on with the Lord. You also encourage the parents that they are not alone.

This should be part of a Sunday morning service where the child is dedicated to the Lord. If there are a large number of people in the service you can have a special service, an evangelical service.

REFER TO BTB - CHURCH GOVERNMENT - QUALIFICATIONS FOR HOLDING THE OFFICES. BAPTISM

LECTURE 18 - THE TWO BIBLICAL ORDINANCES - BAPTISM AND THE COMMUNION SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

These are ordinances and not sacraments; that is, they have no power in and of themselves, they are potent symbols of a spiritual reality. As far as Catholics are concerned to take communion is to take Christ. Under the sacramental view, each time you take communion you take a new shot of Christianity. Take it once a week and you are saved and sanctified. As long as you take the elements you are saved. We reject this view as unscriptural; there is nothing that we can "do" or "take" to give us salvation, for salvation is of grace through faith, not of any works that we can do. While we reject the sacramental view we do not reject the ordinances, they stand for important doctrines and in celebrating them we celebrate our wonderful position in Christ.

The two ordinances are the Lord's table and Baptism. The ordinances are established rites, commanded by the Lord which are memorials or testimonials and are the acts of obedience of one already saved by grace. This means when we say that we are celebrating the Lord's Table or believer's baptism, they do not bestow but show grace. They recall, they illustrate and they teach.

Baptism is celebrated by each of us only once, but after this every baptismal service we attend becomes a time for praise for us, as we recall our entry into union with Christ when we were saved, and we recall the day of our own baptism with joy.

COMMUNION SERVICE

The communion service is the joining together of believers to fellowship with the Lord at His table and with each other. These are joyfully solemn occasions. It is a memorial of the Lord's death as well the glory of His resurrection and the certainty of His coming again. It is a victory celebration. He has won. We celebrate it until He comes.

Pertinent Scriptures are Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:20-34. Turn to these in order and read them now.

In the gospels we have the simplicity of the Lord's Table brought out. Matthew 26 alone could lead you into Catholicism but when complemented by 1 Corinthians 11 it shows the full picture. It is from Matthew 26 that the Catholics teach transubstantiation. By applying Jude 3, the exhortation of Jude for the saints to follow apostolic teaching, we are saved from this. This subject underlines the importance of interpreting scripture with or by scripture.

The first few verses of the 1 Corinthians passage shows what the Christians did once a week. On the Sunday night they would gather together and have a fellowship meal, an agape feast. The trouble was that it was without love as there was gluttony, drunkenness, jealousy and many other sins which were causing the meals to be anything other than a love feast.

After the meal they had the Lord's Table after which a speaker would give a lengthy Bible study. The mental attitude of some and the behaviour of many at the agape meal however is causing the Lord's Table to be brought into disrepute.

As a result some of the Corinthians were put under the sin unto death because of this. Here Paul tells them to wait on one another at the agape, having enough to eat but not too much. If any man is hungry he is to eat at home. The principle is that God takes this ordinance of the Lord's Supper, very seriously and that if you treat it in an unworthy manner you are bringing contempt on the Cross of Christ that it remembers.

The wine represents the blood and the bread the body. If you participate therefore in the meal having unconfessed sin in your life you are guilty of the blood and body of the Lord Jesus Christ. You need to deal with sin before the service, and there should be time for confession before the service begins. Paul says that we should examine ourselves, judge ourselves so that we might not be judged by God. 1 Corinthians 11:31. Do not let the bread and wine touch your lips if you have not dealt with sin in your life. 1 John 1:5-10.

Here we have a service format for the Lord's table. If we deviate from 1 Corinthians we depart from apostolic teaching. What he is saying is that God is judging the congregation because they are not taking communion seriously. If you have trouble in your church it may well be taking communion lightly which is should never be.

PARTICIPATION IN THE LORD'S TABLE

Who should partake in communion?. We have a choice of an open table where all believers who are in fellowship may partake or a closed one where only baptised members can take it. The best way is an open table. People attending the Lord's Table should be encouraged to ensure that they are controlled by the Holy Spirit before participating.

Who should take the service? It is a church ordinance so the church leaders, elders or deacons should lead in the communion. There is no sacramental idea here. All you have to do is to read the passage of Scripture, call them to prayer and distribute the elements. It is to be celebrated wherever the church is; a building, a prison, an open field. It is not a personal thing, it is a family thing (a time when the church family gathers to celebrate the bond that binds them, the precious blood of Christ).

As a rule, in the early church it was celebrated in homes, for that was where the church met. Today it could also be celebrated in homes if the home is being used as a meeting place for the local church or in an isolated situation such as

an Australian sheep station, where the only believers for hundreds of miles are under one roof. Read 1 Corinthians 13:5, and Matthew 5:23, 24. We must reflect before we come, and deal with our sins.

There may be a case where you have a housebound person or someone who is dying who wishes to take communion. With the elders and deacons the person can be visited on request. That person's home then becomes a location where the church is, as the church is made up of saints. This is not a sacramental act however. You should always have the deacon or deaconess who is responsible for that person present, and make the service a time for praise and prayer.

When do you have the service. The best thing is to make it a special service before the main service or have it in the evening after a church supper for believers only as they did in the ancient world, and before the evening service. Make the fellowship time light and relaxed.

If it is at the end of a service your concentration is going to lapse. People at the end of a long service will often be starting to feel hungry. For these reasons the ancient pattern is best, as it places communion straight after the fellowship meal, and before the teaching service. The meal in the early church was a simple one, was bread, cheese and wine, perhaps some cold meat and soup. Keep such a "pot luck" supper simple.

How often should you have it? In the ancient world they had it once a week at the special evening service. As it was a service that reminded believers of the cost of their salvation, underlined the need for confession of sin, and taught the doctrine of positional in Christ, and the doctrine of Grace, they believed it should be regular; I agree, weekly must be the best pattern, as it was the apostles! This is our standard, isn't it!

What should we celebrate it with? Bread and wine, unleavened bread and unfermented wine (Grape juice). If you follow the apostles you should use grape juice or unfermented wine and unleavened bread, as was used at Passover time, a time when all leaven (evil) was swept from the house. The elements used, preach the uncorrupted blood and the pure life of the Lord, and as he was without sin or evil, so the elements we use should be without leaven to be the best picture possible. If you can buy soda crackers or Jewish unleavened bread in your country use it, or whatever in your own culture speaks of the things the Passover spoke of.

BTB - Communion, The Lord's Supper

BAPTISM

We now move to examine the second ordinance - Baptism.

Many in the ultras dispensational camp preach that baptism is a Jewish ritual and has nothing to do with the church. This view of theirs is a false doctrine. They say that the important baptism is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and that water baptism is just an illustration which can be deleted. The Spirit's baptism is critical, and automatic when a person is truly saved, but the Lord has told us to go into all the world preaching the gospel and baptising in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:18-20. As we do not do the baptising by the Holy Spirit, this passage can only mean baptise with water.

Water baptism was done by immersion or in cases of great water shortage effusion (pouring over the head). If we are going to be faithful to the Lord we must baptise in water our new converts.

Turn to and read, Acts 10:39 - 48. Peter preaches the gospel, they accept the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit falls on the people and they speak in tongues which is a sign for Peter the Jew that they have become acceptable to God. Peter seeing their conversion asks why they should not be baptised by water. They asked him to stay several days to teach them doctrine and he did. Here Peter was being obedient to Matthew 28:18-20. The ultra dispensationalists say that this is interim and therefore not current practice. This is not true, for this pattern continues through Acts and the early church, both before(Acts 8:34-39), and afterwards.

We see it in other passages. Turn to and read, Acts 16:15, 33, 18 : 8, note all the acts of baptism. If you do not practice this you are out of step with the Lord and the Apostles.

WATER BAPTISM

Water baptism pictures union with Christ, dying to the old life and being raised to new life in which power you are destined to live. The apostolic practice was to baptise the same day that people were saved, then to stay with them a few weeks and stabilise them through Bible teaching. Baptism was close to salvation in the early church, and therefore any delay to it is unscriptural, and you must have good arguments to deviate from the apostolic pattern.

Baptism is the doorway to entry into the local church. Conversion followed by baptism. Be baptised in accordance with the Lord's commands. Now lets look at another question asked; Is the water running or still? Some Scriptures show it to be running others still.

In Corinth it was probably in the pool of the water supply. In most cases the baptism was private. The early church practice was not to use the baptism service as an evangelical service as we do, rather as a private commitment before the church and family members.

Who should conduct the service? As with communion, this is a church ordinance and so the church's leadership should conduct the service. It should be held wherever there is water enough to conduct it, in a place significant to the church.

In the ancient world after the church had been in existence for several hundred years the baptisms took place around Easter. This was so the bishop could do the baptisms. This was sacramentalism coming in, and was the reason delay occurred.

Most churches keep white garments for baptism, a practise that goes back to the early church. Whatever garments speak of purity in the culture should be used.

REFER BTB - COMMUNION, THE LORD'S SUPPER, BAPTISM

LECTURE 19 - WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

INTRODUCTION

Minister's manuals are useful in these matters, but not essential. There are all sorts of resources for funerals and weddings. Build your own wedding and funeral file with illustrations. Good articles from Christian papers on marriage divorce, bringing up children.

Acts will not give you much help here, as to the format for services, for the early church was NOT involved in either as a matter of course.

Marriage was a civil and family/cultural affair and death also was a family matter, with the early church following the rituals of Israel if they were Jewish and the Greeks if they were Greek. Prayers and Bible readings were used, and as there are many that cover marriage and death, there is a lot of material that can be prepared by you to assist.

You need to have good resources that are relevant to your cultural context as a pastor, for every year you will have to take on average, one wedding and two to three funerals at least as a local minister.

Many people in the world consider the church to be the "hatch, match and despatch" organisation. They will want you to baptise babies, marry sinners and bury sinners as if they were saints. If you are a Bible believing person you cannot be involved in it, unless you have really good reasons. This is an area to do a lot of homework in!

JEWISH WEDDING

At the time of Christ the wedding was arranged by the father of the groom. There are many interesting analogies from marriage to the relationship we have with God. Marriage for the believer is a spiritual as well as a practical thing.

Let us see how the Jewish people did things and identify the analogies to spiritual truths. As we do this think of the application of these rituals to your own cultural practises regarding marriage.

1. Prior to the first visit of the prospective groom to the bride, the father made arrangements for their relationship. (Hebrews 2:13)

Analogy - God the Father - the Planner made arrangements for mankind in eternity past.
2. The prospective groom would then meet the bride and fellowship with her.

Analogy - Christ came to earth at the first advent and spent time with man.
3. Prior to leaving the bride's house the bridegroom would pay the whole dowry or payment for the bride. (Hebrews 9:23-28)

Analogy - Christ's death on the cross paid the debt of all mankind in full.
4. The bridegroom would return to his father's house and build a future house for the newly married couple to live in. (John 14:1-3)

Analogy - Christ ascended to his father's house to prepare a place for his bride.
5. At the Father's request the Son would go to the Bride's home to pick the bride up.

Analogy - Christ's return to earth for his church at the Rapture.
6. The bride as she left her home was married to the groom. (1 Corinthians 15:51-58)

Analogy - As the body of Christ rises to meet Christ in the air the body becomes the bride.

7. The bride had been preparing her wedding garments waiting for the bridegroom. The bridegroom adorns his bride for the wedding supper. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)

Analogy - Whilst waiting for the return of Christ, the body produces gold, silver and precious stones. The final dressing of the body is done by Christ at the Judgement seat of Christ.

8. The bride and groom hold a wedding feast in the groom's father's house, which in rich families could last anywhere from a week to a month.

Analogy - The wedding feast of Christ will last 1,000 years - The Millennium on earth.

9. Friends of the bridegroom would attend the wedding feast, and be there in the groom's father's house feasting before the groom returned with the bride..

Analogy - Old Testament Saints in resurrection bodies will be involved in the rejoicing of the Millennium.

10. Friends of the bride waited outside the wedding hall, with lamps alight waiting for the bridal couple to arrive, before they were permitted to enter the wedding feast. (Matthew 25:1-13)

Analogy - Tribulation Saints who survive the great tribulation will enter into the Millennium in their physical bodies to replenish the earth.

WEDDINGS

Remember, for Weddings - the ancient church was not involved in weddings at all. Weddings in the ancient world were cultural, social and legal affairs. For several hundred years no one had a wedding service in the church. From 320 on they held wedding services. The same occurred with funerals. As the church was under persecution they did not have funeral services, as such.

A minister in the time of Paul did not take either so there are no examples in the Bible of the Christian wedding or funeral service. The Christian funeral was offering prayers with family over a body being buried in the ground or taking them into the catacombs as they were not allowed to bury them normally. Do not go to the Bible for precedence, there are none.

We get guidance from Scripture on doctrines in these two areas, but not practice. Weddings and funerals give opportunities for evangelism within the celebration/remembrance, and that must be your main objective.

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Christian marriage is a relation or respect, of fidelity, of trust and of love. It is also a commitment to whatever family the Lord will give them. The Christian idea of marriage is a high one stressing the responsibility and commitment. Passages on marriage include Ephesians 5, 1 Corinthians 7, Colossians 3. In many passages the Lord talks about love and responsibility in many ways, and all these can be woven into a service.

In the ancient world the marriage was the taking away from the mother and father of the bride to be and the groom taking responsibility for her. The parents are no longer responsible for her, he is. The wedding went for perhaps a week as shown at the wedding of Cana. After a day or so the -parents of the bride joined the group. Virginity was very important in the ancient Jewish world, and both husband and wife were expected to belong to each other alone, in purity and loving commitment.

Doctrines here are important. Leaving mother and father, cleaving to each other. A man taking responsibility. She promising to follow him and obey him. The parents were to be kept at arms length once arrangements were made. These are important principles that must be related to the wedding today.

The man must be a man not a boy; if he is not ready to be a man and take responsibility let him not marry! The woman must be willing to leave her mother, if she is not let her not get married. You as a minister have to be sure that this is alright. If there is in-law interference it should not proceed.

Marriage is a serious business where a woman is trusting her life to a man and leaving her parents. Often this is not preached and the newly weds are under complete domination of the in-laws or parents. When you leave your mother and father you leave them. It is better to stop a wedding that is not based on the Biblical principles, than have a divorce.

SEXUAL RELATIONS

If you are dealing with a youth group you have to get across the concept that if you are a believer, you do not play around with sex, it is for adults within a marriage relationship only. God does not say "no" to pre-marital sex, for no reason, he has a reason, he is trying to stop you making a mess of your life. People may do the wrong thing but if you have told them the truth, they have been warned. You have as a minister to be clear and if necessarily blunt regarding

the doctrines of marriage. Get married God's way and enjoy having sex with your marriage partner alone all your life. Today the pagans talk about, "safe sex", but the only safe, satisfying, and life long sexual life you can have is with the wife or husband who has never been with anyone else.

If a woman is already pregnant and the couple want to get married but they cannot afford to be away from one set of parents then you need to discuss with the people involved if there is a place where they can live in the house with privacy. If there is not, the marriage will not survive as they will not be able to communicate, and the man is clearly not in a position to look after his wife. They have an uphill battle because the relationship has started with sin rather than sanctification. You as a teacher have a major role in the preventative ministry by advising the young people regarding sex, trying to avoid this sort of situation.

Turn to and read, 2 Corinthians 6:14 , read also, Nehemiah 13 : 23 - 27. Note the principle; no believer marries an unbeliever, no exceptions.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Another question is, can a divorced person able to be remarried by you? There is division on that among good Bible Believing Christians. The passages here to look at are, Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Matthew 5:27, 1 Corinthians 7:15. Read these. I believe that if a person is legitimately divorced which is by means of adultery by their partner and the partner has gone off then remarriage is an entitlement for the deserted believer, who was wronged by the adultery.

You need to have a position on divorce and re-marriage. The other problem you will have will be the marriage between two unbelievers who want to have a "white wedding". If a person has been immoral the idea of a white wedding is that of purity and one should not be party to glossing over immorality. It is great to be able to testify that one has not had sex with anyone else.

You can save yourself a lot of heartache that way. It is not appropriate for ministers of God's Word taking weddings for unbelievers. However an unbeliever can marry an unbeliever. If you believe that there is an evangelistic opportunity, you may decide to use their wedding as such. Be careful here, have your objective well thought out and their permission in advance.

If you are taking a marriage it is not just a couple of hours, there will be many hours counselling the couple and practising the service so it runs well. Also you do not want the young couple to spend a lot of money that they cannot afford; they can be "different" and just have a quiet wedding.

Cultural aspects will dictate what is "right" and "wrong" about these matters and you must work in accord with the local traditions and customs, as long as they do not violate the principles and doctrines of the Word of God. Time is required to run a wedding well. You also need to have a practice to ensure you have a God honouring service. It is not a three ringed circus it is a commitment before God and his people.

You should carefully vet music and the ceremony to make sure that it is honouring to God. In order to get it right from the start you should say that this is it and have a standard prepared. Have a handout and tell them that this is an agenda for the next few weeks of counselling. At the end of that you will be asked if you still want to get married and by your response if I am going to marry you. Do not let them make the rules. This can save you a lot of time. The minister is there to serve God not man.

The wedding is the bride and grooms day not the in laws day. So the parents should be out of it and have no say about anything in the marriage, once it is arranged. If there is any interference you turn to Genesis 2:24 and tell them to hear the Word of the Lord. If the mother of the bride does not want to leave and the bride does not want her mother to leave ask them all to leave. Failure to follow the Scriptures will cause misery. Matthew 19:5, Ephesians 5:31. Some cultural practises may change this, but be careful; you violate the clear principles of Genesis 2:24, at your, and the people's peril!

Keep the service to a minimum. It does not need to be a long service. Have a short message to the people. If they are unbelievers give them the gospel. The minister should be paid for the time that he has spent with them Luke 10:7, 1 Timothy 5:18. There are many people who despise the job of the minister. Do not let anyone despise you. Do not let them treat you as a nothing. It is not wise to attend the breakfast unless they are Christians well known to you and friends. There is little that you can do at a wedding breakfast. Remember, local custom and what is, "good manners", will dictate your behaviour.

With the unbeliever you can turn the payment issue round to tell them that as Christ died freely for them there will be no charge as money is not the question salvation for them is. As a rule, we should accept no money from unbelievers for anything.

In every youth group you should teach marriage, sexuality and the family. You can use Proverbs and then have teaching sessions on Biblical sexuality starting with Genesis 3, Song of Solomon and then go to Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3. Every year the youth group ought to be taught this. You have to give it bluntly. Proverbs is very good on this. This will save time on counselling later.

FUNERALS

Now let us look at the subject of Funerals. Even the unbeliever looks for some comfort in this area. They want you to say what a nice person great uncle Fred was when he wasn't. If you believe God's Word you cannot preach lies about pagans, pretending they are in heaven when you know they are in hell. People have the concept of Peter at the gate of heaven waiting for them to come, which mocks the whole concept of Christianity. They think that they can ignore the Lord Jesus Christ. They want to think that everything is alright. Such foolishness does allow for the opportunity to give the gospel at the funeral, but you must ensure the family know what you will say before hand. When unbelievers face a body they know in the hearts that the cartoon idea of God, and heaven/hell, that they have is not true. You have to give them the truth.

When there is a death immediately visit the family. Do not stay for hours, they are in a state of shock. You go into the house with a verse or two and pray, and leave. It is an opportunity to give the gospel. You cannot say where a person is, but you do know what the Bible says. - Luke 16 : 22 - 31. They may have accepted the Lord in the last moments, so we cannot say, they are in hell, but we must point out that , it is given unto man once to die and then the judgement. Hebrews 9:27.

A funeral service is the last testimony of the faithful person. You should choose the music, the message carefully. It is important to check everything with the family first. You have to be true to the Bible. Check out what you are able to say so that you are not compromised. The truth may offend but you must not be offensive. Do not have a lot of hymns. If they are unbelievers just have music. Do not have unbelievers mumble their way through hymns they do not know and will not sing again, save that time and tell them the truth in it.

The graveside services is important. As you go to the graveside read texts as you are going. Have them printed out, for the people later to read and reflect on what they believe. As the coffin goes into the ground there is again an opportunity for reading the words of scripture. If the deceased is a believer the talk and texts should be on resurrection.

You should visit and follow up the funeral service for at least eight weeks after a death, once a week as it takes that long for people to come to terms with the death and during that time they will be open to the words that were given at the service. Remember the graveside service makes the issue of resurrection clearer than any service in a church.

Cremation or burial does not matter to the Christians. Burial is a better example and picture of resurrection if you have a body. Cremation was a pagan practice as is the scattering of ashes, as it is saying that they do not want the body to come back together again.

Even though these things are pagan in their root, cremation can be legitimately used by the Christian, if cultural or practical reasons exist why it must be that way, but the ashes should not be scattered, for we believe that person will be raised where their body/it's remains are laid.

Frank Segler's Ministry manual is good in this area. The funeral for a young child killed, a victim of crime, a baby an old person all are different, all have their problems which need to be prayerfully thought through. Each demands a different approach. A good manual gives you appropriate texts, but each one must be approached as different and special. The follow up is important.

REFER BTB - MARRIAGE

LECTURE 20 - VISITATION

INTRODUCTION

Turn to and read, James 1:27 - to visit the fatherless and the widows and keep yourself unspotted from the world. We should have a holy life combined with loving concern for others. We all have problems in our souls which we have not dealt with. We need to grow in knowledge.

The Spirit wants you to grow so that you are able to face these things, and visitation is one of the ways that individual needs are assisted by individual Christians praying with and teaching their brothers and sisters in Christ..

When you deal with people who have real problems you will have to have discernment to help them. You will be able to encourage them, to tell them that they are not going to sort out the problem overnight, but to give them the practical tools from the Word to help them get started on the path.

You will not generally be dealing with demons in these situations, but you may be. If you discover this, or suspect this, always visit with the full eldership for prayer support. As a believer you cannot be indwelt / controlled by a demon but you can be influenced by them. The Holy Spirit will not allow a demon to indwell a believer and the Holy Spirit will help you assist the believer to come out from under the evil spirit's influence.

It does not help to, "throw a faggot on the fire", or do anything like that, for your sins, you need to tackle your sin by 1 John 1:9. Your problems require lots of application of prayer.

Visitation is not just a person walking into a house and sorting out a problem and leaving victorious. It is a long term relationship amongst the church family, and you need prayer support to undertake visitation, and you too will benefit from it, as others visit with you to encourage you at times of need. Visitation is a two way street!

VISITATION IS A TEAM EFFORT

You cannot run a visitation programme by yourself, you have to be backed by people from the church. You have to have resources on whom you can call for help. If you have a visitation programme you must have deaconesses and deacons on whom you may call, and they must be trained in the Word so that they give Biblical counsel, and prayer correctly, and are upright in their dealings with people.

Visitation often opens up areas where the church can assist a person in practical ways, for example cleaning a house. You can end up with a lot of health problems with an old person with poor eyesight who does not see the dirt on their eating things. Can you get a team from the youth group to help them? That is the objective of visitation, a practical outcome that all can thank God for.

If a widow does not get help with keeping her place clean she is going to end up ill. It is necessary therefore to go to the deacon who is in charge of social work to organise groups to assist the elderly. There is a need for an initial cleanup and a long term maintenance help programme.

When you go out on visitation you need people praying for you. You need a group of people, probably elderly prayer warriors, who can be relied on, to pray for you. Some of the people who may be on the youth group action plan may be those who are praying for you and the youth group. The young people are active with the old people praying that the young people will be more active. The prayer warriors tend not to be able to be brought together, so they work at prayer in their own homes.

PRAYER CHAINS

It is important to have a telephone tree, or some way of ensuring people hear about prayer requests quickly and get praying quickly. You know those who are going to be home all the time, so if they have the telephone or internet, they can be contacted quickly.

One person, the co-ordinator of the prayer warriors on the tree rings three or four others who in turn ring a few others. In this way the tree can be operative in a minimum time. This person has to be kept informed as to everything that is taking place in the church. You have a prayer list that circulates and that people know what is going on. Then you have the prayer tree co-ordinator who is informed in emergencies of what is going on and is responsible for arranging the prayer warriors topics and taskings.

In your phone contact be specific and ensure that the prayer warriors ask God to do something specific. Give the date, day, time and place so that prayer is always specific, for only then can you praise God when he specifically answers.

As a shepherd of your sheep you should be checking in on your sheep, you should have a shepherd call at least once a year if you have a church membership up to one hundred. For evangelistic visitation go back to previous notes. You should go in the joy of the Lord. If you have someone who is miserable keep them at home, they do not do visitation.

You must be backed up in prayer. Give your prayer warriors notice in advance. For example from 10 to 3 on a Saturday they know you are on the streets. You make contacts and cultivate them, they pray and you or others follow them up.

When you visit use their Bible rather than your own, as far as possible. In a shepherd call you have to make sure you do not come over as a nosy minister but that you are calling on them for pastoral care. You are not there to check on them. You are there to sort out their problems if they have any. You have to be sensitive as to what the needs of that family is.

[SGF chapter 11,12] You come as God's servant to that house, you come in prayer and joy. You need to have an icebreaker for a minute or two to open the discussion. If they want to hold you at the door stay there, do not try and force your way in. If the place is in uproar do not start talking but make an arrangement to come back.

Many Christians are self centred ignorant bores, as a pastor we must not be like that. Do not force yourself on the family. If there is a possibility to help, do so, change the baby or hold it. Get busy, and assist, and find what the youth group or others might do to help if there is great need.

If you get inside the house and sit down ask open ended questions. Ask your questions quietly and slowly which indicates that you expect an answer. How are things really going. Many ministers go into the house and spend all the time talking. Ask the right questions and listen. Find out where they are at and where they are hurting. If there is a small problem deal with it before it becomes a big one. Close in prayer after 15 to 20 minutes. Do not stay more than half an hour.

If a real problem comes up you may have to be up to an hour. In that time you can give the first principles and give them something to do. Many people think that you can talk a person into a change of attitude but if you want to change their behaviour give them the facts and the relevant doctrine and then ask them what they want prayed about.

Give them a couple of verses to claim, one at the top, the other at the bottom and a blank piece of paper in between for their problem and leave it with them. Tell them to put their problems in between and claim the promises every hour. Close in prayer and make a firm arrangement to come back within a week. When you come back ask them how their prayer agenda is going.

Leave them with something to do of God's Word so that the Spirit can go to work on something specific. If you give them five passages of Scripture they will use four to confuse the other one. People with great enthusiasm talk people to death and wonder why it is ineffective in their life.

HOSPITAL CALL

The hospital call, when some one who is sick or dying asks for a visit. The dying call is a separate one. Make sure that you do this alone without the family. Work with their husband or wife. If you are in a hospital situation you can work at any time but make sure you work in with ward staff. Have a talk to the sister in charge and ask what is the most convenient time to come. A lot of nursing staff hate ministers because they get in their way. Politeness is godliness here. You can at times tell people not to visit the sick as they need peace and quiet.

Make sure that you control the visits of well meaning people who exhaust the patient. Be short and be alert. A maximum of ten minutes. Go in with a Scripture in mind and a promise that the person can claim. Ask your questions slowly. Do not ask how they are feeling if it is obvious they are in pain. Ask them how they are. You have to prepare the way you walk in. You are there to help. If you are going to be a lover of the soul of the people you need to be able to have this attitude. Say hello to the other patients in the ward. Make your approach friendly so that they may ask you to speak to them on the way out. They may also have a need.

Remember the coma patients as well. They can hear. Hold their hands if possible. Speak to them. Pray with them. Read for them, read Psalm 23 and say to them that you realise that they can do nothing else for themselves at this time but that they should cast their cares on the Lord as per 1 Peter 5:7. He is the Good Shepherd, he cares for you. Commit them to prayer. If you are a man do not feel embarrassed about giving them a hug, if it is appropriate. Sometimes they can just squeeze your hand. Do not write them off.

You must have a loving attitude to little children. This is especially if you have a little child who is dying or a little child in pain. When they ask why Jesus is letting this happen to them, you must be able to sit with them in their pain and questioning of God's love. All your triteness about the love of God will go out the window when you sit in a ward with a little child who is dying. You have to be walking with the Lord. A few trite things you say is not going to cut it with the little child, or their parents. You have to be flexible, honest, and tell the gospel in an unobtrusive way. You come into these situations suddenly and must be ready beforehand and think now about such things. Change your behaviours now while you have a chance.

Many people spend a lot of time preaching which is the easiest part of the ministry. It is when you get through to application in something like visitation that it may prove difficult. It is a great cop out not doing visitation.

If you have marital problems to sort out you need to have deaconesses who are older or elderly, holy and not working so that they are available day or night. If you go to a home to assist in counselling, you never go alone, you do so with a deaconess, for your own protection. Part of the ordination of deacons and deaconesses is that they know the commitment that they are making as far as availability.

If you are visiting the dying you can tell them that even though there is no hope physically but there is lots of hope spiritually. You have to approach this area sensitively. What are your real concerns?, you should ask. What is worrying you most? How has your walk been with the Lord recently? You will find that hurts and pains that have been buried for years will surface. Your promise notebook will come into its own. You can encourage them spiritually. A person maybe cannot read. Give them the Bible on tape. Give them good teaching on tape. If they are dying slowly it should be the greatest time of witness to their family and it is your duty to be there to see it happen.

LECTURE 21 - EVANGELISM OF THE JEWS - GETTING TO KNOW THE JEW

INTRODUCTION

If you want to evangelise the Jews you need to know where they are at, and what they are interested in. There are many ways in which people look at the Jews and what comprises a Jew.

There are various opinions as to who are Jews. Some say it is to have a Jewish mother. This is based on the fact that a man goes off to war and the child stays with its mother and is therefore identified with its mother. The Biblical concept however is the father's genealogy is presented. The child can therefore be born of a Jewish father or mother.

There are three terms used to define a Jew in the Scriptures.

One is the term Hebrew - Genesis 14:13. `Some say that Hebrew means to cross over as river, others say that it comes from Eber in Genesis 10:25.

The second term is Israel. Abraham was a Hebrew, not a child of Israel(as his grandson was Israel). He had a son Isaac who had a son Jacob whose name was changed by God to Israel.

The third term is Jew. Israel had a son called Judah from where the term Jew originates.

The term Jew is first used in 2 Kings 16:6 and Jeremiah 34:9. In 722 the Assyrians came down and took the northern kingdom comprising all of the tribes except Judah and Benjamin into captivity, and as most survivors from that terrible time were from Judah, they were known by many as "Jews". All three names however relate to those who are descended from Abraham.

At present there are more Jews in the United States than there are in Israel with six million in the USA compared to four million in Israel. They like to be called "a people with a common history".

APPROACHING THE JEW

When you approach the Jews there are three types of Jews, the orthodox, the reformed or liberal and the conservative. The orthodox is the fundamentalist of the faith who tries to keep the 600 plus commandments of the Torah. He will wear a skull cap in society. He will walk to the synagogue and not carry any money with him. He tries to keep the Sabbath a day holy and keep the Talmudic law.

The reformed or liberal Jew follows the moral and ethical teachings of the Old Testament. He does not accept that the Old Testament is inspired of God and sets aside most of the Jewish traditions and does not try to keep all the Law.

In the middle you have the conservative Jew who sifts through the law and selects those which are compatible with western culture. If you are going to witness to a Jew you need to know which of the class of Jew he comes from. In general the more education they get the more liberal they tend to become.

Jewish people are not as religious as you may think. Ten percent attend the synagogue on the Sabbath, twenty five percent attend some five times a year with the balance not associated with the synagogue at all.

There are religious Jews, and non-religious racial Jews. They may speak Yiddish from eastern Europe and use Hebrew as a religious language only.

Most will eat the traditional ethnic foods associated with Jewish life down the centuries, but will not be religious. About 70% of American Jews do not keep a kosher home in the USA.

Leviticus 11 gives you the diet for a kosher home. You are unable to mix meat and milk dishes. You cannot eat one within four hours of the other. You have to keep them in separate cabinets, and wash the implements used for cooking them in separate sinks. A kosher Jew cannot eat in a Gentile restaurant and has to carry their food with them wherever they go.

JEWISH LITERATURE

One is the key books is the Bible, the Torah which is the book of the law which is Genesis through Deuteronomy. This is combined with the rest of the Old Testament (the Naviim, or prophets, and Kethuvim, or the writings) to form the Jewish Scriptures. The books in the Jewish Old Testament are in a different order to the English Bible . If you get a Jewish Bible in English it is the Masoretic text which was the basis of the King James Bible.

The third is the Talmud. This was the Jewish religious law which was an oral law of the Rabbis, that was codified as a development of this tradition in the Babylonian captivity. The Mishna, a further commentary series, was formulated by 200 AD and is a commentary on the law of what the rabbis have said in interpreting the law. The other part of the Talmud is a true commentary and was completed around 500AD.

There are two Talmuds, the Babylonian and the Palestinian with the former being more authoritative. Most Jews do not study the Scriptures they study the Talmud. They will tend to argue over the Talmud rather than the Scriptures and they will use it as a guide as to what people should believe. The central challenge of Jewish evangelism is to get the Jewish unbeliever back to the Biblical text rather than trust their commentaries.

ATTITUDES OF THE JEW

The Jews are very humanitarian. They want to change society. They have been persecuted in so many societies, and so to protect themselves they will tend to get very involved in the community. They are civic minded and want to have a

voice in society and comment on how society should be run. Education is also the "god" of the Jewish people. A Jewish university drop out is a person who did not go for their PhD.

They stress separation and tend to stick together as persecution has made them cautious in many ways. If they integrate and marry into society they lose their Jewishness. Thirty five percent of Jews in the United States are married to Gentiles and become basically non religious. The Jew will tend to be more liberal in society due to the persecution that they have received down the centuries, and is there way of lying low and avoiding trouble.

He tends to be blunt and speak his mind. He is forward and outspoken as this is part of his makeup. Do not take the first impression of a Jew you need to get to know him. You will find that they are warm, vibrant and loving. If you build a friendship with them you will find that there is nothing that they will not do for you.

There are many misconceptions about the Jews. Many Gentiles think that all Jews are rich, whereas most are poor. In Israel there are many people who are poor and barely able to make it in life. There are many who do not have education or money. In Europe the Jew in many cases was not able to own land or join trade guilds. The Jews have been persecuted more than any other nation on earth. They have been persecuted heavily by the church establishment, and so they do not look upon Christianity as a "friend" to them.

In the period between 1880 to 1920 the Jews in America went into the sweat shops of New York and worked 18-20 hours a day. Many of them opened their own clothing stores. They worked long hours and lived above the store. Some moved west and became junk dealers. Others opened stores which were small and grew. The Jewish people worked very hard to make things happen. In areas of free enterprise they worked well.

Another misconception is if a person looks Jewish and acts Jewish that they are in fact Jewish. How do you tell, you ask them. Gentiles often think that the Jew knows his Bible. Many Jews have not read the Bible. When a Jew goes to the synagogue they read set prayers and set Scriptures from a prayer book. If you ask them what does it mean they cannot tell you. In the case of Messianic prophecy they do not know unless they have been programmed to deal with a missionary. We are the walking Bibles they are not. Do not be fearful, as you know Jesus is the Messiah of Israel, quietly and respectfully explain it to them.

Another misconception is that the Jews have rejected Jesus. Most have never considered him as the Messiah. Another concept is that the Jews killed Christ.

It is clear from the Scriptures that it was the Gentiles in the form of the Romans who did so, with support from a small group of Jewish rulers. In the European culture they have been called Christ killers. Jesus said himself that the Gentiles would put Him to death in Luke 18:32,33. However all are responsible (Jew and Gentile) for the death of Christ.

Many people consider that the Jews are out to take the Gentiles money. You should not use derogatory names to any minority group, and overcoming the effect of name calling is a real challenge. Another concept is that it takes a Jew to win a Jew. It is not easy for a Jew to witness to a Jew as a converted Jew is considered a traitor, so the Jew is less inclined to listen to one of their own who has become a Christian. The Jews believe that all Gentiles are Christians and believe in Jesus. Many Jews feel threatened by converted Jews, but not by you as a Gentile. It does not take a Jew to win a Jew.

There is no established theology in Judaism. They do not have their doctrines as we have. In the 13th century there were thirteen principles laid out for the Jews. The orthodox Jew believes in one God - Deuteronomy 6:4. This is the shema Yisrael, " Hear O Israel.... They do not believe in a trinity or tri- unity of God, but a oneness of God. They do not believe that man is born with a sin nature. The reformed or liberal Jew believes God is a power rather than a person.

The orthodox believes that God created man and that the fall created death but that man is not born with a sin nature. They think that good and evil are out there and you have the inclination to do good or evil. Psalm 51:5 however shows that we are born with a sin nature. They are humanistic and wish to achieve the very best in man.

The reformed Jew rejects the sin nature and the fall and believes that there is a divine spark in everyone. When sin is mentioned it is sinning against your fellow men that is emphasised in a social or moral context. They recognise sin against God which needs to be confessed but emphasise the social.

As far as the orthodox are concerned the Torah is inspired and the rest of the Old Testament is less inspired. The liberal Jew says that nothing is inspired at all but it gives moral principles. The orthodox Jew spends his time in the Torah which they believe was given by Moses whilst the liberals do not really bother about it.

MESSIAH AND SALVATION

Messiah means the anointed one and is the same meaning in the Hebrew as Christ is in the Greek. Messiah in Judaism is not a God-man he is a man from God and when he comes he is going to do four things. He is going to give the land back to the Jewish nation, he is going to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, he is going to bring peace to Israel and he is going to judge the Gentiles on how they have treated the Jewish people. In the reformed area they expect no Messiah but a messianic age where there will be a negotiated peace. Peace will come to the world and then to Israel. There will be a one world government with world peace.

Salvation for the orthodox Jew is repentance from sin, good works and prayer. To them suffering has merit. You are born into the religion. For the reformed Jew it is the social rehabilitation of man they seek. We can change society they say. With orthodoxy when Messiah comes back Israel will be the chief among the nations and He will judge the nations as to how they have treated Israel. He will bring peace and justice in the kingdom age.

The orthodox believes that there is everlasting life but does not emphasise it. The emphasis is on the here and now. The reformed Jew does not believe in any eternal life at all. He says that it is the memory of him that lives through his son and grandson, via his genetic inheritance.

The orthodox believes that there is a place called sheol which is a place where the wicked and the righteous go. In the resurrection the reformed Jew has no eternal state whilst the orthodox believe in it. There are however considerable differences in opinion as to who are resurrected. Some orthodox say that there is a purgatory type situation whilst others say that it will only be the righteous in Israel which will be raised.

LECTURE 22 - EVANGELISM OF THE JEWS - HOW DO YOU WITNESS TO YOUR JEWISH FRIEND

Why should we witness to Jewish people - Turn to and read Matthew 28:19,20. Here we are told to disciple the nations.

Often we do this to the Gentile nations but rarely do we do it to the Jew. Turn to and read in Matthew 9:36, where Jesus had a deep compassion on his fellow Jewish people. He saw them as sheep without a shepherd and scattered abroad. Many times in our preaching we use it for taking the gospel to the world but forget the Jews.

Turn to and read in Matthew 15:1-9, and 24. Note that even though there is rejection and hypocrisy, the Lord says that he is sent to the lost sheep of Israel; and he still does, and wants to do it through us. Paul prayed in Romans 10:1 that all Israel might be saved.

The Jews think that as they are God's chosen people that God will save them in some way. There is only one way however, by means of the Cross, as there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved.

In Romans 1:14-16 we have the model for witnessing:- firstly by feeling a burden for the lost, secondly by being prepared and then being not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because it is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe, to the Jew first and then the Greek or Gentiles. There is therefore a biblical imperative to take the good news to the Jewish people.

WHY WE DO NOT WITNESS TO THE JEWS

There are two main reasons why we don't. If we approach a Jew encouraging him to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour he will likely say that Jesus is a Gentile God and dismiss the suggestion out of hand. If you ask him to look at the New Testament to prove it he will say that the New Testament is a Gentile book. This is not true as with the exception of Luke all the authors were Jews. Most Jewish people do not know that!

The first reason we do not witness is lack of knowledge. The Jews are held in a mystique and we do not know how to witness to a Jew. The second one is fear of rejection. We fear that by mentioning Jesus we might get a hostile reaction or lose a friend.

The level of education is another area where people feel intimidated especially if the person has a PhD. That person may have a lot of knowledge in their specialist area but will most likely have limited or no Biblical knowledge. Another fear that we have is that they are sharper than we are. Jewish people often have a way of speaking as if they know everything. Often they talk better than they know. If you love them perfect love casts out all fear. The Jewish people are in need for love.

They are not uniquely hard to reach but they must be approached uniquely. They should not be approached with the New Testament. Go out in the power of the Spirit. You need to be spirit controlled. If you look for the opportunity the Holy Spirit will open up situations which you can use under the power of the Holy Spirit.

HISTORICAL PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

Why do the Jews not receive our witness. They believe that the Gentiles are Christians and have nothing to offer them after 2,000 years of persecution. They remember what the Romans did between 70 and 135 AD. They remember that Hadrian in 135 AD dispersed the Jews under the threat of death if they returned to Jerusalem. They remember the great evils done by the Crusaders, in the name of Christ, through the years 1050 - 1250.

They remember in 1492 the Spanish Inquisition when the Jews were herded into their synagogues and while the Spanish Catholic priests went round holding their crucifixes and chanting praises to Jesus set fire to the synagogues and burnt the men women and children inside to death.

They remember that they have been called Christ killers by people in many European countries. The Jews also remember Lutherans trying to convert them and when they were not converted Luther writing all sorts of anti Semitic things about them.

They remember the Russian pogroms in 1903 where Cossacks would come through and kill the Jews in their villages. The Russian solution to the Jewish problem was to kill a third, convert a third to Christianity and expel the rest. The Jews used to live in small villages near the Black Sea and the Cossacks would come through drunk with Vodka and annihilate them. They then had the Nazis from 1933 to 1945 when 6,000,000 Jews were killed. The Germans would kill Jews during the week and then go to church on Sunday.

The Jews have long memories. What we have to do to show is that all Gentiles are not Christians and even those who profess to be Christians need not be so. It is the Bible believing Christians who should really appreciate the Jews.

TREAT THE JEW AS AN INDIVIDUAL

We should be very tactful when dealing with the Jews, we need to deal with them as an individual. We need to listen to them especially the elderly who have a story to tell. Listen to the story and look for the opportunity to introduce God or spiritual matters. In your conversation with the Jewish people ask questions carefully. Show appreciation for the Jews. Do not be pushy and be guided by the spirit. You have to develop it in love and be patient.

Show your love for them by doing the shopping for them or giving them a lift. Be persistent and try and develop a relationship. If you get an opportunity read Isaiah 53 to that person and ask who they think it is talking about. If they recognise who it is then you may be able to share something from the New Testament to show the life of the Lord. Have Isaiah 53 printed up on a card. Have it done in the Masoretic text and give them the card to take it home and read it.

You can invite them over for a meal, to have a good chat and get to know them. However if they are orthodox they will not eat with Gentiles. You start with the secular and move towards the spiritual. You form a bridge from the secular to the spiritual. You can ask them what they do at Passover or what they do in the synagogue. Ask them how they interpret the Scriptures.

RECOGNITION OF THE MESSIAH

Ask them how they would recognise the Messiah. They have eight possible answers

- [a] We believe a man is coming from God to give us the land
- [b] The liberals will say there is no Messiah
- [c] I've forgotten what I had learnt
- [d] Some will be fuzzy in their minds
- [e] Some will say that they do not believe in the Messiah.
- [f] I was never taught about the Messiah
- [g] We will see him when he comes
- [h] I would like to know
- [i] Go and see the rabbi

BIBLICAL MEANS OF WITNESSING TO THE JEWS

The orthodox are the closest to the truth but they see him as a man from God and not the God man. You then show them out of the Jewish Scriptures about the Messiah. Do not use the word Jesus or they will eject you. Use the Old Testament. We need to learn to be able to teach about the Messiah as Paul did from the Old Testament but also be aware of the New Testament fulfilment. You need to be able to give a biblical picture of the Messiah as the early Christians did, from the Old Testament only, so that the passages all bring Jesus up to the person you speak to.

Turn to and read, Isaiah 9:6, there is a child born and a son given showing that the Messiah is the God man. Turn to and read , Micah 5:2, shows his place of birth as Bethlehem of Judea. Messiah is born in a specific town. He took on flesh and became a man.

Turn to and read in Isaiah 53. Here it is clear that most people would reject the Messiah.[v 3]. It is then seen that the Messiah will suffer, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.[v4], that he would submit to the suffering [v7] and that Messiah would be sacrificed [v5, v8, v12]. This time they may well say that you are trying to tell me that this is Jesus. You say that I believe you are right and try and share something out of the New Testament.

At that stage they will give three responses - I was born a Jew, I live like a Jew and I will die as one, do not try and convert me and close the thing down. You however have got the word of God to him and nothing is lost. The second one argues with you but you are to keep calm. When he sees you are not rattled you keep him talking until you have him. The third says that he is interested in what you are talking about and wants more.

We are all sinners in need of a Saviour. The sin of the world was thrust on Him. It has to be forgiven and the substitute must be a blood sacrifice. Leviticus 17:11. The Jew says that prayer has replaced the blood sacrifice but this is not in the Bible.

Some of the Eastern Orthodox Jews use a chicken and kill it. This is not right. Without a special priesthood and a Temple you cannot have a sacrifice. Hebrews 10:4 is a counter to the blood of the chicken proposal. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away the sins. It was just a covering. The Messiah however shed His blood for sins efficaciously - Romans 10:9. We have to believe in our heart and confess with our lips to be saved. You are planting the Word of God in the heart of the Jew; that is the role of witnessing.

TECHNIQUES FOR WITNESSING TO JEWS

[a] Talk about the return of the Jews to the land

[b] Borrow a book on Judaism and check out where the Messiah features

[c] Have a Jewish appreciation night, invite the Jewish people in the community to come to the service. Read from the Old Testament, have the Israeli national anthem, talk about the great heritage of the Jews.

[d] Ask your friend if you can go to synagogue with him. See how the worship service goes and ask the rabbi about it and ask about Messiah.

[e] You wish the Jews a blessed Passover.

[f] Get the Jew into the Messianic prophecies and show him how they are fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

[g] With a tract, loan it to them saying that you would like an opinion on it and that you will contact them in a couple of weeks. Often the piece of literature says things far clearer than we do.

LECTURE 23 - JEWISH EVANGELISM - SOME OBJECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of books that are useful in understanding the Jews. The magazine, "Israel my glory", is a good regular publication.

"To be a Jew", by Rabbi Donin is good background material. Books by Rabbi Jacob Neusner, are also helpful to understand various topics that he has published on. Christian publications from the Friends Of Israel Gospel Ministry are the best source of material within the Christian community.

GOD'S PLAN AND ISRAEL

God has a plan for Israel but salvation is through faith in Christ. The Jewish faith will be preserved until Messiah returns. When He returns they will believe in Jesus as Messiah. Israel has been set aside but this does not mean that God is through with the Jew for all time. There are some that teach that the promises made to the Jews are now being fulfilled in the Church and that the Church is a spiritual Israel. This is the amillennial concept and is erroneous. Refer to the Systematic Theology notes for lectures on this topic in Eschatology (the study of prophecy).

The Jews have been set aside at this time and the Church is looking after things for a while. God has blinded the eyes of Israel judicially but there are individuals who accept the Lord during this time. These are a remnant - Romans 9:27. He opens individuals eyes even though the nation is blind.

The Temple will be rebuilt, because the abomination of desolation is spoken of as being set up there again, and this has not happened to date; refer to Matthew 24:15, 2 Thessalonians 2:4, Revelation 11:2. The Dome of the Rock does not stand where the Temple stood, it was further up the Mount, and there is room for it to be rebuilt even now.

JESUS CHRIST THE MESSIAH

Jesus Christ comes in to make a genuine peace whilst the Gentiles try and make a political peace. The Beast sets himself up as a religious leader having destroyed the religious system in the middle of the Tribulation. He is a man like Antiochus Epiphanes. The Hebrew Christians will flee Jerusalem at this time and find security in the mountains of Ammon, Moab and Edom. Refer to Systematic Theology for a full treatment of this topic.

If the Jew accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his Messiah he will be ostracised by his Jewish family and friends. We need to deal with the Jews on a Scriptural level. Some think that if they become a Christian they will become a Gentile which is of course not true. If you are a Gentile you are a Gentile if a Jew a Jew but as a believer you are a member of the body of Christ whether you are a Gentile or Jew.

Some Jews will say that they have their own religion and ask why you do not go to the Gentiles. We tell them that we share Messiah with all people, not only with Jews but with Gentiles as well. If you are to be a "fulfilled Jew" you must come through Jesus Christ - Romans 10:4. You need to tell them that the Lord has everlasting love for them - Jeremiah 30:3.

It was prophesied by Moses that disobedience was going to bring judgement - Deuteronomy 28:15-68. Here he warned the Jewish people that the holocaust was coming. God will judge these wicked men. There must be a hell and judgement

for a person like Hitler. God does everything right. God is going to allow everything to work out for the good in the long run. We should leave the answer with God as in the fullness of time. He is going to show us - Deuteronomy 29:29. The secret things are known by God.

War is caused by man and not God. However God allows wars. A lot of Jews will say that Jesus was made a God after his death by His disciples. He died a criminals death and after his death so that they would not lose face the disciples made a God out of Him. This is answered by reference to the Old Testament and the Gospels, the Bible predicts His birth, the type of birth, his death and the resurrection.

The final challenge to a Jewish unbeliever is, If Jesus is not the Messiah then choose another who will fulfil all these OT prophecies. These prophecies occurred well before the Lord Jesus Christ appeared on the world stage. There were many Jewish people who believed that He was God in the first century.

THE JEW AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

If a Jewish person says that they do not believe in life after death you go to Daniel 12:2 showing that man is eternal, Psalm 9:17 says that the wicked will suffer in hell. Job believed that even if he died yet in his body he would see God. What happened to Enoch and Elijah.

They may ask if they do not accept Jesus and I die do I go to hell, the answer is yes. You ask the question as to whether they believe in hell. You tell them that we cannot rely on our subjective opinion, we need to go on the authority of the Word of God. The Bible says that the wicked will go into hell. You tell them that you are not sending them to hell, we can judge no man. You can say, "I tell you what Daniel your prophet has said".

What separates the other so called Messiahs from Jesus was that the other Messiahs were political in nature, and all failed, whereas Jesus came and paid for the sin problem. Jesus alone fits the Biblical description completely. If you do not like Jesus choose another one.

The Messiah however had to come before 70 AD, because only then was there access to the records that proved the birth of Jews, and only then could he be a SACRIFICE. There hasn't been one since 70AD for there hasn't been a temple.

Some will argue, If Jesus is the Messiah why do not the rabbis believe in Him?. There have been rabbis who have believed in Him. Turn to and read Acts 6:7, 15:5, 18:8.

They may also say that Judaism is older than Christianity why do I have to change?. You agree that Judaism is older than Christianity but it is only part of the story which Christianity completes. A Jew can only come to the Messiah by coming through Him and then show that Jesus is the Messiah.

Some will say, "You believe in three Gods we believe in one". The word one in the Hebrew is a compound which means that there are several in one. In the case of the word for God Elohim the in is plural. Genesis 1:1, 1:26.

LECTURE 24 - PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

ACTS 20:25-38

Turn to and read , Acts 20:25-38 - A leader is not a person who gives an order and people obey out of fear. That is tyranny. Leadership means people respecting you and wanting to obey and looking for opportunities to serve. This is the standard for Biblical leadership in the pastorate.

You should then co-ordinate the energies and enthusiasms and gifts of the membership, so that they serve and serve well. Leadership is the art of respect and rallying of people to a common purpose with a character which inspires confidence, devotion and self sacrifice.

Paul in the pastoral epistles stressed the character of the pastoral minister. You cannot lead people until you are a person who is worthy to be followed. You should not expect to be a leader in the church until you have the fruit of the spirit in your life; it is the minimum standard.

Paul in Acts 20 talks about what the pastors of Ephesus should do. In verses 27 to 33 he notes the characteristics that need to be present to be a pastor.

v 27 - He is to proclaim all of God's Word which is in contrast with what happened in the medieval churches. We are to preach through every verse of God's Word if the Lord gives us sufficient time.

v 28 - You are to shepherd all the flock. Some of the sheep are a bit rough. These people are not yours, you are looking after them from God and are responsible for them under the overseeing of the Holy Spirit. We are to feed, protect, comfort and lead the flock that the Lord has given us.

v29 - The protective function is in view here. Wolves from Satan will try to fleece and kill the sheep, we must protect the Lord's sheep.

v 30 - Those who would draw the sheep away are to be opposed.

v 31 - We are not to be afraid of a bit of passion in our preaching. Paul gave himself totally to the work with enthusiasm.

v 32 - We are all secure under God's gracious care, having eternal life and rewards.

v 33 - Paul was prepared to work for no money to look after the sheep so that money was not an issue for them; are we prepared to sacrifice and even give from our purse for the flock?

v 36 - He prayed for them all, so should we.

v 37 - They respected and loved him as they had evidence of his love for them.

BTB - Shepherd - Christ The Shepherd

SHEPHERD YOUR FLOCK

In order to keep heresy at bay you need a firm doctrinal statement so that you can kill the heresy before it has a chance to spread. Guard your flock from the wolves out there who are going to fleece them. You also have to guard your flock from the wolves on the inside who will spread false doctrines. You need to protect your sheep as well as feed your sheep.

If you are feeding your flock good food they will not run off and find another pastor to feed them. Even if you feed them you will get an attack of a wolf at least once a year who will take a little group astray.

Do not let the sun go down on a heresy. Have a good tight doctrinal statement. This is in contravention of such a doctrine, either change your mind or change your church. They will lead away weak believers who will become shipwrecks. God will judge the pastor if they do not hit the heresies quickly. This is where regular visitation pays off. Every minister if he has a church with a hundred or so members visit each of the flock once a year.

The deacons should be reporting to the pastor. Who has got the social problems? You need to know what is going on. As a pastor you need to be a manager. Do not get to the stage where the sheep are in the ditch and you do not realise that they are there.

Note verse 31 - Paul warned with tears. He was passionate as a teacher and as an administrator. The word of God must be central to your ministry.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AS A PASTOR

It should also be noted that in verses 33 and following that he was not doing it for the money. He made tents during the day and taught at night. The minister in this church worked his passage. Most of Paul's ministry was working his way round the ancient world. Paul is very practical. It is more blessed to give than to receive. God will recompense you but do not go into the ministry to receive money. Look at your ministry as a giving one and not a taking one.

Paul is tough on the pastors. The church community is tough enough on young ministers. By doing the course this way you are getting good training for the real ministry by working during the day and learning at night. The only time that Paul received money was when he was in jail and could not earn money himself. Don't expect to be more "successful" than Paul was, and have money all the time!

EPHESIANS 4:11-16

Turn to and read ,Ephesians 4:11-16. Note, why were the gifts given? This was the purpose. The purpose of management, the role of management centres in you knowing the purpose of your existence. Why do you exist? If you are a pastor teacher you exist for the perfection of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ until we all become in the unity of the faith. Paul is saying you want to know what your job description is, well here it is.

The gifts have a purpose, they have a function in the church. The purpose is to build up and equip to good works. Many ministers are lazy. Ministry is work. It is work that God calls you to. People want to play with their gifts especially if they can play before the church with it.

Dorcas had a wonderful gift, she could sew and could work. Someone had the gift of prayer. This is works. The person who has the gift of pastor teacher needs to study the Word three or four hours a day. It is work being a pastor, it is work being an evangelist. As a pastor you should be keen to preach as often as you can. Take up your cross daily and follow the Lord. You should be keen to do more for others and take them into consideration more than yourself.

BTB - GIFTS - Spiritual Gifts

Teaching gives stability to the flock. If you go into a church and the minister is lazy you will find it will comprise mainly babies unless the man in charge is a good evangelist and people have just recently been saved. You should be feeding the babies so that the babies grow up. Babies are tossed about with every wind of doctrine. Most of the churches lack discernment because the pastors lack sweat.

Some do not teach the Word because they do not know the Word. There will never be a time when a man who has the gift of pastor teacher will want to leave the ministry if he is doing his job correctly. You will want people to grow up.

1 PETER 5:1-7

You are to feed the body - Turn to and read , 1 Peter 5:1-7. Peter has the credentials to give this advice because he has suffered for the faith and will be martyred eventually. You take up your cross and be prepared to suffer, and work till the end. No room for wimps!!!

True pastoral leadership means feeding the flock, you do it because you want to do it and you love the sheep, you do not do it for the money. He is not in it for money, he is in it to serve the Lord. He should be able to feed his family and honour God that way.

In verse 3 we see that you should not be like a feudal Lord over the church. If you are as leader of God's people you lead in humility and not in power. You cannot rule the church with your own opinions, you rule it by the Word of God. You show the way by your life as an example. Peter reminds them that the Chief Shepherd is going to come back and hold the people accountable. If you want to be the leader let the Lord raise you up. Do not try and do it for by church politics.

He reminds the older people that they must be subject to each other. God's men must lead in humility and be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

A PASTORS PROFILE (10 points)

[a] He will be committed to his people. This will be shown by the consistent faithful, systematic preaching of the Word of God.

[b] He will be protecting the flock from the wolves and perverters. He does it by teaching regularly and systematically and by telling the wolf to go away.

[c] He will be passionate for his people - Acts 24. Paul got involved with his people.

[d] He will lead by example, by word, by deed, by dress, by behaviour. If you act like a pig your congregation will be like piglets.

[e] The pastor will set an example in giving, of his time, of himself, of his energy, of his goods, of his money. he will be prepared to work his own way.

[f] He will serve his flock meeting their needs. To serve them you need to know them, not in a nosy sense but as a caring person.

[g] He will set the pace spiritually, in spiritual growth. You cannot expect people to grow faster than you pastor. If you preach the fruit of the Holy Spirit they must see it in you.

[h] The pastor who preaches the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ can expect to suffer. This is a pastor with whom the Lord is going to be able to do a lot. We have to learn to do with pressure and suffering.

[i] He does not lead by coercion. He does not live like a lord. This is anti God and opposed to Scripture. You are to be an example to the flock in love.

[j] The pastor leads with his eyes on the chief shepherd as an under shepherd, recognising the sheep are not his but God's.

HEBREWS 13:13-17

Turn to and read in Hebrews 13:13-17, we are told to submit ourselves to those who have rule over us, for they are faithful and watch over our souls. They look after you as people who are going to have an account to give to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not cause them grief. If you are disobedient to them it is not going to be to your benefit.

The pastor is to be like a husband who loves the church as his wife. The minister provides for the bride by teaching, by prayer, by warning, by exhortation, by leadership that sets an example. Live as an example with tireless Biblical service.

Leadership in the church puts pressure on you because you must be worthy of respect. If a minister has problems it is his fault as he is not studying or teaching as he should.

REFER TO BTB - SHEPHERD - CHRIST THE SHEPHERD

LECTURE 25 - 1 TIMOTHY 4, LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING

Planning is important. The apostle Paul said as the Lord leads or wills but he knew where he was going several years ahead. It is extremely important as elders deacons, Sunday school teachers to be sure that you set Biblical goals for your service.

Turn to and read , 1 Timothy 4:6 - 5:3 - if you want instruction in the ministries, here are the instructions. Here is what the elder, the deacon is to do. This shows what the various areas of the church should do. It is how they are done and how well they are planned and how they are co-ordinated that is important. Here we have the spiritual motives to help. You must have enthusiasm for your message and a spirit filled life, an enthusiasm for your people. Some ministers get the big things right but miss out on the small things. Many people think that near enough is good enough but this is not true in the Lord's service.

PERSONAL GOALS OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

What should the pastor, deacon or deaconess plan for; there are eight personal goals:-

[a] We should have prayer goals and set time for prayer every day.

[b] We should have study goals with our prayer time leading into our study time. If you are a full time worker it will be in the morning whilst if you have a secular job it will be after work.

[c] You should have a visitation goal. You should aim to visit your people at least once a year. The afternoon appears to be the best time for visitation.

[d] Your evangelistic goals - a prayer list for personal soul winning,

[e] Your doctrine to be applied goals - sort out areas of weakness in your own lives - you need to have a goal to apply God's Word to those problems.

[f] Family goals - you should put aside time for wife and family. Plan to do things with them.

[g] Exercise goals, every other day you should spend 40 minutes exercising, if you do not you are not going to be fit and if you are not fit you are not going to be able to function as well as you should.

[h] Teaching goals - think about the books you want to study and teach from and plan how you are going to do it.

As a minister if you are not studying four hours a day you are lazy. You should be able to prepare a message every four to five hours which will mean that there will be four or five messages that you will be giving in a week. Plan your messages in advance.

If a minister is giving three or less messages a week he is lazy. You should be able to prepare up to three messages a week in your own time. If not you should be in a tent making ministry.

If you can get an extra message a week you have fifty messages a year available. You can use those in times when things get tight. You are not to study on a Saturday night for a Sunday morning. The Lord has known every message that you are going to give from eternity past. Your messages must be prayer backed. They also need to be enthusiastically and powerfully preached. If you do not have goals you will not achieve anything. Paul says to Timothy in both of these letters that these are your goals as a minister.

EIGHT CHURCH GOALS

[a] There will be a priority list for things to be changed, look at things from previous annual reports. See what the failures and success is. You then pray to the Lord and look at what changes need to occur over a period of 1 to 10 years. Let the Lord dictate the timing here not you.

[b] To establish a prayer warrior group, mainly the older people 1 Timothy 5:4 ff. Those who have the gift of prayer tend to be from the over sixties.

[c] Prayer should be your emphasis in every church meeting.

[d] Practice meeting protocol to ensure that meetings are run as Christian meetings should be run. Acts 15 Make sure that there is leadership and prayer and free and open debate and that there are spiritual application of principles.

[e] You need to publicise your teaching programme so that people know in advance what you are going to cover. If people have problems about certain books they know when it is going to be solved as they will know when you are going to deal with a particular section.

[f] You need to lead the people to feed on the word of God.

[g] There is a need to stress holiness, deal face to face with sin.

[h] Stress a Holy Spirit led organisation. Everything is done in accordance with the will of God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLAN

You need to have an action plan as to how you are going to achieve these things in the power of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the truth of God's Word. If as a minister you do not have the strategy to achieve goals you will not achieve them. Put them all down and achieve a number of them. You plan and prioritise your aims. Do not forget the Sunday School and Bible Class. How are you going to expand it, how are you going to extend it into the community.

Introduce the changes slowly. Get your prayer warriors up and running in a month. Organise the church meetings differently. Teach and teach and teach and you will practice what you are teaching. You practice it in the visitation, in the church meeting.

You should invite the elders and deacons together and share the vision. Get the church's ideas, let them think about it. Let them apply God's Word to the situation. Do not instruct them, that is dictatorship. Fellowship is gathering people together before the Lord. It is important to be united and sort out problems before they begin. Everything that you believe should be changed you should have a Biblical basis for. You should be changed by the Word of God.

Leadership in the church requires a person to think before they speak. Your plans come out of your prayers and Bible study. When you call people to the work you call them prayerfully.

Ezra and Nehemiah both had the authority to command but they are both teaching the Word of God. We find that many ministers carry on giving their three point sermons and roster the jobs rather than doing things as unto the Lord. Everything that is done in the church should be spiritual service and should be done joyfully as unto the Lord or not at all.

If you do not do it this way you are going to cause discouragement to the people. You will then need to push them and there will be a pretty frustrating job all round. They will not be able to administer the gifts if you make all the decisions and they make none. You have to make up your mind whether you are going to lead or drive.

If there is a problem you take God's Word and say to the elders and deacons that you are not applying it to that particular situation. Demonstrate to the church how things are to be applied in the church. You put in on paper and get people to sign it, after they have prayerfully seen the point, or corrected you! You need to have people enthusiastically committed to the Biblical way of doing things.

If you are taking over an existing church you will find a lot of things are wrong. It may be the Sunday School which may require a discussion with the teachers. With this you can have a passage dealing with feeding the lambs.

You need to assess what good things we are doing and how can we do more of that. Is Sunday school a torment or joy. How can they get more of God's Word while they are doing it. Build on it, what can we improve, what can we change. Are the classrooms comfortable for classes

LECTURE 26 - THE CHURCH MEETING, GIFTS - SPIRITUAL GIFTS

SGF page 374

Sometimes a church congregational meeting can become a terrible time of argument and violent disagreement, that brings discredit on the name of the Lord.

ACTS 15:1-21

Turn to and read, Acts 15:1-21. This passage gives the first church meeting recorded and how it was run. Using our principle, that the closer we are to apostolic practise the better, this passage gives us a number of things to apply.

The people whose actions led to this meeting being called were adding to the gospel and saying that people had to be circumcised after they were saved. Paul and Barnabus were there and there was a major disagreement between the groups.

Both sides were trying to base their views on Scripture and they had a stand up verbal "fight". There is no problems with having an energetic debate over something, but it is not good to let it degenerate into something that is evil. Remember that evil is defined as Satan's policy, which is everything that is against God's policy.

These people go to their living authority to decide a question of dispute. People now go to the elders who on the basis of scripture must decide the policy of the church.

Principles which we get from Acts 15 are:-

[a] the people who participate in a church meeting should get their advice well in advance of what the subject matter is. Everybody then knows what they are gathering together for.

[b] The matter is referred to the elders for decision or Biblical clarification.

[c] James chairs the meeting, therefore there is a senior chairman at meetings.

[d] The legalistic ones have their say first. You have to decide when there is a major issue of doctrine when you should talk to get maximum impact; always let the party that is in error speak first. It is best to leave your case unto the end, read the Word and give examples.

[e] When everybody has had their say James sums up the meeting. James says in Acts 15:21 that there are synagogues where Moses is taught but we are teaching the Lord Jesus Christ. There are certain things the Gentiles should abstain from, worshipping idols, fornicating and eating meat that has been strangled, but the Mosaic Law is not for them.

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

The reasons for James specific instructions are found in the ancient context. In the ancient world the Greeks and Romans married for convenience to provide continuing legitimate children line for the family, but it was the common practice for the husband to go out and have sex with pagan priestess prostitutes, as part of the pagan religions, or just for fun. This was an evil practise and had to stop for believers, who were, as God's ambassadors, to be different from their pagan neighbours.

The meat available in the ancient world was only available from pagan temples, as all animals were killed, in much the way Hallal meat is today, and dedicated to the god of the temple. Some meat was bled properly but others were not and could be dangerous to eat, also it was associated with a blood cult and these were to be avoided, as only the blood of Christ is to be honoured.

It is much better to eat meat which has been properly bled rather than that which has been strangled. You need to bleed an animal otherwise in warmer climate it starts to putrefy. Christians should not be drinking the blood of sacrifices which was the pagan rite in the time of our Lord.

[f] They do not have a show of hands, there is the apostolic policy and once it is stated that is the end of it. There is no debate once the policy has been made; until that time all could disagree, but once policy was made the debate ended. Just so today; if there is clear Biblical policy on a matter there should be no debate.

Adams says that in his experience there are many times where the orderly function of a meeting, as shown in Acts 15, are not repeated in the church business meeting.

The problems nearly always involve poor shepherding by the pastor. If a pastor is visiting his people you can solve problems before they become too large and deep resentment occurs. All problems should be dealt with on a one on one counselling basis first. Every member of the congregation should be visited every year. If you have your deacons properly assigned you will have them visiting once or twice a year those families allocated to them.

ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF MEETINGS

The second reason for a poor meeting is poor administration in the church. You can post an agenda of a meeting up to a month in advance. This gives the members the opportunity to add to the agenda if they desire, and to pray through the issues intelligently. It also gives you time to teach any passages that are relevant.

If annual reports are not available a month before the AGM the secretary of the group concerned should be replaced. Have your meetings at a reasonable time after the end of the financial year. Those failing to do their jobs should be publicly disciplined. This expedites the report. Lack of reporting is laziness and not honouring to God.

The third reason for a poor meeting is bad chairmanship. The chairman could be the minister or secretary. It is preferable for the pastor to be chairing the meeting. Before you start you need to read out appropriate passages of Scripture, perhaps 1 John 3:11,14-24, 4:4-19, 20 - 5:5. These are particularly important if there is disagreement.

Another thing to think about in advance, is that of a covenant, which everyone agrees to before the meeting. James had obviously been doing some work before the meeting. He did not quote the passage from Amos off the top of his head. For every subject on the agenda you need to have Scripture to back up what is going to happen. It is not a case of I think you ought to do this, it is that the Scripture says this. It is important to have an overhead projector or a black/white board.

One of the questions that needs to be asked is, what is the real question /issue that we have here? Clarify the question. Often disagreement was not about the subject but it is about the way people think about things. It is not whether Moses or the law was good, they are good. The issue was whether they should be brought in as a mandatory thing in the church. This is bad, it is legalism. What saith the Scriptures? By having the Scriptures read aloud, we can be in obedience to the Word.

So let us be clear, what principles must be applied? How do we apply them now? For a church meeting you have to study and pray. We should not rely on the verse where we are told that when we are brought before the magistrate we will be inspired to remember the verses we require as that applies specifically to being arrested, and not a meeting we should have planned for. This passage is much quoted by lazy people. We should study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the Word of God.

TROUBLE MAKERS

If consensus cannot be reached. If there are one or two trouble makers you must make policy as an elders board, you must make the issue clear. If the church is divided down the centre do not force the issue at all. You cannot lead a divided church. If you do hold an item over make sure that you put it in the church calendar as to when the reconvened meeting will occur.

It is important to realise that prayer is a key to power in the church. Let the bitter people be isolated by that. We must do God's will in God's way. Do not make an issue of bringing a matter to finality that night. Be relaxed as to whether there is going to be a solution that day or not.

You need to be prepared for the person who will really disrupt the meeting. You need to have pertinent Scriptures set out Romans 1:19-32, Proverbs 6:16-19, Galatians 5 - the fruit of the Spirit, 1John 3:4-5, Matthew 7. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. You do not cut people down with sarcasm or your authority. Do it in accordance with the will of God. If they want to oppose you they are opposing the Word of God and not you. To continue you can quote Colossians 3:17, 2 Timothy 2:19 and James 2:7 so that they do not continue.

If the trouble makers are full of sin and evil let them have sufficient rope to hang themselves. You isolate them by the quotes from 1 John. You tell them that they are to report to the board on Saturday morning to face discipline for the disgraceful way that they have behaved. If necessary they can be removed by two large deacons. You need to have bouncers for church meetings. The secretary should minute down the facts of the incident, and statements must be taken from those present and signed as a true record of events. If they do not attend they should consider that as resignation, and they should be told that. Even with good shepherding you will need to be prepared for this.

COMMUNICATION IN THE BODY

With good communication you will get rid of a lot of these problems we have just seen. Communication must be truthful, timely, appropriate and targeted. Whenever you are communicating to people the truth is essential.

When things are going wrong you should not lie. You should not say that things are going right when they are not. Speed is essential as lies travel a lot quicker than the truth. It must be appropriate. You will not be telling everything, there are certain things that you must keep confidential.

If there is a problem people must know enough to ensure that they know what is going on. They must not know enough to cause trouble in sensitive cases of major immorality. You need to tell people that you are acting on it but not to name names and dates. You tell the people that if they are aware of immorality you talk to a deacon so that people might be helped. Sometimes you need to name names but this is when an expulsion is to take place. You do not name names until there is a total rejection of the need for repentance. All expulsions on Biblical grounds are open for readmission if repentance occurs. Speaking the truth in love is very important.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

[a] Written - a church bulletin, what groups are doing and what they are planning to do. You may include a great sermon in the past. Teaching programmes so that people know where they are going. Buy Christmas and get well cards out of your own pocket.

[b] Spoken - can be face to face on a visit or after church or on a phone. Email or the telephone are the most cost effective methods of communication. The public method is from the pulpit on a Sunday morning. It is often best to let the deacons do it. The telephone tree comes in this way with one person phoning five and so on. Each deacon is responsible for a certain number of families who are on his list. As the minister you phone the head of the telephone tree which puts

communication in action. Within a few minutes everybody in the church has got the message and can pray about the situation.

Breakdowns occur when communication breaks down. You lose fellowship, increase in tension. A Sunday morning announcement is not pertinent because a lot of people are not tuned in to that.

Adams says that, "Probably more churches are split or go limping along because of small differences which were not dealt with Biblically than because of any doctrinal disagreement. Much power is drained off and enormous amounts of energy is wasted in unnecessary tensions and misery arising from mishandled conflict"

By good communication you can deal with the potential conflict below the surface. Get feedback every visit so that you know what is going on. Regular meeting with the elders and deacons, the breakfast meeting before church. A lot of short meetings are better than long ones. A weekly breakfast elders and deacons meeting is very useful.

Adams SGF pages 374-391 - good outline there

LECTURE 27 - PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ON THE CHURCH BOARD

INTRODUCTION

The pastor is the chairman of the Board. We have this with the word episkopos which means overseer or bishop. When people are working together there will be problems that will be common to the human condition, AND THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF HUMAN NATURE.

Your board is going to be just as human as you are. Often you are not functioning as you should as a Christian. Your people are the same, they are going to have good and bad days. If a number of your deacons are out of fellowship you are going to have a bad meeting. You have to make sure that your administrative procedures are such that the spirit can move and that the problems that people can cause are minimised in advance.

Both Acts 6 and Acts 15 give us two good examples of administrative procedures, with co-operation and use of spiritual gifts. Here we see the roles which the apostles such as James took. It is important to have co-ordination and integration of all things in the church. They all must be organised and co-ordinated by the pastor, in such a way that there is a higher chance for god's glory than men fighting! God desires for everything to run in an orderly and Christ honouring fashion. The purpose of the church board is to provide order within which all the ministries may function satisfactorily.

There is a person who rules, who is the Pastor. There will be defined roles and functions in the church. There needs to be ground rules firmly understood by people for the meeting. It is then a lot easier to administer as things go smoother. If you have systems in place to solve problems before they crop up it will make them a lot easier. Every problem that currently exists in the church is recorded in Acts.

You need to have a well organised constitution with goals, aims and structure. In it should be what is expected of certain officers. The best way for a people to accept a constitution is to actually see it working. There are several things that need to be part of your constitution. When you make decisions in the church how are you going to make them. The congregational members should all be included as believer priests.

PRINCIPLES FOR DECISION MAKING A CHURCH MEETING COVENANT

Here we have suggestions as to how decisions are made in the church. We will not in anger raise our voices at one another. We agree not to swear and use bad language. We agree not to blame one another. Everyone agrees before the meeting starts regarding the ground rules.

Let all be done to magnify the Lord's glory and not ours.

Let all be done in love and respect for one another, for the Lord said, "Love one another as I have loved you."

Let all be done in accordance with God's Word and with the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Let the truth be spoken in love without anger. You may be telling the truth but you are not telling it in accordance with God's Word.

Let nothing be left unsaid that needs to be brought into the open.

Let everything be done in prayer.

Let us not move in any direction without the Lord's clear guidance. If the decision is going to cause a split we agree to pray about it for three months.

Let the Spirit decide which proposition we must follow as he listen to him.

Let us remember that this is the Lord's work not ours.

THE PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCHES ACTIVITY (GOD'S COMPANY POLICY)

1. To bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ by reflecting his glory through the activities and lives of the individuals and activities of the church.

2. To train believers to be ambassadors for Christ, witnesses to what his person and power can do with weak human beings who are committed to him.
3. To be the means through whom the Holy Spirit moves upon the unsaved to win them for the kingdom.
4. To teach believers to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, that all might be like him.
5. To practically show the love of the Lord amongst the saints, that the world might see how we love each other, and so hear the gospel of salvation without our lives hindering them.

It is useful to have something this printed out (with all the Bible references that are at the heart of the principles) so that we can see it at all times in the meeting. This puts pressure on people for spiritual standards. Do not let someone remain angry and unrebuked. As the pastor you are the manager. Your elders and deacons are executives, the people who execute the decisions that are made by the church, to implement the policy in God's Word.

YOUR LEADERS

You should recognise the high positions that they have and they will recognise yours. You must know your executive through and through and trust them. Give them the appropriate job to do. Have rewards for those who do well and rebukes for those who do ill. As the business man you must lead in the Lord's business. In many cases the meetings fall well behind the standards in the world. You may have professional people on the board and if you do not run your board as an effective way as possible they are going to become disillusioned. By knowing your executives and helping with their weaknesses and encouraging their strengths you are able to get the most out of the board. You need to know who you can depend on and who you cannot.

The Lord's work deserves the best. You should be serving the Lord at a higher level than you do your human employer. You must know company policy and implement it. You as pastor are the manager of the local branch of the church and you must do it in accordance with His policy.

Remember the purposes for the church's activity

1. To be a glory to the Lord Jesus Christ by reflecting His glory in the activities and personnel in the church.
2. To train believers to bring more glory to the Lord, to be ambassadors for Christ.
3. To win souls to the Lord by pointing them towards a saving knowledge of the Lord as to what He has done for them. This is an evangelistic and outreach approach.
4. To teach them that they may grow in the love and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ that they might reflect Him.
- 5 To show the love of the Lord Jesus Christ through acts of charity to the saints.

These activities reflect the policy of the church and should be incorporated in the planning

The policy of the church should always be:-

1. Study the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit so that we will reflect more and more the life of our Lord in our lives as we apply the Word of the God to our life.
2. We must attempt to lead all unbelievers to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and his saving ministry to mankind.
3. We have a teaching policy so that in everything we emphasise individual spiritual growth as we train ambassadors for Christ.
4. We want to let the Spirit loose in the church to change us all.
5. We need to keep an eternal life perspective in all our church actions. It is of much greater importance to know that what the Lord thinks about us in eternity is much more important than what people think about us now.

Anything that is not in accordance with this is abolished or eliminated. Anything that encourages using the policy should be encouraged.

As the Holy Spirit empowered minister you need to be setting the example. As you let the Spirit loose in you life and obey Him people will see a change in your life and be attracted to the Lord. As the pastor or shepherd if you ask the flock to follow you it is essential that you set an example that is worth following.

Management techniques of the world is a good way of managing the Lord's business. You need to start with yourself before you start analysing others. If you are not managing yourself well you are not going to manage others.

Four charts on management - From the facts below develop your own charts to assess yourself and your team regularly.

CHART 1 - Down the side of the page list the questions and then leave space to answer each question, and provide suggestions on how you might improve in each area.

The questions are:-

Am I considerate of others opinions?

Do I have spiritual perception, can I spot a phoney?

Am I dependable?

Am I popular generally, am I well spoken of? (Are you unpopular with people because you let people down.)

Do I think about what people say? Am I interested in facts? Do I automatically believe what people say or do I check them out?

Am I agreeable, do I have a good nature?

Do I have initiative?

Do I communicate or do I get frustrated because people do not get it right?

Am I unselfish or do I think about myself in everything that I decide?

Am I generous with credit? (A little bit of encouragement will move your people along more than anything else.)

We need to discover things in our life which need to be improved. Look for improvement and thank God when it comes. When you get yourself sorted out you can look at the elders and deacons.

Have a go at an elders retreat with this. Let them start with you first but be supportive, how can we help. You will draw the group together if it is done well and prayerfully. You will pull them together so tight that Satan will not get a look in.

Get to know them socially. Invite them into your home for dinner. Have meals together as often as you can. Watch them as they perform the tasks assigned to them in the church.

CHART B - Executive profile sheet - you need to create an atmosphere in the church to excel and serve the Lord. Feed the legitimate need and reap the profit. If a person has a need you feed it and strengthen it and encourage it. They will then be more productive as a worker. If you want to make the best out of something you need to look at every aspect of it. You need to think about what possible spiritual gifts people have. What ability do they have.

Have a profile sheet(Chart B) for every church leader, and use it to help you ensure you get the best out of them

On this sheet you need to note:

Name and date of birth of them, their spouse, and children.

Possible spiritual gifts.

Hobbies, sports, and interests.

Job profile, administrative experience, and ability.

Need for status?

Need to feel they have accomplished something?

Need for loyalty?

Need for high standards?

Need for supervision?

Need to be recognised as an individual?

Need to excel?

Need to co-operate with others in tasks?

Need for creative activity?

LECTURE 28 - CHURCH ADMINISTRATION RELATIONSHIPS

CHART A

Chart A, in Lecture 28, gives a guide to a character which you are trying to improve. The idea is to see the shortcomings and then see how we can help the person, and how they can help themselves. A lot of Christians are not dependable, they are asked to do things and they are not done. Another area where there needs to be improvement is where someone says something about someone else you need to confirm the facts before you act on it. You need to communicate with people. If you ask the question, do you love the Lord enough if a person is on the right track they will tend to say that they would like to love Him more. It is this desire to be more Christ like that we are trying to help grow.

We need to get specific so that the board can pray for each other. If you have a theological college with 40 - 50 people in dormitories living together, then every month they ought to sit down in small groups of 10 and say how they find each other in the dorm. This is important when you are living together. Some people live like pagans when they are training for the ministry. At the end of each semester the students should get into these groups and ask the question, have they

been setting a Christ like example. If you find a student in the college who is setting a bad example, and they will not be corrected, they should go.

If you cannot deal with this sort of scrutiny you exclude yourself from diaconate and eldership positions, because we must be above reproach, and well spoken of in the world.

CHART B

Let's review Chart B - The Executive profile sheet. You need to feed the legitimate needs of people to produce the most productive effort. You must think about what you are doing and about your people to administer the church as the armed forces are administered. We need to have knowledge of ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses, and also knowledge of our enemy.

It is important that you as a pastor know about your board, when their wives and childrens birthdays are, and what their interests are. It is important that ,for instance, you do not have a pastoral visit on a wedding anniversary or birthday. If you know these things about your people you can talk to children about up coming birthdays and the like.

You need to ascertain what spiritual gifts your people have. What are their hobbies, what are their sports. This can help you not to offend them and help you utilise their attributes. By a combination of knowing their gifts and interest you may be able to find a place where the person will be able to serve. This will bind your diaconate together. The people will follow you because you are interested in them.

How do we get our people motivated and moving and working better? Some need status or position, others need to be encouraged, others still are self motivated. You have to be sure that these things are not features of the OSN. If there is a lust for power it will destroy the board. If there is an OSN weakness you can either expose it or help them control or eliminate it.

Most people have to feel that they have accomplished something, this is legitimate, and while we should meet this need, we want to train them to hear the Lord's "well done", in their soul. If you give a person a job to do it is important that they are able to do it and complete it. If you want to destroy a good person, give them too much to do. Most people want to be loyal and not wish to rebel. Be an encourager, a refresher of your team.

This type of evaluation will show up the trouble makers quickly. Give them the chance to be loyal, set an example. If they are lacking in loyalty or integrity that is a danger sign. Give them something that they can excel in. Some need authority over them, some need encouragement. You will find many people in the church who are keen to please but they will flit from one job to another if they are asked to do something else by another person.

You cannot function with a person like that. If you have a person like that you take them aside and tell them that if anyone asks you to do something else to say that they have to do the task that they have been given, and they need supervision to ensure they complete tasks. We need to recognise people as individuals and treat them differently.

We do not see committees in the New Testament. We do however see people with gifts functioning with assistance from others. The Lord can reward those people personally for their faithful service. The Biblical pattern is personal responsibility rather than committees.

CHART C

Chart C - Staff sociogram. This is how you rate different people as a performance measure and is very useful if you need to do a reference. Questions that are asked is do they adjust, do they have initiative, are they resourceful, are they dependable, are they above average, consistent in their stand, considerate of others, are they cheerful, are they reasonable, are they sympathetic, have they any energy and enthusiasm, can they be trusted, do they drift through life in a haze, are they quick thinking, are they courageous. From this assessment you can get a good profile on performance.

STAFF SOCIOGRAM

ATTRIBUTES OF PEOPLE BEING ASSESSED

(1=deficient, 2=less than desired , 3=average , 4= good, 5= excels)

KNOWLEDGE
THOROUGHNESS
UNDERSTANDING
WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN
COMMUNICATION
FAIRNESS TO ALL
ADJUSTMENT TO CHANGE
INITIATIVE

RESOURCEFULNESS
 DEPENDABILITY
 CONSISTENCY
 CONSIDERATION
 CHEERFULNESS
 REASONABLENESS
 SYMPATHY
 ENERGY
 INTEGRITY
 ALERTNESS
 QUICK THINKING
 COURAGEOUSNESS

ALTERNATE CHART - CHART D

An alternative chart for assessment is the following

CHART D SPECIFIC TASK PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Work	Not acceptable	Barely acceptable	Average	Above Average	Superior
Job Knowledge	Hasn't a Clue	Slow	Can do task	Dependable	Guides Others
Dependability	None	Needs a Start	Needs Supervision	Prompt	Fully Responsible
Oral Communication	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Clear and Concise	Holds All Attention
Written Communication	Very Poor	Poor	Can Read	Good	Outstanding
Resourcefulness	None	Needs Instruction	Follows Instruction	Good Suggestions	Top Standard
Working With Others	Not Good	Follower	Will Lead	Natural Relaxed	Dynamic Leader
Discernment	Poor	Erratic	Good But Slow	Good	Excellent
Work Organisation	Chaotic	Loses Track	Needs Advice	Keeps Up	On Top Of Job
Supervision Ability	None	People avoid them	No Interest	Will If Asked	Leads
Quality of Work	Poor	Below Standard	Average	Superior	Excellent

Circle the performance of your team and analyse your own, for specific tasks.

USE OF CHARTS

You can sit down with them and help them, look at it together and see how well the task has been given. Was it acceptable, average, above average. Did you take responsibility as unto the Lord in this job. Did you give good oral communication, give good guidelines. Were you resourceful in what you did. How well did you work with others are you a leader of a follower. Is your work organisation in chaos or are you on top. Does your quality of work have to be checked all the time or do you always produce good quality work.

SETTING THE STANDARDS

In any church that you run you should have a statement of faith, a statement of purpose. If you establish this before you start you have some hope of steering the church Biblically. It is almost impossible to superimpose these things after a year or two in the pastorate. You need to be proactive in this area. Everything you do for the Lord could be done better so that we need to monitor and revise the basics.

- [a] We need to communicate - if you want to be an administrator in the church it is essential to clearly communicate with the people. The Board should meet every week for a short meeting. Do not have a monthly marathon which tests the sanctification. A Sunday breakfast is desirable though not often feasible.
- [b] Assign tasks - people must have the opportunity to take responsibility so that they may undertake tasks as unto the Lord. Often in churches people do not have the opportunity to serve. They are not given a job that they can do as unto the Lord. You need to have time frames within which people can perform the tasks. You have to ensure that the non workers do not override the workers at a meeting. Give the non workers a job so that they are seen to fail and in humility they see that they fail and seek help.

The Bible teaches personal responsibility and accountability and personal rewards. Have a diary and note when they are to report and monitor their progress. You keep an account of performance and you can use that from time to time in regards to deacons not standing again because they did not perform. Be looking for spiritual ability. In the New

Testament the deacons were examined to see if they had the gift of pastor teacher and then actively trained them. You can put your deacons on to courses which is going to help them in the spiritual area.

When people know the church policy and they see the leadership leading by example you will find that morale will lift and there will be success and great achievement. You have weekly monthly and yearly goals. If you never set a goal to achieve anything you can guarantee success, you will succeed in achieving nothing! Without a vision the people perish. Meeting together and praying together sets the goals for the year.

In September / October have a retreat where you pray and talk and talk and pray and share the Scriptures. What are the goals, where are we going, what do we want to achieve, what is the Spirit laying on the church. The leaders can then say that this is what we believe the Spirit is saying to us.

Cash Accounting Get good advice here from a professional accountant. The pastor should not handle the money, it must be done in a way that the government auditors praise you for. It is the Lord's money guard it thoroughly.

If people know what is happening with monies going the giving will improve. With dropping morale giving will also drop.

SGF - section 3 - Administration.

LECTURE 29 - THE ROLE OF THE DEACONS AND THEIR TRAINING.

DEACONS

The deacons are the most under rated group in many churches. Most deacons do not function as they should.

Turn to and read the following, Acts 6:1-10, 1 Timothy 3 : 8 -13

Putting them together there are four principles for the office of deacon. Although it was basically an administrative role, they were to look after the widows. It was therefore both administrative and social.

Firstly the qualifications are spiritual, they were to be men filled with the Holy Spirit as were the deaconesses. Do not seek a trained social worker, they need to be spirit filled before anything else is looked for.

Secondly there is no gift of deacon, two of those in Acts 6 were evangelists and teachers. Deacon is an office. Service as a deacon does not exclude one from being an evangelist or teacher, or exercising any spiritual gift in the church.

Thirdly they are not to be new believers. They need to be tried first. You do not put a new church member into a position of deacon. Let them show that they are faithful in the Lord's work before they are placed in a position of deacon or deaconess.

Fourthly - note the work separation. The elders and apostles were set aside to preach, teach and pray. They spiritually fed the sheep. Deacons were set aside for social work, of "deaconing"; the word means to serve at tables. They literally did this ensuring the widows were fed. They physically fed the sheep. If in a large church your pastor is doing all the visiting and counselling the ministry of the Word is going to suffer. The deacons are there for visitation ministry today, to work with the pastors, but of course both groups are to be evangelists or teachers in their areas of responsibility.

Make sure that the deacons function at this level so that you as pastor, are ready to study and teach. The apostles say that their job is to pray, study and teach. This is important in a large church. As a pastor you need to prepare at least four messages a week perhaps five. You have about 40 hours of prayer and studying a week to do a good job. If you visit it should be in the afternoon after you have spent 5-6 hours studying in the morning. If you find that the counselling, visitation, is impinging on your study time you need as a pastor to call for help from your deacons.

Christians have a poor understanding of the role of a deacon. Many have no real knowledge of the basics of the Scripture. At the same time men accept the exalted position of being as deacon without understanding the responsibilities and requirements of the office. Too many pastors do not teach Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3.

SELECTION OF DEACONS

The people of the church select the deacons, the elders appoint them or challenge them. You need to have a good constitution which allows for the minister or elders to reject unsuitable deacons. Do not limit your number to seven you should have sufficient to cater for your church size.

In the large church of Jerusalem there were sufficient widows for seven men to be appointed. Most churches under a hundred members only need two or three deacons and a similar number of deaconesses. Do not limit yourself to seven.

It was noted that the only people who were helped were those who were helpless. The social work was very selective in the early church. They had a very high view as to the use of the money that has been given to the church. It only went to those who were in need and loved the Lord and had served him. We are often far too liberal with the Lord's money. The deacons and deaconesses had to be people of discernment.

There are those who are needy but do not conform with the guidelines. If an alcoholic worships the bottle it is not realistic, nor spiritual, for the church to provide charity for them. You may decide that you will give a meal to the alcoholic as an opportunity to witness to him. If he is not interested in the gospel you are wasting the Lord's money. The Lord holds you responsible for the way in which the Lord's money is used.

RECIPIENTS OF BIBLICAL CHARITY

The early church gave food and goods and not money. The church in principle should never give money to people. If you give money you are in a difficult position, for you have made an issue of something other than the gospel for the person who receives the money.

In the case of the alcoholic you may have to give a word of rebuke that they are in this state because of their sin, and that the Biblical response is to assist them face their sin and give them the only hope which is Christ., not a handout that keeps them drinking another day.

If you go to an alcoholics house where they are starving to death with a bottle of whiskey on the table do you give them \$20 to buy food, for they will spend it on drink. If you must give buy their whiskey off them, in exchange for food. You look at them and tell them that they have to face the sin and evil that has led them to the desperate place where they see drunkenness as their only hope. We must tell them there is real hope, if they find the Saviour. If you relieve their physical misery you are robbing a person of getting to a real solution for the pain, and hopelessness that led them to drink. The danger is that such people can be kept alive in a living hell so that they can drop into real hell later; that is not our mission!

A widow who was living in sin and was not willing to change who was starving did not get support from the early church. Their message was, If you want to live in sin, live in sin, and don't complain about the misery you have selected for yourself. If you worship the devil don't expect Christians to support you in your choices. They were blunt, stating that, God will judge you and you will die, and until you repent we will not give money to you as it will be money to Satan or his people.

The deacon and deaconess were the people who visited others in their homes. They referred things back to the elders who were to preach the Word publicly whilst the deacons worked privately. This is why the spiritual standards were set so high. To be a deacon working with widows was to be open to sexual temptation, monetary temptation. There are people in the churches who are too easily tempted in these areas, and they are not eligible to be a deacon or deaconess.

If you have not got control of your children this excludes you. If however your children have gone off the rails after reaching their age of majority this does not exclude you necessarily. While they are under your roof you are responsible for them.

Training the deacon - if you are stressing the Word and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in their life it helps. Less than four services a week and you are failing your people. In addition there needs to be a special deacon training course not only for deacons but those who may be deacons in the future. This will consist of Biblical counselling, dealing with people in crisis etc. Try and do it on Saturday or Sunday afternoon. Be sensible as Sunday is often a family day. Have an attendance register so that the only people who can be a deacon are those who have done the course once there have been a couple of courses.

INTERACTION BETWEEN PASTOR AND DEACONS

As a pastor of a new church what do you do. Five suggestions:-

- [a] Have a deacons retreat, to talk about the diaconate. You challenge them as to what the Biblical job really is.
- [b] Find out what the deacons job is. Then check it against the Scriptures. Ask them what they did as a deacon last year, this year.
- [c] Examine all the Scriptural passages and compare with what they are doing.
- [d] Plan a course of study so that they can do what the Bible says that they should be doing.
- [e] For the person who does not think he needs to learn anything do a role play perhaps with a drunk. This shows that we do not have all the answers. If the person eats humble pie he will be keen to learn. If he is not he will storm out and you accept his resignation as he goes.

Your deacons must be able to cope with things that they are going to encounter. If they do not your church will not have a ministry in that house again. Ninety percent of people who say that they are persecuted for the Lord in their work place,

are basically people who do not perform in their work place and bring disrepute on the Lord's name. The witness of the unbeliever as to the work and behaviour of the deacon, or pastor is to be sought.

You can train deacons and deaconesses in this way and it is vital to do so. They need to be trained to see the covert drinker, the drug addict who is not overt.

They need to see where the people are at, what is their need. They need to respond sensitively, but biblically, following the apostolic pattern. All Christians need to be more sensitive and discerning, so that your deacons training course should be open to all.

SEVEN QUESTIONS ON DEACONS

1. Should deacons serve for life or for a limited period ? There is no guide in the Scripture. They were apparently a deacon until they moved on or failed. e.g. Nicholas of Antioch became apostate, Philip moved. Decide for yourself.
2. How are deacons to be chosen? - Acts 6, with qualifications in 1 Timothy 3. The church is to choose the deacons but the elders appoint them to the office and have the right of refusal if there is something in the person's life that is not in accord with scripture.
3. How do you discipline deacons? - Like every other church member. There is no special rule for the deacons unlike the elder who is publicly rebuked for any error in his life.
4. How many deacons should a church have? - This is dependant on size. One deacon for every fifty people in a normal church is a rule of thumb. You need to have some deacons or deaconesses who are elderly or retired. These people are available to be used at the times of crisis. It is not wise to have too young man or woman to serve as a deacon or deaconess especially if they have a young family, for that responsibility will take them away from the church one. Most churches that have young deacons do not have the deacons doing the Biblical job.
5. Should the deacons be on the church board? - It is the elders who rule, the deacons apply the social work. The deacons report to the elders what they do and receive their instructions from the elders. They cannot be Biblically the decision makers in the church. It is from the deacons that your elders will come, so there is an argument that they should be present to see the decision making process and learn.
6. Will the deacons be doubling up in visitation as the elders also have that role? - The deacons visitation is geared to physical need whereas the pastors and elders will be looking for spiritual needs. Every person should receive a pastoral visit at least once a year. If there is a specific need in the house the deacon will be visiting three or four times a week until the problem is solved. Organise a church meals on wheels for church people if necessary. If you have elders and deacons mixed up you will have a mess in the church.
7. Should the deacons be the ones serving at the Lord's table? - not necessarily. Neither that or taking up the offering is a job for the deacon. It is better to allow others to do and serve. It is important for them however to have their badges on and be out in the foyer so that they can watch people going out. At the service the minister can then tell people that anybody with a social need see the deacons in the foyer afterwards.

The elders are not elected they are selected to be pastors and elders. All the elders appoint the deacons so that they are all responsible for discipline problems. If you need to change the constitution do so in one concerted effort rather piecemeal.

LECTURE 30 - CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS AND DISCIPLINE

1 CORINTHIANS 14:33-40

Turn to and read the following, 1 Corinthians 14:33-40. In this passage in Corinthians God tells the church that He is a God of order. God gives gifts for the building up of the church. You have gifts of pastor and administration. You cannot ignore what God has provided for His Church, and there needs to be organisation, so that these gifts operate in an orderly manner. There are ruling gifts, and these need to be exercised biblically.

BTB - Spiritual Gifts.

Turn to and read the following- Romans 10:12, Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:11, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 Corinthians 12:7-30, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24. The Lord has given leadership gifts. We have the priesthood of all believers. The leader is the first amongst equals, leadership is not dictatorship.

The leader should be sharing the Scriptures and praying over every issue but the leader takes responsibility of the decision as an under shepherd before God. There must be authority and structure and organisation within which the gifts can function. You need to have your meetings organised and your structures in place.

TWELVE PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Twelve principles of Church Government are behind every constitution (there will be differences in the way churches are structured, but these principles must be behind any structure):-

1. God the Holy Spirit has given enough gifts to make the church work. In 1 Corinthians 12 it says that the Holy Spirit has given enough gifts for the church to function. In every local church where the spirit is present there will also be the people to do the job. You need to find them, train them and teach them to grow so that they can fulfil the gifts. Your constitution must recognise this and allow for it to happen.

2. Your constitution must allow the gifts of the Spirit to function and flourish or else you are denying the very basis of your faith. If you look at church history when Christianity flourished you had people at the top who allowed those at the bottom to function. Your actual form of government is not so important as the people in the structure however. This is not tongues and miracles, at the centre, it is pastors/teachers and evangelists, the gift of helps and administration.

All should pray but not all have the gift of prayer. We are all to make disciples. There must be the opportunity for the pastor to shepherd the sheep; a pastor that is ruled and directed in everything by his board cannot function as a true under-shepherd.

3. The constitution should have a biblical base. You should have the texts of scripture to back it up everything in the constitution, and it should be a Bible teaching document. If any point is not backed up by Scripture it should not be in there.

4. Any position of authority should be a biblically recognisable one. Biblical positions are pastor teacher, elder, the elders, the deacons and deaconesses.

5. The Biblical practices of personal responsibilities should be practised. The position should be Biblical and the responsibilities within the position should be Biblical. Deacons should have the physical oversight with the elders having the spiritual oversight. The pastor should lead the church.

6. Discipline should be Biblical. The procedures should be noted in the Constitution and should be Biblical.

7. Members rights and responsibilities should be spelt out. What is your responsibility as a member and what are your rights.

8. Decision making processes should be made clear. There is a process for making decisions and it should be spelt out there.

9. Church meetings should be spelt out so that people realise what is required as far as quorums and voting. There should be four business meetings a year of which one should be annual. The reports that are required should be identified and the time at which the reports are to be given should be clear.

10. Money management should be in the constitution with definite responsibilities spelt out, so that there is full and accurate accounting for all monies given to the Lord's work.

11. You must ensure that your constitution is in conformity with the state rules, in accordance with the laws of the land. You need to be a non profit organisation. If you do not do this carefully you bring the Lord's name into disrepute when the Government investigates you. You must tighten up the constitution as a priority. If you find that there is something wrong call an emergency meeting to modify it to conform with the requirements of the laws of the State.

12. The Constitution should incorporate a full statement of faith that every person should sign as believing in full. If people are not challenged by the statement of faith they will drift away from the faith.

Many churches in the United States require the membership to sign the statement of faith, on an annual basis. Many denominations have been destroyed by failing to do this. Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopalian and some Baptists have been ripped apart by legalism or liberalism. Most of the trouble makers in the church are unbelievers or make-believers, they must be identified by their false beliefs, or false claims. You also need a way of expelling people who do not believe.

Boardman's Ministers manual - pages 146-148

You should have a statement of faith and solemnly promise that if at any time you do not believe any items in the statement you will resign your membership or accept dismissal as the inevitable consequence of it.

You must have a statement of faith in a shortened form, as what the early church would have referred to as, your creed. The statement should be modified or tightened to deal with current threats to the apostolic faith. If you have a constitution which does not say that the word of God is without error in the original there will be difficulty with some as you try to apply scripture to them.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Any discipline of church members must be Biblical, just and gracious. It must be done in such a way that the disgraced member has no recourse in the civil courts.

There is a case where you have to physically intervene such as if you have a father repeatedly beating their child in the church. You however must take it in such a manner that they cannot take you to court and disgrace the name of Christ.

A Biblical example of over reaction was when Moses killed the Egyptian mistreating the Israelite. If you have someone beating someone up in your church you need to use reasonable force but you must be prepared for the worst, and so avoid escalation of the situation.

If you eject someone you need to be able to counsel them from God's Word if possible.

EXPULSION FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

There are four Biblical rules for expulsion from the fellowship:-

- [a] Unrepentant persistent sin. - 1 Corinthians 5:11 - anything that disgraces the name of the Lord. It can be covetousness, immorality, people doing the wrong thing in the business community. The sinner must recognise the sin. If the person falls once like the unwanted pregnancy this is not a reason for expulsion but if they are persistent in fornication it is.
- [b] A persistent lifestyle which is called wicked. 1 Corinthians 5:13. This is where a person is living a lifestyle which is not in conformity with holiness.
- [c] False doctrine which is a blasphemy and a lie against God's truth. It is a violent assault on tender young believers. You cannot make an issue however out of a matter that is not covered by the statement of faith. 1 Timothy 1:19-20, 2 Timothy 2:17-18, 4:14
- [d] The wolf in sheep's clothing should be expelled. This may be a person who has a lust for power. Acts 20:29-31, Matthew 7:15-23, 10:16-18, 2 Peter 2:1-3 The church should be a haven for safety for the sheep.

Members must understand that there are standards that must not be broken for behaviour in the church. Do not bring legitimate business you would promote during the week into the church on Sunday. Do not sell life insurance when you should be thinking about eternal life insurance. The Lord ejected the money changers from the Temple, and no-one is to ply their trade in church.

FIVE STEPS FOR DISCIPLINE

Five steps for discipline issues.

- [1] Get the facts and go privately to the persons concerned. Galatians 6:1, James 5:19-20
- [2] The principle and procedure of Matthew 18:15-17 should be followed -you go to them, you take someone with you, bring them before the church. No discipline should be exercised before the third warning. You need to deal with the problem straight away. A week should be the longest time between hearing of a problem and getting to then third meeting. If you delay you can end up with a split church. The other concept is that the individual members are sorting out the problems before it gets to a size where the minister has to get involved.
- [3] False teachers should be exposed and rebuked twice only, if people are actively teaching false doctrine. - Titus 3:10, 1:13,14, 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 1 Timothy 6:3-5. You give them two warnings, you tell them to stop it and if they do not they are out the next time. They may be prophecy nuts, liberals, or hyper Calvinists. Your constitution should reflect the church's view on these subjects.
- [4] The expulsion is not final. If there is repentance and fruit of repentance then they should be readmitted. 2 Corinthians 2:1-11, Galatians 6:1-10. You discipline them to recover them. The acceptance back into a church of a repentant believer should be done with joy.
- [5] Expulsions from the church should be published in the church newsletter to protect other churches. You have to make sure however that it is not libellous. You give copies of the bulletin to other churches. You need to ensure that people have pressure put on them to repent. You must be rigorous on your discipline procedure and your constitution.

LECTURE 31 - PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION - THE COMMITTEES

INTRODUCTION

Turn to and read the following, Colossians 3:23-25, 2 Corinthians 9:10-14.

Each church should split its ministries into areas or groups to make it easy to administer. Most will be dealt with through a committee structure.

The Biblical pattern has four points:-

- [1] Teach the people through the work of the Holy Spirit as they mature in the knowledge and grace of Christ. Most of the problems in the church comes when the people are not spirit filled.
- [2] God the Holy Spirit gives gifts. We need to see who has got the gifts and use them.
- [3] Train the gifted people so that they may be able to use their spiritual gifts better. The Bible School is a ministry training centre.
- [4] Place the spiritually gifted people in places where they can use their gifts to best advantage.

You have the pastor as chairman of the Board. There are also the elders and deacons as administrators and social workers. In each area of ministry you have one person who is responsible but with a team to help them.

There needs to be a linear responsibility format. The pastor is responsible to the Lord for the whole church. The elders and the pastor are jointly responsible for the spiritual welfare, the deacons are responsible for the social work and administration with other elected people being put in charge of other areas. This work can be Sunday School, Youth work, Library and the like. The people should use their spiritual gifts and report back to the pastor or elders about the fulfilment of their task.

FINANCE

Finance - this is an important area. God often uses money and giving as a means of discipline. As the minister you should have a weekly report as to the offerings last week. If the offerings take a dive it is often a spiritual indicator. If this happens it is not a matter of asking the flock to give more. Do not ask for more from God's people, ask God for guidance as to what is wrong and you preach and pray your way out of it. Do not bludgeon your way out of it. If people are not obedient it is your problem as a minister.

BTB - Money, Giving and Tithing

Cash Accounting System - it should be noted that a church can be destroyed by a money or sex scandal much quicker than the teaching of false doctrine. You should always have at least two people as money counters because even though people involved are totally honest, other people could accuse them of wrongdoing. Two people should be appointed as money counters, neither being the treasurer. In the notebook they record the total offering independently of the treasurer. All people that sign it state that it is a correct record of the offering that week. This way all are seen to be above reproach.

The monies are then given to the treasurer whose job it is to bank it. By this method you can be sure that they are all honest, and they are covered from malicious attack from others. Using a bank deposit book and receipts the monies can be checked through by the auditor. There should be a receipt book so that all can be checked by the auditor. The receipt book should be used for all personal donations. You have two basic forms of information for the bank, the notebook and the receipt book. It is honest and seen to be honest and the treasurer is covered.

All transactions with the church money should be by cheque and receipted. You need to have a multi column cash book and separate out whether it is from the offering, special donation or a special item such as a fund raising dinner for missionaries. You should always be able to cross check the offerings against the cash book and receipts and bank book.

When payments are required it is well to have forms for the Board to sign authorising all payments. These are used for the board to authorise payment by the treasurer of accounts on a weekly basis. The treasurer should then pay all accounts in full, except those as noted to be investigated or rejected. The elders sign that this is what they order, and they rule off the form after the last approved account so no one can add any other account. If you have four bills you individually rule out all lines on that form after it. If you do this it stops any questions at church meetings as to what has been approved. It protects everybody. Each cheque should have at least two signatures.

The treasurer and the three money counters should be appointments of the church and you must also appoint auditors.

AUDITS

There are a number of audit checks:-

- [1] Are all the books present
- [2] Do all the collections show in the cash book.
- [3] Do they all tie together with the deposit slips.
- [4] Are all the receipts properly recorded.
- [5] Is every cheque noted.
- [6] Are they all authorised by the board.
- [7] Are the accounts being paid for promptly
- [8] Do the books balance

LIBRARY CENTRE

You can use your library as a drop in centre. It is excellent method of a youth ministry, as a good place to study after school can be in short supply in some communities. Many times you will have school age children and you will have the opportunity to use child evangelism during the afternoon programs. You need to gear up the church building, Monday to Friday from 3 to 5pm, as it can be an outreach/homework centre. You can have a Sunday School every day of the week if you want to.

You need a good library and bookshop and encourage the bookshop. Check out what is in it already if you have one. Allocate enough money a year from your budget for the church library, and approach old pastors for their libraries after they no longer use them. It will be of no value if nobody uses it; advertise it and have a deacon or volunteer there for it at certain times. You need good Christian books and good theology books for the older ones. Young people will know that they can study in there. Many will see it as a place where they can do their homework. If they come there Monday through Friday it is easy for them to go there on Sunday. These are easy evangelism areas. You will see more people saved through a drop in centre than you will on Sunday nights.

You may have a young people's crusade while the older ones are at the homework centre. Have the pastor, elders, deacons or volunteers come round and help them with their homework. You have to be thorough, thoughtful and prepared, but the results are amazing.

MISSIONARY GROUP

Within your church you need to have a missionary group. You need to have someone, perhaps an elder be responsible for it. You will have five or six letters from missions each week whether you want them or not. You need someone to sift through it and give a précis for publication in the church bulletin.

The mission board should be responsible to the eldership and have a similar accounting system as the church has. Whatever work you do the work must be reported back monthly to the eldership and there should be annual reports to the members. For the Sunday School and Bible Class there should be a superintendent preferably an elder.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School should be divided on literacy grounds - those who cannot read, those who are learning to read, those who can read and the teenagers. On top of that you have your Bible Class. They should all meet before Church and the teenage and Bible Class could work through this diploma course over a six year period if the classes go for 90 minutes or so.

The people will have to be Holy Spirit gifted teachers with the pastor or assistant pastor being the teacher of the adult group. Let people exercise their gifts. There is nothing worse than a Bible Class where the teacher has not got the gift of teaching. The church must have commitment in this area. This is an area for the training of pastors in the future.

SGF - Chapters 10,13,14 Adams suggests a two session Sunday School, starting Sunday morning at 9:30 and going to 10:10 at which time he has a five minute break, 10:15 - 10:55 is the second session. Service begins at 11 and concludes at 12. He argues that it is better to have a one hour church service and a two hour Bible class than a one and a half hour church service.

Using this method if you had a teenager starting at the age of 14 by the time they were twenty they could have a diploma in theology. Both adult and teenage should have the same 6 year programme. Take your Bible class seriously and ask them to buy text books to complement it. For example you could use Chafer 52 Major Bible Themes and go through it for two years, covering every area of theology. If you are teaching properly you will get the young people there.

LECTURE 32 - MINISTRY EVALUATION

SELF ASSESSMENT

Very few ministers actually do this, AND IT IS TOO EASY TO BECOME COMPLACENT IN MINISTRY. They start well but run out of steam. You need to ask yourself the hard questions and not just sit down and wait for things to happen.

Turn to and read the following, In 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, the inner man has to be renewed every day. The habit of daily devotions and repeated daily prayers is vital. Turn to and read the following also, in 2 Timothy 2:6-7, Paul urges Timothy to get on the faith. Your ministry needs you to teach others so that it becomes a Bible Training Centre. Paul says for Timothy to consider what he has told him, chew it over in his mind and consider what is happening in the ministry.

CHECKLIST

Use the following checklist to see how you are going:-

1. Has your dress or personal hygiene slipped?
2. How is your prayer life?
3. Is your Bible Reading timetable slipping behind? This problem can be overcome by using tapes in the car as you drive around.
4. Are you keeping ahead with your sermon preparation and production of materials for teaching.? Are you preaching four times a week? You need to have four or five hours of preparation every weekday morning.
5. Are you still excited about the Word.? Does it still enthuse you.
6. How do you react to criticism. You will be criticised if you preach the Word. The criticism will be both constructive and destructive. We need to ignore the attitude of people and find out how you can be more powerful. Spurgeon used it to his benefit. If you use it God's way it will be beneficial.
7. Visitation - How are you going with your visitation project. In the afternoon you should be on the beat talking to the people in the area. How are the elders working in their visitation programme.
8. How much time are you spending with your family?. Are you away too much. Is your wife suffering as she does not see anything of you.
9. Are there too many routines in your service. Are you in a rut. Are people challenged or not.
- 10 Listen to a tape of yourself. How are you coming across, how can you improve the effectiveness of your approach.
11. How long is it since you had a holiday. It has been found that people require a holiday of at least 21 days to be refreshed. Try and take three weeks in one block and try and get away from the telephone.

Spurgeon used to go to the south of Spain. He was criticised for this but he said it is more important to save the Lord's servant than worry about saving the Lord's money.

If you are going to recharge the batteries you should walk enjoy and relax. In the ancient world people like Peter Paul and John spent many weeks on slow journeys which gave them this relaxation period. Thus every time Paul went on a missionary journey 70 % of his journey would be recharging his batteries. He would also select a place to winter over, and have a quiet time for recharge and teaching his pastoral team. Turn to and read the following, Titus 3:12, 13.

Wesley and Whitfield used to spend a lot of time on horseback which exercised them. Wesley could put his horse in a particular direction and read the Bible as he went along.

You cannot relax driving a car but you may in an aeroplane, but you can do so walking, and this remains the best pastoral exercise and time for reflection and prayer.

Turn to and read the following, Ephesians 5:25-33, for it is very important here. Give time with your family together. Many universities have a sabbatical year, where staff who have taught for seven years get a year off to study and recharge their intellectual batteries. The church should budget for its minister to go off for a sabbatical year, one in every seven years. His assistant can then pastor for the year while he is away. Often they can go off and study and come back

really on fire. Sometimes during such a period the pastor can produce a classic written work and this will bless the whole world. The church never loses out from looking after its faithful Bible Teachers.

12. Are you into the latest fad? Are you jumping all over the place or are you preaching systematically. Are you pushing a particular personal "wheel barrow" (viewpoint) or are you preaching the word. You should preach verse by verse, doctrine by doctrine, principle by principle. If you follow the fads the church will fall apart during your sabbatical but if you preach line upon line your church will continue to mature.

Turn to and read the following, In 1 Timothy 3:16,17, Paul said that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Not just some of the Scriptures, all the scriptures. You need to have a systematic programme where you do teach the whole Bible. It was the English Bible which changed England, not Henry VIII. The people heard the Bible read word by word. Most of the people in England did not hear sermons, but for the first time they heard the Bible read in their own language regularly from their churches pulpits. This changes nations!

13. - Are you tempted to move. Many people are tempted to move before a job is done. If you are tempted to move there is probably something wrong with you. One of the keys for the ministry is, 1 John 1:9.

Revivals come from God but many great revivals have been formed through a commitment of God's people to prayer, even when discouraged. If there is something wrong with you and you are not praying powerfully there will be no revival in the church. We should commit ourselves to prayer to revive our spirits and then refresh the church.

14. - See Adams appendix B page 500 - Appendix B - For common things that can cause problems in churches.

SOME THINGS THAT CAUSE PROBLEMS IN CHURCHES

If your people have to come out to meetings more than 3 or 4 times a week you are sinning against God as you are undermining the family. As parents we are to look after our children - Ephesians 5, Colossians 3

Lack of Biblical priorities - what constitutes God's work. The pastor should train the people in the church to assist him and not do all the work himself.

Everything you say in messages should be tied into practical application. You have doctrines but you must apply them to be effective.

You need to teach then Scriptures so that the people know that the Bible is correct and trustworthy.

You should not be in awe of doctors, engineers or other professional people within your group, nor be nervous when facing the aged; stand up and teach the Word of God.

It is important that you are disciplined and start meetings on time. The Lord demands the same punctuality as the businesses of the world.

You must make an issue of the Scriptures not traditions. You need to have a Bible School before the church meeting. In this you can pick up the problems before they become too large.

If you are thrown out of the church make sure it is for the right reasons; some of the great saints have been badly treated by their churches, but it was because they stood for the truth, and opposed evil. If the church throws you out for teaching the truth, rejoice and seek where the Lord will lead next.

LECTURE 33 - CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING INTRODUCTION

CHRISTIAN AND NON CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING

This subject brings the whole area of spiritual life and function into focus. Christian counselling is a subject that you only study after you have got a good framework of Biblical knowledge. To be an effective counsellor you need to have a maximum knowledge of Bible doctrine, and have walked with the Lord for a number of years and suffered yourself through many trial of life, and learned wisdom through them.

Christian counselling is a process of encouraging, advising, teaching, correcting, admonishing; it is sitting in a one to one situation and letting the person who has come to you, be heard fully, and then come to terms with problems in their lives, and the Biblical solutions. It is using discernment to assist them out of a problem for which they can see no solution.

There are two major differences between the Christian and non Christian counselling

[1] The Bible is God's manual for life on earth - in God's manual every problem that man can have is answered. There is nothing new under the sun. - Turn to and read the following, 1 Corinthians 10: 11 - 15.

[2] The Holy Spirit is God's provided power to live according to the manual. In the power of the Holy Spirit the Christian has the ability to cope with every problem in life. We have the way to solve the problem.

This power is available to the unbeliever through salvation. The people who come to you for counselling have Biblically revealed needs, and counselling is assisting people to meet these legitimate needs.

The first is, to be obedient to God's revealed policy and plan. If they are an unbeliever they need to be saved, if they are a believer they have to become spiritual in their daily walk.

There is also a need to be aware of God's purpose for their life, this involves setting goals. Christian counselling involves achieving these objectives together.

Christian counselling starts with good news; that they are god's creation and a part of his plan, there is therefore a purpose for their life and power to fulfil that purpose available through a position in Christ that God has provided through the cross and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

PHASES IN COUNSELLING PROCESS

There are three phases to the standard counselling process;

[1] - The unburdening process. In this you have to let the person unburden their soul and you truly hear where they are coming from. You have to show genuine concern. They need to trust you. You need to know all there is to know about them that is relevant so that you both can come to a solution, working together to discover what it is God has for them.

[2] - Analysing - . Here you both look at these situations from a Biblical perspective. You see how the problem tree had grown. You diagram it and ascertain a central issue so that you can deal with the central problem. Have a table between you, and work on it, or on the ground with a stick, if necessary, to visualise their situation. They need to fully see their situation, and say, "yes, that is me", and then seek the solution. You may decide to have a "hit list" of problems, if you cannot identify anything that is the "main problem".

[3] - Planning - here you work together through an action plan to, on an hour by hour, day by day basis, tackle the problems. You specify what is needed to be done, and teach the passages from the scriptures that apply.

All Christians can be involved in counselling at some level, and should be. All you need is to be Bible saturated and Spirit led. If you want in your church to have many counsellors you need them to be Bible saturated. You will therefore encourage Bible study, prayer and obedience in your church. Counselling is something for spirit filled mature believers and not for anyone who has just been on a "counselling course". Knowledge without spirituality is a destructive thing.

J. Adams wrote a book entitled " Competent to Counsel" a phrase taken from Romans 15:14. He stresses that if a person is to be a good counsellor they have to be good Bible students. The word for admonish in this verse is "noutheteo". From this Adams developed what he calls, the "nouthetic form of counselling". He says that all personal problems are due to sin. Deal with the sin and you have dealt with the problem.

This is a little too simplistic as some problems people face are caused by physiological problems, (eg, imbalances in the body such as schizophrenics) or events beyond their control, like the deaths of loved ones, or sickness. Other may be for example, victims of crime, abuse such as incest, a parents alcoholism, drug addiction of others, rape, victims of psychological pressures from cults they were brought up in. So not all problems you will meet in the counselling rooms are the result of the person's sin, they may be there because of another's sin. Whatever reason they are with you, there is a solution in god's Holy Word for them.

People are blessed by association with godly people but are cursed by association with the devils people, and these people need the washing of the water of the Word to heal their hurts. You will also have people who have faced a grief either by death or separation. Parents who have brought up their children well but watch them go into gross sin, people who have lost jobs, money, houses in fires, .etc.

We are emotional beings who have not only been created by God but also brought up, by parents. We are the result of what has happened to us, and the decisions we have made, as we face what has happened to us. When we become a believer we take our baggage (our old commuter programs in our minds)with us and this needs to be dealt with it. Growth in the Spirit is what will deal with most of this, but specific problems may be best dealt with directly by counselling, with the Bible Class to back it up.

MATURITY AS A COUNSELLER

Maturity counts with a counsellor not age. Turn to and read the following, 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13. Paul says not to react to the pastors admonishment. Bible teaching in its own way is counselling with the people being counselled sitting in the pew rather than the office. Note that they are to be esteemed highly in love. You should not do any counselling or preaching in a self righteous pious way; you too may need help one day.

Love demands that you go into detail. As you counsel a person you need to fine tune the plan, seeing how the persons obedience can become more and more responsive to the particular situations they face so that they deal Biblically with more and more. In that way a bad situation can become a good situation and a conclusion made to the problems.

Many people get into situations because they are victims of other people's sin. You need to be able to listen to people in an appropriate way so that they can give you a full account of their problem without feeling as if you are being nosy. You need to show them that you care enough for them that they can plumb the depth of their soul. Praying with them and for them is an important part of the job.

Those that you do not get a solution with are generally disobedient in some area, often one they will not discuss, or bring up.! Turn to and read the following, 2 Timothy 3:14,15. The answer is, identify the sin, remove the sin and replace it with righteousness.

You need to get the Scriptures to show its light on the problem. Disobedience to the word of God is at the centre of most counselling upsets.

Many people will come to you for help and when you offer them an answer from the Scriptures they will say no. Once you get them stabilised you get them into a discipleship programme. If you use systematic verse by verse Bible studies and messages it is going to save you a lot of counselling time. You will find that they have their problems solved in the pew rather than in the office.

In counselling, teaching and counselling come together. It is very important that the counsellor also leads a Bible study and spends as much time in the word as they do in counselling. If you constantly counsel you will get tired spiritually.

If you do not keep your Bible study up you will "go mad" (get burnt out and exhausted), or get depressed. Often you will find that the unbelieving counsellor has problems with his or her own marriage or children. Counselling is not the place to work out the counsellors problems; they must have their life right before they start!

You need to be a good listener to be a good counsellor. You have to ask the right questions in the right attitude both from a body language and tone of voice. It is necessary to tie them together. There are techniques in listening and speaking even if it is on the phone. You then have to advise them in a way that is fully integrated as well. Listen to constructive criticism from others as this covers everything that is important in inter personal relationships.

LECTURE 34 - COUNSELLING - APPROACHES AND RESOURCES

As Christian counsellors we must be discerning about the real nature of people and what their basic needs are. You have a different starting point as a Christian together with a different methodology. You have a different attitude to man than an unbeliever has. There are character flaws that the unbeliever does not recognise, and they do not have the relationship to God which the believer has through the spirit. The starting point is Systematic Theology, especially, the area called, Anthropology, the doctrine of man, his nature and needs.

While the Christian counsellor can learn a lot from secular psychologists the basic need in man of salvation is not considered by them, neither is the need of sanctification. There is a sin problem in man that needs to be solved with holy living. Man, when he is in conflict with God is going to be miserable. People have only real meaning in life if they understand what God has put them on the earth for. Man is not going to have real happiness unless he allows the creator have sovereignty over him. No secular psychologist can come to terms with this, and as this is the starting point, they won't have a great deal to teach you!

SIN IN THE LIFE

Turn to and read the following, John 2: 23-25 - Jesus did not commit himself to them because he knew what was in man; so must we! In the following chapter the Lord said to Nicodemus that he needed to be born again. Three times he repeats the principle. If you are dealing with an unsaved person you must have as the priority their salvation.

In Galatians 6 we have a very important concept of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Turn to and read the following, Galatians 6:1-10. You must not be judgmental regarding your fellow believer in convicting the person in front of you in regard to their sins.

You must have a real concern for their well being, which is Biblical love. You are not to convict of sin unless you are also committed to help them achieve in their life what God is wanting them to do. You should not rub their nose in their sins, your attitude should be to restore them as a separated brother or sister.

Over half of the marital problems that you will face are going to be caused by adultery. This is a serious sin but the way the Lord treated the woman caught in adultery and John 8 is the key here. Turn to and read the following, John 8 : 3 - 11. Having dealt with the pious self righteous characters who accused her, he dealt with the woman in loving concern. He understood the frailty of man and women but he did not excuse the sin.

He lifted the woman up and said that he was going to restore her but that she was to sin no more. The job of the counsellor is to restore the adulterer's relationship with his/her spouse if possible, but the priority is to restore them to their God so that they do not sin again. If you blast him when he comes through the door he will either stay and become a hypocrite or leave and continue sinning. Be clear of your objective! It is to restore them to the Lord, and stop them sinning!

Turn to and read the following, Jude 22-23 - You have to deal with the sin in your own life. If there is a sexual problem in your own life you could be tempted by the situation and fall, perhaps even with one of the partners who you are dealing with.

Of the many ministers who get into adultery many fall at this point. We need to have the correct motivation and have a holy hatred of the sin that the person is talking about so that you might be able without hypocrisy go and say, "sin no more". You are not perfect, they are not perfect but they and you can resist sin through the ministry of the Holy Spirit if you are believers.

APPROACHES TO COUNSELLING

What resources do we need and what questions do we ask. Planning for the future is an important feature of counselling. There are many approaches in the area of counselling, here are some of them:-

[a] - The analytical approach - they believe that your early life set up conflicts and that you can solve your problems today by talking through all the little things that have made you as you are. This is the concept behind rebirthing. Freud and Jung were initiators of this. They rejected the concept of sin and believed you could cope with everything. If religion has caused you problems hang loose and sort things out.

[b] - The interpersonal school - this group emphasises the environment and social factors. As a problem is set up so a problem can be solved. If you change your environment you can change your way of doing things and reacting with people.

[c] - Group therapy or reality therapy - this is one of the most powerful in the unsaved area. This stresses will and the purpose for living. This has great success with juvenile delinquents and is used a lot in drug counselling. In this you do not allow anyone to provide an excuse for their behaviour.

This is called the tough love approach and it can be pretty rough. They have peer pressure applied to them, and action is demanded. Like the NIKE adverts they say, "Just do it , no excuses".

[d] - Logo therapy - this says to forget about the past, reality is now, what are you going to do with the present. They say that it does not matter what your situation is you can change your attitude to it. They start with the question, "Why have you not successfully committed suicide up to this point?. Once they have worked out what does truly matter enough to the person to stop them killing themselves, they begin to rebuild life around it. You can use this technique in Christian counselling and have as your objective to bring the person to where they see what the Bible says, and have them live a certain way in the power of the Holy Spirit. We can do it. If we could not do it God would not have asked us to do it.

[e] - Transactional Analysis - this divides the person up into three aspects or power centres, parent, adult and child. This is the basis of the book, I'm OK you are OK. In this method, the adult is logical, the parent critical and the child emotional. They help a person spend more and more time working from their adult rather than from their child or parent. Rationalism is the basis for this approach, and you can use it but you must remember that the basis of it is that man is a rational being, and we are not always rational. Often there is a problem of sin and you are not able to think your way out of it.

[f] - Reflective or Rogerian Counselling - this is a listening technique where the counsellor listens and responds. The person being counselled will agree and amplify or disagree and clarify. It is a means of getting a full picture of the problem. You find out their problem and then find out where they want to go and get them there. Rogers had the concept that if you allowed a person to talk long enough then they would talk their way out of the problem. It has as its basis, rationalism, that man within himself has the solution to man's problems. It is sometimes effective, but limited because it is based on a false principle.

[g] - Behaviour Modification - this states that it does not matter about what you are thinking it is your behaviour which matters. This is again based on a false premise. Most people have habits which can be changed, but the heart must be changed, not just the behaviour.

The techniques they teach are helpful in assisting people to change difficult behaviours but there is more! A teacher who does not understand behaviour modification will eventually lose the children. Behaviour modification stresses the reinforcement of what is desirable. You guide the person to do something else and you praise them for that. Behaviour modification works well for young children, but have limits. People have reason and not just behaviour.

All of these methods fall short of the Christian counsellors approach even though there are good points which can be used in most of the techniques.

SEVEN SHORTCOMINGS WITH THE METHODS

There are seven areas where the methods fall short:-

[a] It lacks a standard for behaviour. It is only the Christian with the Bible who is able to give guidelines as to how a person should perform.

[b] They lack power as they do not have the Holy Spirit.

[c] They lack an analysis of the complete person as only the Bible allows you to incorporate all the methods.

[d] Only Christian counselling can deal with the past and the present.

[e] Only Christian counselling is grounded and motivated in love.

[f] Only Christian counselling can give universal counselling irrespective of race or background.

[g] Only counselling in accordance with God's Word can meet the problems of the whole person, the body, soul and spirit.

There was one other model that is the medical model, the model of mental "illness". No Christian should accept this as nobody catches a psychosis or schizophrenia in a similar way to you catching a cold.

There are psychiatric problems where the chemistry of the brain does not work and this needs specialist attention, but isn't an illness in the traditional understanding of illness.

Man's problems in the psychological sphere occur are in three areas:-

[a] - The person is born with a temperament nature. This is inherited and nothing is going to change it. Every child is different, they were different from the day that they were born. Each will have different areas where they have strengths/problems.

[b] - The Bible teaches that they have an upbringing and learned behaviours. Patterns of response are set up in the soul. You have a free will with which to make good or bad decisions.

[c] - There are weaknesses that you have inherited. You cannot change them but the question is whether you are going to control it or not.

Most of your reformers were angry in temperament which if combined with theology is a positive attribute. With a bad background, and bad choices in life however, you have combined with anger a bad person, your rapist, thug or murderer.

School has a very limited effect. Children learn more from the home than from school. You have a real problem if you have a person with a bad temperament, a bad upbringing and who has made a lot of very poor decisions. This sort of person is written off by the world but we do have an answer for them; the transforming power of God. The Old Sin Nature is part of the temperament but able to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

We need to put off the old habits and put on the new. In Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5 we have items on counselling.

RESOURCES

Resources - where do you begin? Problems are not solved in an hour. If you take 15 years to get into a situation you cannot get out of it in a day. You may have just had your seventh child and have just lost control. Many people do not want to face their problems until such time as it has become so large that they cannot cope with them.

[a] A mature spiritual life is essential. Spiritual growth is going to be a big part of every action plan you develop, and in place for yourself.

[b] You have to have good resources and have them well indexed. You need to be able to get into the Bible Topic Books, good notes. You need to have doctrinal resources to turn to.

[c] You need to have good prayer warrior support.

[d] You need adequate rest. You need to be sharp and clear in your mind if you counsel. If you try and do too much you will crack.

[e] Have a nice light airy office painted in light pastel colours. There are certain colours which relax and certain angry colours. Avoid bright red, yellow and orange.

Counsel in your own office on your own terms. Get two comfortable chairs. Have the table between you and them with your books behind you. You need to have male and female counsellors trained and available. Always have others around (in the building), in case the person claims you did something wrong during the session. Keep yourself safe.

If you have a photocopier and computer system ensure they are treated with good security. It is important to timetable your time so that you work under your conditions rather than theirs, or you will be exhausted.

[f] You need to have good reading matter and access to a Christian doctor or psychiatrist who the people can be referred to if you are unable to help them. You need to get good Biblical backgrounds and be able to use them.

Within the church you have every type of personality some with bad background and many who have made very bad decisions. A Christian who is sinning is violating what they know is wrong and it will rip them apart.

LECTURE 35 - COUNSELLING

Turn to and read the following, Mark 6:33 - the starting point in counselling must commence with your own spiritual state and attitude. You must be spiritually pure, discerning and compassionate before you begin.

Between clients you need to have at least five minutes of reflection. It is therefore important to timetable counselling; people just are not allowed to turn up and be seen. They can turn up, but only to make an appointment.

You have to realise that most of the people who are coming to you for counselling will not be living as the Lord would wish them to live as Christians. They are sheep who have refused to follow a shepherd and therefore you need to love them as Christ loved them, but be careful. As part of your preparation for counselling you need to pray that you will have a Christlike attitude towards the poor and needy.

In the first session you are gathering background knowledge and thinking about it. Spiritual First aid will be part of this first session. This background knowledge is the background to counselling and you have to get background knowledge to administer first aid. You have to get facts not just impressions.

You need to start as you intend to go on, being friendly, concerned but business like. You need to be dressed in a suitable manner for the culture and people you are with; sloppy clothes and counselling do not really mix. You must have a professional approach and appearance.

The rooms must be tidy clean and comfortable. You need to spend some money on yourself, if necessary before you start. You need to recomb your hair. You need to think about the impression you make as neat tidy and sharp. You will find those who run a sloppy counselling practise have a low level of success.

COMMENCING A MEETING

When the person arrives get the person to sit down. It is important that you sit down behind your desk, or table. Do not allow small talk to enter into the dialogue. If it occurs you should head it off at the start. You introduce yourself and start the first question straight away. You confirm their name and check contact details; you then explain to them how you run the counselling session.

You must alleviate anxiety as many people come to counselling and they do not know what is going to happen to them. You should say some thing positive about working together and solving their problems as a team. You should point out that there is no problem that cannot be solved and tell them that in a couple of sessions that we will know how long until they will be well on top of their situation.

If you follow God's word you will solve any problem that you may have as long as they are willing to solve the problem. If they do not have the will to solve it they will not solve anything. You should have one to two sessions a week initially, and after adequate sessions they should have the peace and joy that we are all supposed to have. You can be positive to the murderer, rapist, thief, the bankrupt. You tell them that, "if you commit yourself to this you will get to the spiritual place you seek".

You point out to them that life is too short to be miserable and that in many ways it is up to them to make this a success.

The first question to ask is, "What led you to the point where you decided to see me? Then, once that is clear, What is your living situation? What has led to the present situation? What did you do, not do, what have you done? What is concerning you? At the first session you will be able to get some of the background to the case. Most people open up slowly. You must write notes on what you are finding out. Let them see you writing notes. Use your questions to reflect their answers back to them for further clarification. Is this the whole situation or anyone else involved. What did you do then, what was your response? etc.

People's problems are the result of the responses people have to circumstances not the circumstances themselves. Often the problem is the case of a faulty response to a problem.

MARRIAGE

What you may have is two young people coming together. They have and take the opportunity to have a sexual relationship, the girl gets pregnant, the man resents it. Someone suggests that they get married which they do but they both resent it. Five years down the track you have a real problem on your hands. They have made a number of bad decisions having made a poor choice at the beginning. There is an absolute necessity to be celibate prior to marriage. What happened before marriage in that regard causes problems in marriage.

You have to go back to the original bad decision and show that sin was the basis of this. Each person has to recognise what they have done. You have to deal with the sin involved by confession, repentance and then deal with the emotions involved because of that. You work out a pattern of new behaviour and work towards that.

It is important that people hold themselves responsible for what they have done. You need to ask, why did that not work. What effect does that have on you? What could have been done then? What can be done now? What is really troubling you at the moment about this?

People may say that they are arguing about money. A counsellor who is not doing his job properly will then set up a financial management system for the people and not get to the basic problem area. Money is often the "presenting problem", but behind it is another deeper and more significant problem.

You need to get rid of the sins which have caused the tensions in the marriage. The fact that they have had to get married has caused anger, frustration and bitterness. Explore with them different ways so that they can react or respond. Most of the problems are what I call, "onion problems"; they have many layers. Once you get the skin off there are additional problems. You need to keep on peeling the skins back until you come to the heart of the matter.

You ask them what they think they can do, what they believe they should do before the Lord. You confess your sin before the Lord and do it one at a time. What you want to hear them say is, Lord help me work my way through this. You ask questions and seek responses for half an hour or forty minutes and then sum up. You make a time for the next session which should be within the week. You should give the people something to do. Firstly they can confess their sin and assure them that we are all responsible for our own sins.

Quite often you will find that in the last ten minutes of the first session they will start blurting out material that should have been brought out earlier, but you must be strict with keeping to time. If you are counselling someone for two or three hours you are wasting their time. You will have too much material to deal with. The person will feel better but no problem will have been solved. From the patterns that they disclose, you will find areas where they can be helped.

If they have commitment they will be back, if not they will opt out and be a walking disaster but you should not fret. In Christian counselling you are emphasising Christlike behaviour. Even if you have the most Christlike manner over 50% of people will not respond. What they want is someone on whose shoulder to cry on and go back and sin again. At the end you write a prescription for them, whether they will hear or not. Turn to and read the following, Ezekiel 2:3-7.

Note down what their attitude to siblings is, if they are angry, depressed, or other data should be noted down. In the early sessions you need to build up the big picture of what their life has been like and if relevant, what their sin pattern has become. If they are unkempt and sloppy they have a poor image of themselves; find out why. Is it because of what others have done to them, or the bad decisions they have made, or a combination.

SUPPORT

What support do they have from their family or community? Mobilise whatever support there is for them, to ensure they are kept safe through the counselling process. The key motto in counselling is "ACTIVE NOT PASSIVE"; keep the person active in all ways rather than have them passive, doing nothing. This means active in all spheres of life; physically get them walking every day, eating good food, mentally keep them active by reading or hearing tapes, spiritually keep them active with feeding on God's word and in doing anything they can around the church by way of active support tasks (even cleaning).

You need to check them out mentally also, just to be sure they do not have an obvious mental retardation or other problem. Can they remember the events of the last few days. Is there a mental problem with how they see the world; anything "weird" in their way of describing things may need a doctor's advice to clarify they are alright.

Can they add up all right. Can they recall an eight digit number? Make sure also, that you have not got a schizophrenic on your hands; are they related to space and time, do not hear voices, do not hallucinate or see things. If they do, they very likely have an organic mental problem, and a doctor/medication is needed. Are they obsessive with their topics such as money and sex. Are they anxious, sleepy. Have there been any suicide attempts. Is there any meaning in their life? If they are a suicide risk, ensure they are supported through the first days and weeks of counselling by someone in their community.

LECTURE 36 - COUNSELLING

With counselling you need to make sure that as people walk out, at the end of a counselling session they have something to do; remember the motto, "Active Not Passive". The evening after the counselling session will probably be the hardest time so they will need to have something to cling to by way of a promise, or promises (written down for them) from God's Word also.

You need to ask the same questions many times, for example, as to how they feel about their parents, their siblings, their spouse, their children. Some of the problems can go back right to their birth circumstances. The purpose in asking is to uncover any, "root of bitterness" that needs to be dealt with. These are what I call, "log jams in the soul"; they hinder peoples spiritual life due to the deep resentment they feel within.

Sometimes you can only deal with these things by the prayer of forgiveness (both for those who may have wronged them and for their own bitterness). Remember Job. He was healed and restored after he prayed for his friends, and they had wronged him badly by their "advice". Turn to and read the following, Job 42:1-10.

Often when people have had bad experiences in their childhood it will show in their problems in later life. They need to be able to forgive their parents, or at least pass their judgement over to the Lord, and leave their bitterness, anger, outrage and sadness with God to heal them as he judges the offenders. You may even have to take them to the grave and ask the Lord to forgive them for the hatred that they feel for these people.

Pray for judgement upon the abusers, knowing that the Lord is just and righteous and they will be dealt with by God even if they have escaped the courts of man. Sexual abuse is an important area where this is important, but other areas of abuse such as psychological and physical, verbal abuse also put a lot of pressure on people. Beware of an error here.

Many Christian counsellors stress that the victim must forgive their abuser. While forgiveness is Biblical, so is judgement of those who practise evil. Abuse is such a great evil, as it violates all the divine institutions, free will, marriage, and the family, and those who practise this evil will, unless saved, surely spend eternity in Hell. Turn to and read the following, Matthew 18:21-35.

Note that Peter's question on forgiveness is in a context where judgement is also mentioned. It is legitimate to pray for judgement upon the evil, as we see the saints in heaven doing this. Turn to and read the following, Revelation 6:9-11. Do not rush people to demand that they forgive their enemies; righteousness, justice, and judgement may need to be addressed first, and these demands are legitimate.

They need to be asked about their job as to whether they feel it as a haven or a place of threat. Are they socially active in their life. What do they think of the people they are involved with, and do these circles need to be expanded so that they have better and more positive support groups to call upon. Has there been a death in the family recently, the grief of which may have sapped their coping power. Any problems with the law, that may also be factors in their responses. Then ask, "has your faith helped you at these times?"

Another way to help people visualise their problems is draw a person weighed down by a heavy load, and then lots of space above the load for them to identify "the loads that I am carrying". Which areas are affecting them as problems. Think about unforgiven sins and worries/anxieties that are bearing down on them.

If the person is suicidal we need to see if there is someone out there who is able to support them. As a counsellor you cannot say to them to ring you at any time day or night. Work out who their closest friend or family is and set someone else up as a support. Your job, remember, is not to replace their support network, but to expand it. Always check whether they need salvation or not.

Ninety nine per cent of people will have to deal with sin. This is always the starting point. A person may defeat bad habits by replacing them with good habits, whether they are saved or not, but we want them to have the Holy Spirit's power to assist. If they are worried about something write it down bring it to the Lord, deal with it and then screw the paper up and put it in the bin. Teach them, that if they find themselves worrying again, to repeat the procedure. Pray about your worries.

DEALING WITH LUST

If they have lust for someone, they must recognise it, name it and identify their Old Sin Nature weakness, and replace it with the love of the Lord on the Cross for that person, firmly in mind, so that the love of Christ is more important than the lust you have. Picture their soul in heaven rather than their body, and then act towards them as a sister or brother.

You will then see how inappropriate your lust is and how important the love of Christ is and let the love of Christ be seen in you towards that person. Putting off the old and putting on the new will not happen overnight, it is a daily demand. Turn to and read the following, Ephesians 4:17-32. Christian counselling is helping people to apply these verses in their daily life, to replace the old evil way of living by the new godly way of living.

What are the sin chains in their life, the chain of sin that has led them to where they are. Most people who come to you will be "chain sinners"; like a chain smoker they will light one sin on the one before it.

The sequence could be anger - violence - regret - frustration - anger. They light one sin off the other. Many violent young people have a habit of hatred. Eventually you have to work out what the chains of sin are in a persons life. The sin is related to other sins.

The overt (presenting) problem may not be the main problem. Their life pattern needs to change. Their state has taken a number of years to mature, and it will take many weeks and months to replace. Someone has worked out that it takes 29 days to change a basic habit.

Adams may not go far enough back in his approach. What I am challenging you to think about is a form of "reality therapy" in a Christian mode. Facing the chain of events and sins that have led to the present evil life pattern that has brought the person to you. Being thorough means having them see all that has led to the present, from Adam's sin and their inherited Old Sin Nature, through their upbringing, top their decisions as adults.

Most problems are complex. It requires the growth of new good habits to steadily replace the old way of life; for some who have been addicted to drugs and alcohol it takes two years or more before they even feel "safe" in public. Encourage them to keep a "Transformation Diary" through their counselling time to record all the daily battles, losses, lessons from them, victories, and verses that have helped them on their way. Such a diary becomes a source of great comfort and encouragement for them in later years.

Seek out a real "meaning for living" that is relevant for the client. Note down helpful verses. Give them one or two verses at a time to add to their diary. What you are doing is giving them first aid. Give them 1 Peter 5:7 and help them to do it. When they start to come out of their problem make the Bible studies and verses more systematic, and get them into the systematic Bible teaching of the local church.

Have them describe themselves. We can call this, "me warts and all". For each area of life(physical health, mental, spiritual, family, social, cultural, creative, marital, etc), have them complete this sentence many times. "I am a person who . . . (Use verbs like, loves, likes, enjoys, hates, has experienced, has survived, am interested in, etc). This can be given as homework, and by the third or fourth session you can be focussing on working together with these things they have identified about themselves, strengthening the good and replacing the bad.

Have them develop a behaviour inventory. Ask them to record all the following. What makes you annoyed, what makes you feel frustrated, what do I want to change about my behaviour, what do I want to do more of? Tell them, "do not minimise, be honest".

Then have them ask, what is going wrong?. On Monday morning write down anything that gives you fear or anxiety. You give them a ring binder (or they use their diary) and ask them to bring it along to the counselling sessions, so that they can record their thoughts and fears. They keep their homework and notes in it. They are working on themselves and now are looking on their problem as "a thing", and so it becomes a thing to be dealt with rather than themselves.

They can note down what triggered these worries. Look at fear this week, anxiety, the next, then move to other issues that concern them, taking a week for each. Ask them, what makes you fearful this week? What makes you fearful, note it down. By the end of the week they may be starting sorting their problems out by themselves as they see the issues in black and white on the page of their diary.

There are certain things that the Lord wants you to deal with and put out of the way. By dealing with these things you will help them to deal with items which the Lord wants eliminated so that He can bless them rather than live in a soured condition. Ephesians 4.

If you are dealing with a person who has not got much self confidence you deal with a minor thing to start off with, each victory they have builds their confidence. If however the person is motivated you tackle a core area. You may discuss strategies as to how to defuse problems by taking factors out of the scenario, and getting them into real problem solving thinking. This puts them in charge of their own life, which is what we want to achieve.

BTB - Doubt, Attitude, Motivation, Guidance : The Will of God

Through the BTB topics identify what is sensible Christian decision making. You can either do the right or wrong thing in each and every decision you have to make; the challenge is to make more and more good decisions, and fewer and fewer bad ones. You may not be able to change your circumstances but you can change your response to them. You are able to analyse each challenging situation and decide how to deal with it in an appropriate way. You tell them that if they want to remain miserable just continue what they are doing. To escape the self destructive circle requires work and application. By changing your routine it may be possible to avoid a conflict.

Many marriages are battles, and this is why the person is sitting before you. You have to have a strategy if you want to make your enemy your friend. The concept is that if they continue along the old path it will continue to be bad but if they modify their action it will be better.

Get them to list habits to put off, and the habits to put on, and develop a strategy to achieve their goals. Develop a, "goals to be achieved", and a goal achieving sheet. Have a strategy which you are following as a counsellor, with each person to assist them to achieve the goals they and you see are the key Biblical ones.

You and they need to deal with the sins that so easily beset them, and not just function from one sin to another. You need to eliminate the sin pattern from life. You should not clear up a problem and then allow the person (or yourself) to use his energies in pursuit of other sin patterns. The critical thing is that a person does not go to hell.

This is solving of the root of all sin. It is dealing with the whole pattern of sinfulness in their life, by replacing the power of the OSN with the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Remember though, "five minute wonders", do not exist there are often major problems. Do not expect quick solutions and be suspicious of those who claim to have dealt with all their problems too quickly; often their hypocrisy is covering greater evil!

Add to the diary concept with your own notes; develop your own handouts to use with clients as you are taught more by the Holy Spirit and experience. Make sure that Romans 12:1-2 is the basis of your work. What we are looking for is the renewing of the mind. They and we need to be constantly becoming a new creatures. Many people have been warped for a long time and do not have problems that have been there for a short time. We have to pray about all the sins and bare them all to the Lord, and let the spirit minister upon every area of our life.

Counselling is an area where you need to be sharper spiritually than any other area of you Christian life. Walk humbly with your God, be very thoughtful and use the assets which God has given you.

REFER TO BTB - DOUBT, ATTITUDE, MOTIVATION, GUIDANCE, THE WILL OF GOD

LECTURE 37 - PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

Turn to and read the following; the words of Paul in Romans 7:14-24 Here he expresses the cry of a person who having looked into the problems now knows what to do, but finds it hard to achieve. This is a common feature of people that have been counselled that they know what to do but ask the equivalent of who is going to deliver them from this body of death. This is a passage where you can take people, when they are finding life difficult when they are trying to change, but their OSN is so very strong.

BREAKING OF HABITS

We are, by old nature, what we were born, we have a temperament and what were brought up to do, believe and be has had a deep impact. We are each unique. We get into different habits, we make different decisions, and these modify that basic inherited nature further. You are trying to show them the way out of the dark woods of sin, to teach them Godly patterns to help them learn good habits. This takes time.

If you fail you need to get up and get on with things. Turn to and read the following, Philipians 3:13-17. The most successful mission to the down and outs in America was founded and run by an alcoholic who fell from time to time, and each time he fell back and drank he went to the minister who supported him and offered his resignation, and each time the minister would not accept it. Rather he encouraged him and prayed with him and that man recovered fully from his alcoholism, but it took time, and while he did recover he helped hundreds and thousands of others.

You need to encourage people to change, and not expect total transformations overnight. The message from the "Gateway Mission" is also one we need to remember, the Lord was still able to use the man even though he fell at times, for each time he fell he got back up, confessed his sin and got back into the work. Turn to and read the following, Romans 7:7-25. Note that Paul was battling with sin, and occasionally losing the battle, even as he wrote Romans! He didn't stop writing and wait until he had total victory, neither must we, for that will only happen when we see him face to face! Do not expect total change to happen overnight. The work of God takes time but he will, by the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit transform us. Do not expect a solution overnight to serious problems, if a person claims they have had such be careful, it may be a phoney .

The person being counselled must realise that they have a problem with their old sin nature and that there is a battle in the soul which needs to be won each hour of the day. It is a life long battle and will not be over in weeks!

THREE PHASED PLAN

Remember the three phased plan we discussed above.

PHASE 1

Phase 1 -Analysis - you have to analyse the problems you have so that you can discover problem patterns. This allows you to find out where the people are going to have problems making the changes required. You may well find that the problems they have occur in a cyclical pattern occurring at certain times of the day or week. You can then, in your planning, concentrate on those periods when they have difficulty and develop a plan to avoid temptations and replace bad options with good ones.

If you can find out the problems you can then create a problem hit list as we have seen. You work out the problems that the person is having in his life and make up a hit list of things that need attention in the best order to get results. Once it is on paper they will feel better.

Counselling programmes often only get people to feel better about things but remember, that our job is to get to the root cause and solve it completely. People with problems feel bad about things, and about themselves. They have sufficient motivation to come and see you but not enough power to sort out their problem; so we must address both the subjects to be faced and the power problem for them.

The starting point of getting them right is to sort out their relationship with God but you may also have to build them up emotionally about the possibility of a solution. By using the time of day method you are able to show that their problem is time orientated and that if that time period is concentrated on there is the start of a solution to their problems.

This is followed up by numbering the problems. Most times they do not get above five. They do not look as bad when written down, pull it out of your soul and put it on paper. You need to be objective. This will work with all types of personalities. Having done this you ask what they can do about it.

PHASE 2

In Phase 2 we address the need for an action plan, identifying that we have actions to be taken. It is very important to write down the situation, your assets and from this a solution is often forthcoming. When it is all written down you work out what plan is going to defeat the enemy. Where are we going. What is the solution to the problem. What is hindering us getting there. What are the things that hinder this solution.

We then tackle the problems. Often when we get into circumstances or problems we often will react to it by rote, by a habit which results in disaster. This is an area where only a Biblical approach will work where only the power of the Holy Spirit will solve the problem.

PHASE 3

Phase 3 is planning for the future. When Peter fell, denying the Lord three times, what was his problem. He was in the high priests house in his own strength. He lacked the power in that situation, in fact he was in the wrong place. For John that place was not a temptation, but for Peter it was. For many you will see this is an issue for them. They go to places that others are alright in, but for them they fall into sin there.

There are areas for us all where we are out of our depth and we lack power; counselling involves identifying these places, removing the power problem, and having a daily life plan that helps us avoid known temptations that are beyond us at this point. The Scriptures lay out goals for Christians so it is clear where Christians should be. Most people want to feel as if they have done something meaningful with their life, and that is our goal.

Turn to and read the following, Hebrews 12:12, 13. This text says, make straight paths for your feet. It also tells us of sins that trip us up. Most of us if we go into certain areas will be tempted to sin. If we avoid those locations we will probably not be tempted to sin. The best tactic is to avoid that situation. We need to avoid places where we often sin, until we see what is happening and have the inner power to resist successfully.

In Colossians 3:8-17, Paul tells us to put off the Old Man (the power of the OSN) and put on the New Man(the spiritual life we should live in the power of the Holy Spirit). In Romans 12 : 1, 2, we are told to be renewed in our minds. "Stop drifting and start thinking"; this is the encouragement of counselling. Christian Counselling - Adams.

HEBREWS 11:24-27 - CHRISTIAN LIVING

Turn to and read the following, Hebrews 11:24-27 - here we see what is meant by sensible Christian living. There is every principle for Christian decision making here. What did Moses do? - firstly he made a refusal he refused to follow sin. Many people get into trouble because they reject one thing but do not replace it with something else. Often you will find a person is "cured" of a sin only to replace it with something far worse a few weeks later. Jesus told a story about a man being swept clean of demons only to be re-possessed a few days later because he had not filled the vacuum the departing demons had left with something good. Turn to and read the following, Matthew 12: 43- 45.

We need to encourage people to replace their sins with habits of righteousness. - Philippians 3 and 4. Fill your mind with good. If you do not fill your mind with good it will fill up with all the evil things of the world. You must do both things. Moses rejected the evil and chose the good even though in the short term it meant pain.

In counselling you are always going to be asking someone to do something hard. The benefit of the hard thing is that it will be of benefit over time. They will find benefit, but you need to encourage them through the difficult time initially.

A WIFE WITH A BAD HUSBAND

If you have a wife with a bad husband. God's Word says that marriage is to last. Often you have the unbelieving husband and Christian wife. If she was a Christian when she married the unbeliever she is getting discipline from the Lord.

Once they have committed a sin by marrying you do not ever encourage them to commit another by divorcing, unless there is danger to either party from the behaviour of the other.

In this case you work in 1 Peter 3 and 1 Corinthians 7. The latter passage has a safety clause which if a person turns violent the other is allowed to leave. She is allowed to leave but not divorce. Separated she prays for him that he might be transformed and that they may get back together again. You are asking the wife to take the hard road for a short while for the long term benefit. The only Biblical reason for divorce is adultery.

In this type of case you need to encourage the wife that they are to look to Christ for their reward rather than the husband for encouragement. You cannot change him, stop nagging. Show him by your behaviour that the Lord has rendered a change in your life. This is a hard road and you will get a benefit. Love can be rekindled by the Holy Spirit. Claim 1 Peter 5:7.

See your husband in hell and pray for his salvation. You are not only telling them to get rid of the bad but also to accept the good. In a marriage the wife is meant to get a lot of strength from her man. If she is not getting this strength from the man, she is to get it from God. 1 Peter 3 shows that the wife is not to preach to her husband but in her life to show the love of the Lord. If they do this they will have success. If you do what the Bible says you will have blessing. As they feel better about the situation they are encouraged to continue. People need to be obedient to the Scriptures.

This is not a quick exercise especially if they have been worn down by neglect. The longer people have been in sin the longer it will take you to get back. The church is meant to be a network of support for such people. The importance of small home groups meeting to pray for each other and encourage each other, cannot be over emphasised. You cannot achieve this by meeting as a church just once a week.

LECTURE 38 - SETTING GOALS AND PLANNING.

INTRODUCTION

Turn to and read the following, Ephesians 5 : 15 - 20, Colossians 4 : 5, 6. Time is a precious commodity, used up every day and gone. None of us know how long the Lord has set for our time upon earth, and we must have an attitude towards our days here that ensure we make the most of them. In counselling, many people you will meet are wasting their lives, the days and hours slip by because of their depression and passivity. Turning this around is a major job in the counselling process.

TELEVISION AND INTERNET

Television and the Internet, are major factors in time loss in the 21st century; they are very dangerous mediums as they entertain eyes, ears and the whole person is involved, and the hours available for the lord's work slip by. Television is a very important factor in suburban neurosis in western cities.

TV companies will program certain channels and times for so called, "soap operas", or violent or sexually provocative programs that encourage people to escape from reality rather than confront their problems. With TV, the Internet, and rental videos people are being encouraged to escape from reality.

We have nations of tranquillised people, who can then go to their doctors to get pills to tranquillise themselves further. A lot of children are being converted into violent or sexual perverts today due to this. The only way to improve the situation is by spiritual revival, as this modern trend is part of a serious attack by Satan on the institution of free will.

There is nothing intrinsically evil about TV, the Internet, or videos, and as believers we use them all. However the use of them to hide from the reality of life, death and judgement is a serious spiritual issue, as unbelievers ignore the realities of spiritual life and spend their days in fantasy.

Our role is to waken them to reality. Christians themselves often lack discernment here. We should think on the good things and not fill our mind with nonsense, yet many believers will spend hours in escapist activity and minutes in Bible Study.

We must teach all who come for counsel certain principles; the first is, if you are going to get real contentment in the Lord you have to tackle things. If you have a life altering problem it destroys your joy in the Lord and it slows you down

spiritually. You cannot really live as you should do with these problems inside you. If they have financial stress adding to other stresses the picture becomes compounded.

You need to train your deacons and deaconesses in counselling. You should in a medium size church have 3 or 4 deacons and deaconesses who are retired and are willing to counsel, they should set aside time to the task. They should have counselling rooms and spend two days a week on duty being available for anyone who may need counselling. - 1 Timothy 5

There is always the difficulty of whether to charge or not to charge for the counselling service. It is better to charge for the service and if people cannot afford it have a stamp "paid by grace" which you can cancel the debt. We need to distinguish between pastoral care and counselling; pastoral care is never charged for, but once a person says, "I need counselling", they should be prepared to take responsibility for paying for the help they receive, as they have created the problems. Experience shows that if people get counselling for nothing they do not appreciate it, and are unlikely to take it seriously enough.

GOAL SETTING

Goals to be achieved. When you get them through their problems and the client thinks that they are just about there you need to work with them to jointly set a new aim(s) for their life. You should encourage them to come to the Bible class so that they can consolidate things. You take them through problem solving techniques and help them set a new target for their life.

This principle of goal setting applies to all areas of work. If you aim at nothing you will succeed every time! If you are leading a team you need to set your immediate goals for the week (goals that are Biblical and bone fide) and all pray about them being achieved. At the end of the week the group ought to be brought together to see whether the goals have been achieved or not.

There can be then a time of praise for those things that have been achieved and reconsideration of those which have not. Why do Christians lack motivation? It is often because they are not led properly, or taught about their responsibility. You encourage them to start to set the goals and review them regularly. You help them through the week to achieve the goals that have been set.

Turn to and read the following, Matthew 25:13-30. Note the point of the Lord's parable. There is time to serve, there are talents given by the Holy Spirit for us to serve, and there is a point of accountability where we are judged for what we have achieved.

Our challenge in ministry is getting people to set Biblically sound, physical health, intellectual/professional and spiritual goals, helping them to reach the goals step by step and at the end you are praising God with them as they meet them. They are getting to depend on God not on you in the process. Most clients rely on their counsellor initially for this but your role as a counsellor is to help them to refocus on Christ, and the Holy Spirit for their strength. Helping people to become strong in the grace and knowledge of Christ is our aim! This applies to all counselees, but also to all members in the church, and especially to the church officers.

You conduct training in this with the deacons and deaconesses on a Monday morning at the weekly prayer breakfast. You have your immediate goals this week, medium type goals next month and ultimately you should aim at your long term goals for the church.

By concentrating on each item you will eventually get to the target. It is by achieving the small goals that we achieve the large goals. If you want to go to university for instance you may not have your pre-qualifications so you set goals with the ultimate aim to obtain the degree you want to have. The short term goal may be to start night school next week. By achieving success at the first goal this encourages you to go on and achieve the next and so on.

All problems can be solved one step at a time; it is tenacity that is required, to stick to the job for the long run. Every race is a matter of a number of steps, and every step must be taken to win the race.

Turn to and read the following, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. These words are a challenge and encouragement to us! Paul keeps himself fit and healthy, mentally active and spiritually focused so that he can do the work of an evangelist, so ought we. This is the motivation we seek from the pastoral team, and for the counselled!

We have looked at the case of those who are lazy or depressed, and the need to get them away from their escapism, and into life serving the Lord, but what of those who are so "driven" that they are in danger of destroying themselves at the other extreme?

PACING YOURSELF

There are a number of cases where the people throw themselves so vigorously into work that they burn themselves out in a year or two. Rather than working 20 hours a day for two years god's plan is that we work ten hours a day for 20+ years. We should model ourselves on Wesley who preached for 50 years rather than someone who is burnt out in 2-3 years.

There are exceptions, and one such was the famous missionary, David Brainerd, who ministered the gospel to the Red Indians in the 1770s. He found that he was dying of tuberculosis and so decided to keep doing the work, and went from camp to camp preaching, collapsing and staggering on to the next location. He lasted four years doing this and died, but had a great harvest of souls. He was dying anyway and decided to "go out with a bang rather than a whimper"; that is a Biblical concept. Wesley and the like took life steadily and this tends to be the best model for obedience to God's Word. Keeping oneself physically, mentally and spiritually fit is the goal for the obedient believer.

The Christian life is a step by step long term run; it is not a short sprint. In a long distance run you have to monitor your body. We need to tackle every problem systematically, teach systematically, preach systematically, work systematically. There is no prize for taking things on with great zeal, with little thought, for there will be little results. All the great revivalists were planned thinkers and careful prayers as well as being zealous.

You could develop a weekly goal achiever sheet. We are to encourage counselees and staff to meet the little goals so that eventually the big things can be met so that the big problems can be solved, and the life time goals reached. David with his five stones did not take Goliath and his fellow four giants on at one time but was prepared to sort them out one giant at the time. He succeeded with help of the Lord and God honoured his planning and courage. Both are required.

From an exercise book you can set goals and tick them off as they are achieved. The first daily goal should be to exercise physically, and eat well, so that you have health and fitness. In the ancient world people did a lot of walking or spent a lot of time on horseback. You cannot recharge your batteries physically while you are driving, you must make time to exercise, and decide to eat well. Driving can be a time for spiritual recharge, if you use Bible study tapes as you drive.

A further area to explore with the counselled, is for them to have, what has been called, a dream sheet. Ask them, "what have you always dreamed of achieving?" What is your mission?. There is your life time goal, write it down. If you are called to be a missionary you will have a number of things happen along the way, you need to train, there needs to be a local church which sends you out, there needs to be supporters. There are a lot of steps between now and fulfilment, but get them to start planning to achieve the goal. In the Lord's service you are not serving Him when you get to the last goal you are serving Him all the way along, every step is to be prayed over, praised for, and rejoiced over once achieved. Often it is the steps on the way that are more important than the final goal. The benefits you will receive will, be temporal and eternal.

You should plan your life in a diary. If you are a family man you should allow time for your children and your spouse. This will prevent you from being double booked. Be planned, active and be yourself. Do not try to be an imitation of someone else. Act as an ambassador for Christ. Be consistent, caring, professional and moderate in your eating and regular in your exercise.

Make sure you encourage the positive things and be looking for good things in your children, live and think in the wholesome, reject the negative. You have to remember over 50% of those you counsel will not go the full distance, so don't be discouraged, just ensure they have no excuses that rest with your shoddy work with them.

Read *Shepherding God's Flock* - part 2 chapters 1-6. The book, from the Minirth Meier Clinic, "Happiness is a Choice", is also very good for depression.

LECTURE 39 - COUNSELLING SPECIAL AREAS - MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

INTRODUCTION

The areas of marriage, family problems and divorce take up a lot of counselling time.

SGFA - PART 2 - Adams in his book covers this subject quite well, and he stresses that there is quite a lot of counselling regarding sexuality, preparing for marriage that should be part of pastoral ministry. There are plenty of opportunities for Biblical counselling to be given in this area, and it is appropriate for only believers have a high view of marriage and morality today.

You can avoid a lot of problems by teaching, encouraging and guiding before marriages reach crisis point. It is critical to your ministry that you are able to talk about these things. You need to be able to talk about these things bluntly, without embarrassment. It will help if you are an older person who is married and have had you own children.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

People without children really do not have a real concept of what having children is like. Similarly being married is quite different from perhaps the single person's view of being married. If the pastor is unmarried, or newly married it is best for him to use an older deacon/elder or deaconess for counselling in this area until he has at least ten years experience in the field personally!

The best way to prepare your people for seeing problems as opportunities for growth, rather than negatives, is to institute a verse by verse teaching programme of the Bible with not less than 4 sessions a week. In this way the solutions to problems will be seen from God's Word systematically. All the problems we have, they had in the ancient world. Do not wait until the time when you have to see 15 people a day an hour a day to solve their problems. Systematic Teaching is preventative medicine.

Ninety percent of marriages experience problems from time to time. If you believe that marriages are generally happy you are deluded, naive or have led a very sheltered life. Many marriages have problems in the sexual area, the financial area, the family area. The question is not whether there are problems but whether the problems are being solved. Are they going to seek the Biblical solutions and get stronger because of that or are they going to break up and give great heart ache.

A Christian psychologist and Denver State University has been studying marriage since the early 1970s, and they have been following up couples since that time with questionnaires to see how their marriages are doing. They have identified the five key predictors of divorce, and these seem to be constant across cultures and races. They are patterns of behaviour that are destructive of marriages, and if a marriage is to survive they must be solved. These issues will be the major focus of marital counselling, as you work to break them down with the couple and build positive patterns to replace the negative.

They are:

1. Communication breakdown, where the couple stop talking about what matters; one may withdraw, the other may nag, but both stop telling each other what is important to them. This is the number one target for helping troubled marriages; just getting them talking about what matters to them, hearing each other, is going to help.
2. Close down of openness, where they share less of themselves. Sexually, and socially they drift apart.
3. Criticism. A pattern emerged where one person becomes the critic and the other feels constantly criticised.
4. Contempt. This is the nasty next step to criticism, and if it is taken by one person the marriage is in very bad shape.
6. Conflict that gets no-where. Note, that it is not conflict that is the problem, but conflict that gets no-where. If there is conflict but the couple will face it, there is hope.

You must uphold the Biblical view of marriage, in that it is designed to be, for ever. It is ordered by God, as such for the stability of society. It is ordained so as to bring up children in a stable two parent family. One parent families are not ordained; they are the result of either tragedy, or sin. It is God's will that children have a mother and a father and that they can be seen caring for each other so that the children grow up learning about love and respect for the opposite sex.

Many problems occur because children see parents not loving one another. If you are yelling and screaming and walking out on your partner that behaviour will be learnt from you. You must work as a team. This is where the Christian church should be an example. Everybody suffers various problems, disability to a certain extent, sickness, pressure, none of us are immune from it, but all of us, in Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit can and must face the problems and solve them.

SEXUALITY AND MARRIAGE

You need to talk about sexuality within a Biblical context, but many are fearful of talking about that subject outside the home. It is clear from the Bible that the home is not to be the end of sex education. If you leave sex education to the parents alone, you are being disobedient to the Lord, for the Bible teaches a great deal about sex, and it must be taught, just like every other topic in the Bible.

Many Christians have problems with sexuality. The Christian often has more problems with sex than they should, as they have been brought up in a place where it was never mentioned. It is therefore important that in the Bible Class you teach this topic from the Bible. If you do not you will find young people experimenting. You have to teach them what God teaches about the subject, and so protect them from the evils of immorality with AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases destroying many unbelievers today. If our Christian young people do not accept Biblical morality they will die!

SEXUAL PROBLEMS IN MARRIAGE

Sexual problems in marriage come from two factors. Early parental teaching, or the lack of it, is the first. The child is taught by both word and example. Parents teach by what they say and by what they do not say. Many consider sex to be dirty and "not nice", and you do not talk about it.

Many are brought up in families where they do not associate their parents or God with sex at all, and yet God made sex for us to enjoy with our right woman or man. All people have sexual urges and how they deal with them and cope with them depends very much on what the parents are doing and saying, or what help to understand things you give as the Bible teacher.

The second factor is what the young person has done or what has been done to them. A complicating factor is child sexual abuse; where this great evil has been done to a child their view of sex may be badly affected. Others spoil sex by early experimentation with their friends, and so learn bad habits in sex, and have it associated with guilt because of their sin. As a result many believe that the sexual act is something which you get over as quickly as possible, and that it is dirty, or just for the men. This type of concept causes frustration and lack of satisfaction that later will affect the marriage relationship. If a person is sexually inept or has a bad attitude about sex their relationship is going to be damaged, and they need to replace their false view with God's viewpoint from the scriptures. Until they do, there is going to be hurt, embarrassment and shame.

Children are, without guidance as to the truth, likely to experiment. Many of the venereal diseases are almost incurable now, whilst AIDS is a death sentence. By not telling them about things you could condemn your children to death. We should teach them what the Bible says, and not tie ourselves up in knots trying to simply suppress their sexual urges. They should be told why it is wrong to have sexual relations outside marriage, and be encouraged to see that self control before marriage sets them up for life long satisfaction with god's right person for them later.

We have to make all we teach here Biblically based. We take them to Ephesians 5, Song of Solomon and Colossians 3, where God's policy is given. Most parents in the church will not do this. Never give advice on these passages by yourself always have someone with you, if you are in a counselling situation. These passages should be taught in church, and certainly in the youth Bible Class.

Many young people plunge into a sexual relationship very early at 13 to 14 years old. This is dangerous. With sexual relationships happening at this age there are problems. Promiscuity causes lack of satisfaction with the right partner. You must teach them that they are to wait for the right person and wait until they are old enough to really enjoy themselves person to person and not look on the partner as a sexual object.

A young girl may look sexually mature but they are not ready biologically or psychologically for the demands that this type of activity puts on them. Sex is not for children, it is for adults. It is bad if it is not a safe relationship where a man and a woman, not a boy and girl, are married. Marriage, and sex, is for people who know their own minds.

Problems with cervical cancer are often caused by premature and promiscuous sex. This is having too many partners and poor hygiene. It takes quite a long time for two bodies to acclimatise to one another. They are exchanging body fluids. With promiscuity your bodies are out of equilibrium. The only safe sex you can have is with one partner with neither partner having had previous sexual relations. One man and one woman staying together for life.

In the Old Testament there are a number of regulations regarding hygiene which will protect both men and women. God's word does not allow promiscuity. God intends man and women to be safe in sexuality. He has created sexual joy for those who love and care for one another.

PASSAGES USED FOR TEACHING SEXUAL RELATIONS

There are a series of passages which can be used in teaching this area:-

[a] Genesis 2 and 3 is a passage for marriage. They are not only together sexually but in every other way. They are committed to each other, body, soul and spirit. You leave your father, your mother and your home and set your own family up. You are responsible for yourself. One thing that sex does is to divide the generations. When people start experimenting with sex children will not respect their parents any more, for they are doing an adult thing. Promiscuity will destroy the family. By waiting to express your sexuality you can be safe in it, and keep the family bonds intact.

[b] Song of Solomon - Solomon makes a very strong case for marriage, waiting and fidelity. Many people when teaching this book do so as an analogy of Christ and the Church but the prime function of this book is to teach relationships and marriage, the secondary theme is the analogy to the church. He is warning young men to avoid promiscuity.

[c] Proverbs 2, 5, 7 and 31 - these chapters deals with the problems of young people facing sexual temptations and the importance of doing so Biblically. Solomon wrote Proverbs for his sons, but the message applies to girls as well. Proverbs should be taught at youth groups. In this book you will find many practical things which are applicable today, as it is a blunt treatment of the threat of seduction for all young(and older) people. No-one is immune from temptation, and those who think they are most vulnerable!

[d] 1 Corinthians 7, 1 Peter 3 - If you are in an evangelical church you will have the case of a partner being saved and this changing the perspective of marriage. This was the problem for both Paul and Peter. Their preaching led to the salvation of one marriage partner but not the other. What was the person to do? Here we can show there is an answer from Scripture. Here we have practical advice for what is now a mixed marriage; with the believing spouse having the responsibility to set the standard.

[e] Ephesians 5:18 ff and Colossians 3 - give the responsibilities in a marriage. All teaching on marriage must underline the importance of the place of the filling of the Holy Spirit. We need to put off bad habits and put on new. This is a pre-requisite to become like Christ. Once people have been converted and they are under the control of the Holy Spirit they will be changed, and in marriage we all need to be changed to be more like Christ in our attitude towards our spouse.

As a study you can use the marriages in the Bible where there are a variety of problems and relationships. Also you can look at the many women and men in the Bible. There are examples of all the problems in marriages and their solutions in the Bible.

A good book on the subject is, "The Great Women in the Bible", by Edith Dean.

If you fail to teach these things to your people, you are condemning some of them to death and some to life long regrets.

REFER TO BTB - MARRIAGE, CELIBACY, FAMILY

LECTURE 40 - MARRIAGE COUNSELLING

When you are talking about sexuality is quite often important to have some lightness in the conversation. Some carefully thought out and tasteful humour can assist in the dialogue. It is better to take the risk and help them to learn rather than be totally bland about the situation, and miss the issue and therefore the solution. There is a balance here, for getting sexuality wrong is potentially fatal for the people involved, so any humour must be simply to break down inhibition to talk, for this subject is "deadly serious"!

The reasons for breakdowns of marriage and the deadly sin of adultery, are things that can be understood by all. If people realise that all marriages have stress they can relax and be more objective about their situation, but they still must commit themselves to finding a solution. We will all fail to do what we ought at times, but we need to deal honestly with our failings and then will be able to defeat the sin and gain a victory, and restore the joy of our marriages.

Best book on this subject is, "Marital Counselling" - Norman Wright.

In a marriage counselling session you need to set ground rules at the start, so that people are very clear as to where they are going and what parameters they are going to be using. Part of it is that the people being interviewed will not be able to interrupt each other or complete the sentences for each other. They must be silent when the other person speaks. If they are trying to have you on, you must confront them with this and tell them to stop it. Let them realise however that when they are honest you will not explode or be embarrassed.

If there is a major sin in the life you will find that people will waffle and go round the subject. Your concern for them must be to show that you are willing to help them overcome their problems, and that they can face them with you. They may have done things that are death penalty things from God's Word's viewpoint but your hatred for their sin must be controlled by the knowledge that these are blood bought sinners, and if they repent there is grace for them.

The Scriptures say quite clearly that homosexuals, murderers, do not inherit the kingdom of heaven but Paul shows that those who have had that problem, who repent and become Christians will be saved and have eternal life. Turn to and read the following, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Note, that all sorts of evil and sin can be dealt with if people come before God with honesty and focus on facing their sins and living in righteousness.

The Bible is good news because it shows that there are solutions to the problems of man. When a wife/husband comes in for counselling she will pour out all the bad things about her husband/his wife. Try and focus on the whole picture; hear them, but also ask about the good things. Do not express any opinions on what you think about the other person or take sides in a dispute. If some one has come for counselling there is a grain of hope, and we want to build hope. Concentrate on it and try and feed that. You can ask the question, "What can you do to make him do what you want him to do" If she accepts that, you have got her on a positive road. Stop people reacting and start them to think. You take charge, you are the director, make the play.

THREE GOALS IN MARITAL COUNSELLING

There are three goals in marital counselling:-.

- [a] To increase the satisfaction levels of both partners.
- [b] To encourage a strong and safe environment in the home for children and parents.
- [c] To determine the life goals of each partner and start planning to work towards them.

By this means you have got them away from thinking how miserable they are to thinking about what life could be if they deal with the problems.

The 30 question file is a list of questions you use in counselling, but experience tells me that the best approach is to let them both talk and hear each other. Challenge them with questions like. Why are you in the position that you are?, and how did you get there?, and where do you want to go in the future? Why didn't they come before?, and if they tried

before, what went wrong?, and what has caused them to seek counselling now? Each of these open ended questions will get information and identify the way to move ahead to build hope and focus back into the marriage.

It might be that they face a life threatening situation, so that question may be very important. You need to know where the wife and children can get refuge, you cannot trust the Police because of shortage of manpower. It is no use leading a woman to Christ and then sending her back to her violent alcoholic husband where she is killed that night. Identify how dangerous it is for the man or woman in the relationship, and ensure they and the children are safe.

You should then ask them to advise you as to how they see your role. Note it down, and work out a strategy from there, or suggest another way you wish to work. Ask them bluntly, How serious are you about finding as solution? Often there is a "payback situation" in a relationship that is a bad one.

If a wife/husband stays in a bad relationship there is always something she/he is getting out of it. Identify what that "something" is, if they are not improving yet they want to stay where they are. Both may have an equally serious psychological problem, that will need to be addressed. Ask them, Are you really interested in getting a solution?

A number of times you will find that it is a perverted situation such as an alcoholic home, and while initially you feel only one has the problem (the alcoholic man), you discover that both have problems and needs that are being met in the bad situation. For example, a woman may stay with an alcoholic man, because she has an excuse then for her tamper, and her own failures in life, for with him there he can be blamed; if she left him she would have to make the hard decisions to change her own life!

I have knowledge the following sort of cases. A woman marries a drunk, and then he is wonderfully converted and wonderfully changed, which leads to her to leaving him, divorcing him and in due course marrying another drunk. You will likely find that that person came from a family where the father was a drunk. Often the deep perverted pattern of living has been set up way back in childhood, and they must face it and adopt Biblical patterns to replace the old ones. If they do not, they will continue to live in self destructive ways.

You must confront the people to be ready to undertake 6 to 8 sessions so that you can tackle these deep seated problems. The solutions as portrayed by J.E. Adams in his book and the approach he takes will work in many situations, but if people have a warp in their background it will not. Remember the free will factor! People can decide to reject God and his word and all we can do is watch as they slide down hill, but it is their life and they are answerable to God not us.

The sins of others may need to be dealt with. The person in front of you may have a problem that started by sexual molestation as a child. They have never confronted or forgiven those who have done it. You work together with them so that new patterns can be established and their life can be put back together again.(Refer to early lecture)

ATTITUDES

Marriage partnerships are often put under strain when one person thinks things are important and the other mocks that suggestion or considers the concept of no consequence (the contempt problem). Some people need to be financially secure whilst the other marriage partner spends money as if it is going out of fashion.

This puts a lot of strain on the people who need to be more careful. If the spender continues to spend after the partner has said they are crazy with worry about it, they have sinned against their partner, and against God, who calls us all to respect and love each other.

Seek to find out what the people want in a marriage and what they expected. You may ask them to write out what they wanted to achieve, and what they are disappointed about. Have a caring day where the partner caters to the other persons needs. The partner does not remind him or her of their needs, they just care and show love. You have them working together, they are smiling at each other. You ask them to tell you about their courtship and tell you about the good emotions they once felt for each other, and look at ways of trying to recapture them.

Another technique is the daily "conference". In this you have them agree to a common place where at a given time the partners meet to talk nightly. They take it in turns, the first one is given free reign for fifteen minutes to talk, the next evening the other is given free reign.

They may agree to have several "rounds", but the objective is the same. Each one concentrates on simply hearing the other one, and not responding to what they say that night, just note it and think for twenty four hours, and respond the next night. If the listener speaks the meeting stops and then restarts after apology.

Most problems in marriage are communication problems. At the follow up joint session, you ask the husband, how he responded to what his wife said and vice versa. What made you sick, what made you weep, what did you learn as you listened?

With marital counselling you bind them together on what they agree on and then start dealing with things over which they disagree, which are then easier to solve. Abuse is a common problem from both sides, verbal abuse from the woman and physical abuse from the man.

The battle is won over these sins, if you continue through to the end; focus on breaking down the five problems identified by the Denver Study (Previous lecture). Bring them to the place where they see they must renounce their anger and realise that it is sinful.

LECTURE 41 - COUNSELLING WOMEN AND THE ELDERLY

There needs to be older men and women as deacons and deaconesses who can assist the pastor in counselling women and the elderly. This will save a lot of time for the pastor. This would be in conformity with 1 Timothy 5 where Paul recommends that the older women counsel the younger.

It is clear from this passage that the church is not to support widows who are not leading a pure and spiritual life. The older women should be an example to the young. It also makes it clear that you should look upon all members of your church as your family. You should look upon an older man as your father, an older woman as your mother, a younger man as your brother and a younger woman as your sister.

One of the great tragedies is when a minister gets sexually involved with one of the flock, that is one reason why we must be so careful to follow the Biblical standards. Turn to and read the following. 1 Timothy 5:1-16

SGFA - Page 254 Adams states what can happen to a woman in an unsatisfactory marital situation. If you are a young minister no matter what people have said about you as to how unattractive you are to women you can end up a temptation for the woman who is in such a situation. You may not have anything physically attractive about you, but by your spiritual maturity you will become attractive to vulnerable women.

You may be in contact with a godly woman who is frustrated by her ungodly husband and is looking for a godly counterpart with whom to relate, and while she may not intend to sexually sin with you feelings overflow. Eighty percent of the time when a minister has an affair with a member of the congregation it is not the, "scarlet woman", who others would have spotted as a whore. It is an emotionally needy and vulnerable woman who is looking for a spiritual man. You should look at each woman who you are counselling as a potential source of temptation. This is why the older deaconesses should be counselling the older and younger women in the church, and the pastor has a very limited role. In all counselling of women, a deaconess should be present.

PRINCIPLES

SGFA - Page 255 - gives very good counsel:-

[1] Always have a husband present. This would not happen in the majority of times where trouble eventuates.

[2] Never counsel women alone, always have a person there. Have your secretary there. If you do not want them in the room because of the matter under discussion always have the door open so that they can walk in at any time.

[3] Never compliment the woman as she may take that as an advance or romantic interest.

[4] Never counsel a woman by yourself in her own home. Remember Joseph was the innocent party in relation to Potiphar's wife but he ended up in jail. As a minister you do not have to fall to have your ministry ruined, you just need an allegation made against you that you cannot refute.

You need to know how to deal with a situation when you go into counselling. Do not encourage people to drop in at any time make sure they have an appointment. The maximum interview should be fifty minutes within a time slot of an hour. Always try and get a deaconess in the room for every female case, and get them to take over the case if possible.

Never visit a woman in her own home. A pastor should not go on pastoral visits during the day unless you have a deaconess with you.

You have to be prepared to talk about women's problems, and be ready to refer on to the deaconess quickly. Many men are still full of myths as far as the way women respond or react to various situations normally things that they have heard from other men.

Problems include menstrual cycle, suburban stress, toddler stress and these are solvable providing you know something about it. You have to face these things squarely. There are a number of very good books which will help you understand these areas of concern, enough to empathise and then introduce them to the deaconess who can be the practical one to support them.

If you are not well read as a pastor here, you need to get help and use your deaconesses who have done their homework and done their study. There are many good books written by women for women. They need to be in the church library. A couple of deaconesses need to be set aside as resources in this area. There is a major problem in our society with women who feel as if they are trapped and helpless.

Most of the problems in a church is where a person is claiming to be Christians but acting in a very pagan manner. If you are going to be effective as a church you need to ensure that those who are representing your church live a life which is spiritual otherwise you can get a bad name in your community.

OLDER PEOPLE

These should be the power and strength in the church. The youth group is not as important as the elderly for spiritual power. The elderly are the people who supply prayer power support. As believers become older they should become stronger in their faith. They should be more useful. Any minister who ignores them is very foolish.

In the first week get to know the older people and organise the spiritual amongst them into a prayer warrior group which need not meet, but must be co-ordinated by a trusty elder. Most of your prayer meetings will involve the older members of the congregation. It should be noted however that grey hairs does not necessarily mean wisdom. Some are grey haired babies in Christ. Examine their lives in Christ before you enrol them. Do not have small talk, ask how their health is, and then how is their walk with the Lord. They are going to meet the Lord probably sooner than you are and therefore keep to an important subject.

The reason that they are still alive is that the Lord wants them to pray and learn more lessons about him. Encourage them to see this and be part of the spiritual power of the church.

Turn to and read the following, 1 Timothy 4:1-12 - Paul gives instructions to then Pastors in the church to teach the Word consistently and often. It is God's Word. You build up the people as you teach them and there will be growth movement and respect for you. You want the respect of the elderly, then you must teach them the Scriptures. It is important not to make simply social visits to them. Let no one disregard you because you are young. If you are talking about things that matter you will win respect and a hearing from the godly elderly. Always put the emphasis on the Spirit of God and on the Word of God.

Old age brings a lot of things into your life. The cankers of past sins, feuds, frustrations and the like can come out. Many old people suffer from depression not because they are by themselves, and are old, but because they do not like themselves; or more accurately, they do not like what they have done or been. Many are lonely because they have been awful and still are. awful! There is too much that is within which has not been dealt with. If they say they are not well, then you ask them how is the Lord helping you with that. Find out how they are ticking spiritually.

Turn to and read the following, Job 27:1-6 - Here he says that he is going to hold on until he is called home. Other passages include - Psalm 150:6, 104:33-34, 146., 63:1-7 .

When there is a cause for depression (and there always is, in some manner a cause for depression) they should be helped to hold on to the Lord. It should be remembered that most of the books of the Bible were written by people over 60 years of age. They therefore know about the problems of old age, and the answers are there. Teaching the elderly in person or by the church tape ministry is a major role.

There are three areas of evangelism, the young which is generally well covered, the adult to a lesser extent but the elderly area is often non existent. There are few churches who are doing this in New Zealand. As their friends die these elderly people have to face death. They are not people who will come to church so the church has to go to them. Older evangelists can share the Christian hope right in the old persons home, at the very doorways of death and dying.

Young people are not the best to do this work. If a young person has a family to give them this additional work is to be even sinful, as their work is in their home with their children. Remember the lesson of the evangelist Billy Sunday; he led many people to Christ but saw all of his children go to hell, as he was never home to show them by his life what being a Christian was all about.

There is a lot more energy in a lot of these older people that there is in a lot of young people, don't undervalue the older members of the congregation. There are many things that elderly people can do better than the young. First is visitation which the younger people cannot do often because they have not got the time, or the life experiences.

They can be involved in counselling, Bible Teaching, church cleaning activity. They can deal with maintenance or administration. All people like to be involved. As a pastor you should learn about the way of growing old in the sunset years. If you as a pastor ignore the resource of the older person you are in danger of judgement on the basis of neglect of duty. You must make use of them.

SGFA - Chapter 8,9

LECTURE 42 - PSYCHOSIS

David Benner's book on the Baker Encyclopaedia of Psychology is very good one as a resource for people going on into in depth counselling.

When a person has a significant mental disorder, what should you do as a pastor? We have an attitude taught to us in the Western world, that everyone with a psychiatric disorder must go to a psychiatrist. This area of psychiatry is at an all time low however, with pagans ruling the field in most countries. This area of mental disorders is an area for specialists, but we must try to find one who is a Christian, if that is possible. Many times you will find that people involved in the industry who are unsaved are more nutty than those they are dealing with!

What is a clinical psychosis? Proverbs 23:7 says that as a man thinketh in his heart so he is. Certain patterns of responses you have set up in your soul will form chemical imbalances over time, especially if there is an inherited weakness in their family for mental instability. If they have a family history of mental instability, and nothing in their education and upbringing stabilises them, then under stress later they will lose their grip on reality.

Another major reason for many so called psychoses is drug or alcohol abuse, or sexual abuse at a very young age. Those who have suffered the evil of others, or added to their own inherited weaknesses with drug or alcohol abuse will suffer in a particular area. A third area is the environment in which the person is brought up in. Some psychoses come out in childhood some in older age but a trend will normally be seen in the teenage years that is indicative of where the person will go in life. The influence of the mother and father is huge in this area as a common cause of these problems is bad or neglectful parenting.

The parent can be overprotective giving a child an insecure situation yet lax, giving the child things. All instability will create problems, and a lack of consistent discipline, or being violent will bring consequences for the child. When you are dealing with psychosis it is complex and will take a long time to sort out, what is going on; how much is temperament nature, inherited weakness of the OSN, or abuse, or the person's own bad behaviours [sins, drugs and drink].

You are into counselling for 2 to 3 years with those suffering from psychosis. You need to provide a new family for most of these people. They also have to realise that this may be an inherited weakness and they are not going to come right completely, and must live with the weakness and cover themselves by walking in the power of the Holy Spirit closely every day. All of us have genetic flaws, we may have bad inheritances. For instance if there is TB in your family history, you are likely to have a 60% chance of respiratory problems yourself. There are genetic links to schizophrenia and other mental problems also.

If people have a problem they need to take that into account and modify their life so that they can live within the confines of their inherited predisposition, and minimise the negatives they have got with their OSN.

Certain misconceptions regarding psychosis. They are not all a result of demon activity but some are; remember that drugs are the door to the occult, and many get into demon possession through taking drugs or alcohol.

BTB - Satan's Work, Demons

PSALM 109:6-13

Turn to and read the following, (Psalm 109 : 6-13)

1. Note the power that Satan and his demons have over those who open themselves to him.
 - [a] Satan blinds mankind to the truth of the Word of God by means of religion. (v.7)
 - (b) He has the power to shorten life. (v8a)
 - (c) He can remove persons from a place of authority (v 8b)
 - (d) Satan can kill (v 9)
 - (e) He can persecute children (v 10)
 - (f) He can remove wealth (v 11)
 - (g) Satan can turn people against each other (v. 12)
 - (h) He can cut off man's posterity to the second generation (v. 13)
2. Satan as a killer
 - (a) He has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14, 15)
 - (b) Killed Job's children (Job 1 : 1 2, 1:18,19)
 - (c) Motivated Cain to murder Abel (John 8:44, cf 1 John 3:12)
 - (d) Often administers the sin unto death (1 Corinthians 5:5)

3. Satan as a source of disease

- (a) Was responsible for Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 1 2:7)
- (b) Produced illness in Job (Job 2:6-8)
- (c) Uses his demons to inflict diseases (Matthew 1 2:22, Luke 13:16, Acts 10:38)
- (d) Causes certain types of deafness, dumbness, paralysis and crippling effect by means of demon possession (Matthew 4:24, 1 2:22, Mark 9:1 7, 18)
- (e) When demon possession causes the affliction, the removal of the demon or demons produces an instant cure (Matthew 1 0: 1, Mark 1:32-34, 6:1 3, Acts 8:7, 19:12)

4. Characteristics of Demon Possession

- (a) Loss of individuality: the demon-possessed person no longer has control of faculties of the soul (Mark 5:1-1 3, Luke 8:27, 9:39, 40)
- (b) Abnormal behaviour:
 - (i) Convulsions (Mark 1 :26, 9:20, Luke 4:35)
 - (ii) Violence (Matthew 8:28)
 - (iii) Abnormal strength (Mark 5:4, Luke 8:29, Acts 19:16)
 - (iv) Raving (Mark 5:5)
 - (v) Foaming at the mouth (Mark 9:20)
 - (vi) Nakedness (Luke 8:27)
- (c) Loss of health:
 - (i) Dumbness (Mark 9:1 7, Luke 1 1: 1 4)
 - (ii) Deafness and dumbness (Mark 9:25)
 - (iii) Blindness and dumbness (Matthew 12:22)
 - (iv) Epilepsy (Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35)
 - (v) Mental illness (Mark 5:15)

PSYCHOSIS

Psychosis is not always as a result of sin although sinful actions, like drug taking may be involved in development of some psychoses. There is growing evidence that severe and early childhood sexual abuse is a factor in the later development of some mental problems, like some cases that are later diagnosed as schizophrenia. It is important not to jump to conclusions about sin being at the root of all psychosis, remember the lord's words regarding the person born blind; Turn to and read the following passage, John 9:1-11, especially verse 3.

Psychoses are not illnesses, in the traditional sense. The people can still do things to help themselves. Illnesses are something that you can catch by contact. These are not in that category. Alcoholism is not "caught", neither is schizophrenia. You may have to deal with this and if you do it is essential that you have close relationships with your local doctor. You have to study the problem so that you can talk intelligently with the doctors and get help and assistance from specialists. Be willing to hand these people to specialists if you are unable to assist them fully. About 8-10 per thousand of the general populace have a severe psychosis. You need to be careful about who you refer them to.

Four common psychoses:-

[a] Obsessive - Compulsive Disorders - Several of the following are indicative.

- [i] These people tend to have an attitude where they expect the worst.
- [ii] They are also perfectionists which puts them into a bind and you get depression.
- [iii] They are great manipulators and must feel that they control everything. You need to know all the facts which you cannot and cannot decide which increases tension.
- [iv] They will be compulsive in action with such things as hand washing. They have a dirt fetish. They can use ten towels a day or several towels when they have a shower.
- [v] Obsessive guilt and thoughts are also a problem.

Approaches to this needs to be systematic. 99% of the time it is because their personalities have been warped by their parents. The whole structure has been warped. You are looking at 1 to 2 sessions a week over 3 to 12 months to get results. You have to teach them to deal with obsessive thoughts, by replacing them with others that are less destructive. You set a new way of life for them as to the time they get up, have breakfast etc.

A good text is, by, William Backus - "Telling the Truth to Troubled People", pages 184-203.

[b] Schizophrenia

What it means is, "departure from reality". In this disorder the thinking of these people has almost become scrambled; their brain miss-fires telling them things about the world around them that are not true, but they experience them within as if they are true. They function in a way that is bizarre.

Schizophrenia is diagnosed by the four A's:-

[1] Association - is completely impaired in these people, there is no association within their brains of like thoughts with like thoughts. Conversations are split up and associations of ideas get scrambled, or joined to form a disjointed sentence.

[2] Autism - complete withdrawal from everything around them.

[3] Ambivalence - love and hate together and inappropriately so. You can never be sure of what is going on with their emotions, they are unpredictable.

[4] Affect - their emotions do not correspond with their circumstances. Someone falls in front of them covered in blood they will laugh.

They will often have hallucinations, they see things and hear voices. They hear voices which may tell them to do worse and worse things. People who think they hear God tell them to kill someone, in this state, will do so. We know from the scriptures that God is no longer talking to us audibly today, and certainly would not be urging harm done to those for whom Christ died. The worse the voices are the more advanced is the situation. Medication is available and essential (or they need to be placed in secure custody) or there will be tragedy. They also have delusions of being persecuted, so don't expect to "win" in their eyes by placing them in secure care, or giving them medication, for they will believe badly of you anyway.

Prayer saturation is important, as is Bible saturation. In fact Bible saturation can provide a huge improvement to a person with this problem. Having them work in simple but safe tasks around the church, while they listen to Christian or Bible teaching or music on headphones can help. Do not use Old Testament passages about the slaying of people! nor give them the job of chopping the wood with an axe!, nor carving meat with a knife! Music is good but so called Christian Rock will be very bad for them. Family counselling is important as in the vast majority of cases the parents or spouses have problems themselves. The church can be the new family to help them deal with the problems of their old one.

[c] Bipolar disorder - the manic depressive.

These can go from emotionally and physically feeling as "high as a kite" to the pits of depression. These people often come for counselling after they have spent their family's money in a "high" (or manic) state, and you need something similar to schizophrenia treatment because the cause of the problem is a chemical imbalance in their brain; they are short of a mineral called lithium carbonate. Get to know your local homeopathic medicine doctor, or other doctor. Family counselling is important here also, and these people must not be given access to large amounts of money. You need to see them twice a week for six months at least.

[d] Personality disorders

This is where a person does something which is absolutely wrong but they have no real remorse. They tend to be intelligent but they have no real concern for others at all. This is egotism taken to extreme. They will show no remorse unless they do it for show. A person who has committed a shocking crime, who then shows excessive remorse may have this disorder.

Unless they are changed by Christ they can be charming one moment but would kill you, or deceive you, the next without remorse, if they thought it could be of advantage to them, or just on a whim, without any real reason at all. Sexual immorality is a common presenting problem, but only after they have been caught. They do not come for counselling generally, and will not normally be in the church other than to cause trouble, or because they must be to work some deal they are involved in.

In the past they would simply have been referred to as people who are controlled by their lusts, be they the lust for power, money, sex, approval or position. They are often promiscuous, they are incapable of loving anyone other than themselves, but claim to love anyone who suits their immediate purpose and can really put on an act to fool them. Many of the so called, "jet set" have one of the personality disorders; they have no conscience, no remorse. They are often melodramatic and they are unstable in their personal relationships and jobs. There are a lot of people who are constantly going from church to church, and creating trouble for each. They have no room for Christ in their life but they are good actors. If you get a ":-feel" that a person has the above characteristics treat them with extreme caution, as these people are dangerous to ministry, and will lie to destroy you if you cross them.

Your prisons and high social strata are full of these types of people. The only thing that will work is the movement of the Holy Spirit convicting them of the need of a Saviour. They are as cunning as a fox, and even if they appear to be genuinely saved they should be watched for the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their family life and work life before they are trusted at all.

LECTURE 43 - APOLOGETICS

Apologetics is the defence of the scriptures against those who would devalue them. Turn to and read the following passage, 1 Peter 3:15 - an apologist is not a Biblical apologist unless he has set the Lord apart in his heart, and is standing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Apologetics is a spiritual, not just an intellectual activity. We should always be prepared to give an answer for the hope that is in us. It is an answer to the questions of man as far as Christianity is concerned. Evangelism is not very effective at winning certain people groups to Christ because we do not take the time to get to know the questions that these people are interested in today. If we are able to discern the question then we can say Jesus is the answer. Before we introduce Christ to them, we need to be sure we have heard their question correctly. We need to scratch where people are itching!

You can never be a good apologist without preparation. Christianity has an answer to every person, other religions and cults. Everyone can find an answer in Jesus Christ. Christianity is a reasonable faith. It is not kissing your brain good-bye. There is a reason for the hope that is in you. Do not be ashamed of the gospel, as if it has no logic and evidence behind it, Christianity is the most reasonable and logical and evidential faith there is, and it is the only way whereby people must be saved.

Others have a blind optimism, we have a hope in Christ and our hope is based on a reasonable basis, with good evidence that Jesus is who he claimed to be. We must however do this with gentleness and respect for the serious questioner from another faith. This is our duty as a Christian. Evangelism must not magnify the offence of the cross by being offensive to the people we are talking to.

Look briefly at the following passages and see that the whole focus of our manner is that we might not give offence to people, but rather give the gospel in a way that we have not clouded the issue for them by our manner.

Turn to and read the following passage, Matthew 18 : 7 - 11, 1 Corinthians 10 : 32 - 33, 2 Corinthians 6 : 3 - 10, Galatians 5 : 11 - 14.

Remember, we do not save people, the Holy Spirit does, but we can get in the way of the gospel message, and we can by our behaviour limit our effectiveness in giving the gospel by getting in the Holy spirit's way, rather than being a help to people to understand the spiritual issues they face.

Plato was right when he says, "He that holds a true believable faith without understanding is like a blind man who happens to take the right road. The one who knows apologetics is not blind. It is great if we are on the right road but we need to know what we believe, so that we fulfil the great commission and have others, through the work of the Holy Spirit join us on that right road.

There are three types of believer in the church, there are those firstly, who believe the gospel. These may be the ones that have grown up in the church from children. The second type believe the gospel and experience the reality of the power of God in their life. The third group, not only believe the gospel, they experience it, but they also have reasons for the gospel, that makes them eager to share it with others. This makes them an effective Christian. They have an understanding based on facts, and experience.

Faith is not blind optimism hoping that things are going to turn out alright. Faith is not irrational. It is the resting of the heart on the reliability of the evidence. Faith is a step in the right direction not a step in the dark. Some Christian groups emphasise experience alone, and have little within on the basis of reason; this makes them unbalanced in their faith and limited in their evangelism.

The Bible presents faith as truth. Faith is a trust, faith is rational, it is a personal commitment to the truth, and submission to the person who is TRUTH. It is objective as well as subjective. We are to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the apostles, and for all that they have given to us. It is objective faith. It says to have faith in God. You cannot have a subjective faith without an objective faith. You cannot trust in God if God does not exist. The objective must come before the subjective.

Many times people say that doctrine does not matter; yet doctrine is the logical systematic framework of Christianity. How are you going to talk about Christianity if doctrine does not matter? In apologetics we try and defend the objectivity of Christianity. You can be a Christian without being an apologist because Christianity is true and objective faith in Christianity is effective in life and facing death. However to be truly effective as a Christian you need to be an apologist so that you know why you believe and what you believe. You can give people good reasons for Christianity but it is up to the Holy Spirit to convict, and the other person to accept. Faith is not against reason, it complements it. Our role is to remove the logical obstacles to belief from the thinking of intelligent unbelievers.

God is truth. Reason was given to us so that we might be closer to God. Some say Christianity is a leap in the dark. Others say, we claim it and it is a reality. We use reason in every area of life. If you are not rational you are not living intelligently. If there are any areas in which we should be rational it should be in eternal things, for only they matter.

Existentialists say that it is not what is happening it is how you feel. They say that life itself is a blind leap in the dark but they never do it themselves. The Bible however says, come lets reason together says the Lord. Turn to and read the following passage, Isaiah 1:16-20.

Without reason we cannot have faith in God. We as Christians must be interested in things that are reasonable. God created man in His image and this gives man a reasoning faculty. Only human beings worship God, animals do not as they have no sense of reason.

FOUR REASONS WHY APOLOGETICS IS ESSENTIAL:-

[a] The Bible commands it - In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. This statement in the first verse in the Bible refutes atheism, pantheism, agnosticism. Paul in Acts goes for the intellectual people in Athens to challenge them. We should be winning both those who are intellectual and the simpler of mind; we should be able to give the gospel in a loin cloth and in a three piece suit. Paul was put in prison because of his defence of the gospel. The Bible is getting attacked now with science, philosophy, psychology and even theology. Our duty as a Christian is to defend the truth. We need to respond to these challenges. Many of the theologians are saying that God is dead.

[b] It is logical to defend our faith. It is important to use reason in various areas of life therefore it is important to use it in our Christian life. God gave us a mind, he gave us a heart to love Him and a will to serve Him. If Christianity is not logical we have no right to communicate it.

[c] Because the whole gospel is apologetics. Jesus uses apologetics in relation to His deity. The seven miracles in John are to demonstrate that , He is the Christ. Jesus Christ, the Apostles and the early church leaders were involved in this. The early church appealed to the fact of the resurrection. This was seen as a vital part of the church. People are not interested in an esoteric faith, they are interested in something that is real.

[d] It is practical. It deals with the practical problems in life. It will strengthen your faith.

Many churches say to come to Jesus and be happy, they have never given people the truth. When those people become unhappy they look for something else. They have accepted Jesus Christ emotionally but they have not accepted the truth of the whole gospel as a fact of life.

If you become an apologist you will strengthen your faith. An unrefuted sceptic is a sceptic still. People are not believing because they are thinking that Christianity is not true. We as a church have not provided the answers to refute that false position.

It will help you to face atheists and sceptics as well as the liberals. A lot of the liberals are pretty smart but apologetics can give you that extra strength. If Christianity is true all other isms must be false. It will enable you to witness with confidence. Many Christians are afraid to witness as they believe that they will get clobbered. It is extremely practical in an age of scepticism.

Paul went to Mars hill and challenged the Greeks,. God has given us His Word as well as the techniques of apologetics. It takes away your doubts. You will be able to take criticism and boldly walk in society.

LECTURE 44 - APOLOGETICS

As you come from God you have value. You cannot accept with atheism, that you have no value. Atheism implies the philosophy that there is no future hope and man has no destiny with the only life being the present one. In this concept life has no meaning beyond what you make here, and offers no solution to suffering. From the Christian viewpoint this life is only a portion of eternity. We can look at life not from a tunnel vision viewpoint but from a whole of life perspective(this includes eternal life). In the Christian context we can look forward to a better future. The atheists however are filled with despair.

BTB -- Eternal Life, Resurrection

We are guaranteed a resurrection body. Christ said that because He lives we will also live. We should be able to share our faith with confidence to those who are lost and in darkness. From a Christian viewpoint we have a perspective, we have a future, we have a purpose in life. Without Christianity you cannot get answers into the fundamentals of life.

Atheism is unliveable. What must you believe to be an atheist - nothing. What do you have to do to be an atheist - nothing. The solution to the problem of being an atheist is to commit suicide, or take some drug to tranquillise yourself against the terrible reality that you are part of. We have the only hope for such a person.

Some theologians have adopted the concept that God is dead. What a crazy thing? You are a specialist in Theology (the study of God) and you abolish your subject! What keeps such people going? The only reason can be that they are so foolish or deluded that they do not follow their own thoughts to their logical conclusion. Atheism, if you are very smart will lead to insanity, for the hopelessness is overwhelming. The Scriptures say that they believed themselves wise but they

became foolish. If you believe that God is dead and concentrate on that, you will either commit suicide or become insane. Man was created in the image of God but atheism denies that. Life is not meaningful if God does not exist.

If there is God who died for me and my life is in His hands then there is meaning to life. Christians should never feel lonely because God is always with us. You cannot have a joyful time in a difficult place; it is going to disappear, but you are not. As Christians we have a basis for ultimate stability in Jesus Christ and His revelation.

The whole purpose of apologetics is to give to the unbeliever reason to believe and answer his questions. Sometimes you can answer a question with a question, suggesting that their situation is hopeless and that you have the solution to their problem in Christianity. You need to be prepared to show them the logical conclusions of their "faith" in nothing.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR THE ATHEIST

There is no God - prove it. You can show many arguments from philosophers and scientists that God exists. If God does not exist how do you explain Jesus Christ. Jesus said that He was God, is that true or was Jesus mad?

You can have a series of apologetic arrows, one of which is to say that if God does not exist then the Bible is a fraud. We have 44 people writing the Bible. Were these people consistent liars? How is it that they weave a consistent picture over 2000 years?

How can a fraud and a lie have founded western civilisation where the influence has been the Bible? You can go through a number of prophecies in the Bible and move on to the resurrection. Prove there is no God and the resurrection is impossible. It takes far more faith to be an atheist than a Christian.

In any philosophy can you offer me another person who is better than what we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are like a beggar who is telling another where to find bread.

REFER TO BTB -- ETERNAL LIFE, RESURRECTION

LECTURE 45 - APOLOGETICS

Unbelievers consist of atheists, agnostics and pantheists.

The apologists come in a number of forms:- The rationalist apologist, and the empiricist apologist. The facts of Christianity leads us to a rational understanding of Christianity. Other apologists reconstruct and show historically how things occurred to verify the Bible. Josh McDowal is one of these. They are classified as rational evidentialists.

Others speak of rationalism in man. We are all sinners and are touched by the reality of God's truth. Man is able to differentiate between god and evil.

John's gospel says that in general revelation every man is enlightened but that only a small number are saved. What this means, is that all people see enough of the handprint of God in the creation, but most reject the personal challenge to believe. A recent survey in the UK shows that only 4 in 10 believe that God exists. Atheism is a popular theory in the world today.

However for the thinking man the absurdity of atheism forces you more and more towards Christianity. Francis Bacon said that little shallow thinking leads to atheism but deep thinking leads to God. The fool has said in his heart that there is no God. Psalm 14:1

Why do people crusade so much against God if he does not exist? We do not have violent crusades against Santa Claus. God's reality is so clear that man cannot stand it and therefore have to suppress it.

Any belief system must be evaluated against three questions :-

[a] is it logical, does this system make sense. Atheism, Marxism, Hinduism are all illogical. It is not logical to say that there is no God.

[b] Is it factual. It is not factual to say that there is no God. In Christianity what we say about the universe is consistent with reality. You apply the doctrine that all have sinned and you look around the world and find that that is true. You can prove scientifically the doctrine of sin. What God's Word says about the real world is consistent.

Marx and atheism says that man is basically good. Why do you have so many wars on at the moment, killing and pillaging one another. Christianity is liveable. What the Word of God says about us and what exists is consistent.

The atheist says that there is no God but no atheist can live in atheism. If God does not exist then you are not accountable to anyone. If God does not exist then selfishness is alright, murder cheating pillaging is fine as it purely represents what is right in the murder or cheat's mind. You should not be considerate of others, you should live selfishly,

ignoring others. If God does not exist you are just a chunk of meat. The reason that the atheist, Marxist and Hindu does not live as their philosophy shows that it is not liveable. It is ironic that every non Christian lives a Christian based life to some extent. If you are matter and I am matter what do we matter. You cannot talk about value of human life from a materialistic viewpoint.

[c] It is not logical to say that you are an atheist as in order to be an atheist you need to know everything in order to know there is no God. We however only have a small amount of knowledge. A person cannot deny the infinite with a finite mind.

If there is no God there is no absolutes, there is no truth. Atheism is the antithesis of truth. You are either for God or against Him. He who denies God hurts himself. The non Christian commits intellectual suicide. He shoots the gun at God but is actually shooting himself. If you deny God you cannot consider yourself to be smart. All ideas have consequence. Christian ideas have consequence as do pagan ideas. If God does not exist them all reality goes for nothing.

If in the beginning there was nothing, nothing cannot produce anything, atheism believes in absurdity. If God does not exist there are no values at all. Without God you cannot talk about right values and systems.

One waggish believer has put it this way. This is the absurdity of atheism. "Once I was a tadpole and did begin, then I was a frog with my tail tucked in, then I was a monkey swinging from a tree now I am a professor with a Phd".

If you are nothing and going to nothingness you are nothing in between, there is no meaning. However meaning is fundamental to human beings. Many people are not thinking as people but are existing as animals. Modern man is uncertain, is unfulfilled and unsaved.

He lives in an unfruitful and unfulfilled world. If you deny the essence of God you will face emptiness. If we came out of a big bang we are helpless we have no hope at all.

Atheism is morally bankrupt. We all believe in morality. If atheism is true where did we get our morals from. Why should we be honest or truthful. The concept of right and wrong does not come into the concept of atheism. If feeling becomes the basis of morality it is the end of morality. It is impossible to have moral laws from an atheistic background. If true evil exists it must mean that there was true good. Evil is against the character of God it does not query His presence. The atheist is in total darkness that is why the Lord came as the light of the world.