

Pastoral Ethics

Dr. Chuck Phelps

Pastoral Ethics Syllabus

Course Description

This course is a thorough discussion of the ethics of church financial management for fulltime vocational pastors. Ethical approaches to premarital, marital, and divorce and remarriage counseling will also be discussed. This course will also include a careful consideration of the ethics of inter-gender relations for both the pastor and church members within the context of normal church life. The ethical and legal concerns surrounding church discipline, leadership conflicts, and church divisions will also be presented with an emphasis on methods of conflict resolution.

Class lectures will follow the following structure:

- I. An introductory overview of various ethical philosophies
- II. The pastor and his family
 - A. The role of the husband and the wife
 - B. Riches
 - C. Rearing children
 - D. Recreation
- III. The pastor and his flock
 - A. Counseling ethically
 - B. Administering ethically
 - C. Preaching ethically
 - D. Marrying ethically (defining biblical marriage, divorce, and remarriage)
 - E. Leading ethically (liberty and license)
 - F. Learning ethically
 - G. Disciplining ethically (church discipline philosophy and guidelines)
- IV. The pastor and his fellows
 - A. Our predecessors and successors
 - B. Other parishes and schisms
 - C. Office practices and staff

- V. The pastor and his field
 - A. The political arena
 - B. The public persona

- VI. Miscellaneous topics
 - A. Communicating ethically
 - B. Forgiving biblically
 - C. Mediating practically

Course Objective

- VII. To understand various ethical systems in survey form
- VIII. To discuss practical procedures for ethical pastoring
- IX. To give consideration to the ethical dangers facing pastors today

Pastoral Ethics

A General Introduction

The professor wishes to recognize with special appreciation the labors of Professor Clark Lindsay of Northland Baptist Bible College in Dunbar, Wisconsin, who offered invaluable assistance in setting forth the principles related in this introduction.

X. The study of ethics in general

Though the word “Ethics” is often heard, few have developed a careful understanding of what the study of ethics implies and entails.

- A. The definition of ethics. Ethics is defined in *Webster’s Third International Dictionary* as, “The principles of conduct governing an individual or profession: standards of behavior.” The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* defines ethics as, “The study of the general nature of morals and the specific moral choices to be made by the individual in his relationship with others: the philosophy of morals. The rules or standards governing the conduct of the members of a profession.”

- B. The derivation of ethics. The English word is of Greek origins.
 - 1. ἠθος (*Athos*)
Found only in 1 Corinthians 15:33. Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich Lexicon defines *athos* as a custom, habit, or usage.

 - 2. ἔθος (*Ethos*)
Found 13 times in the New Testament. *Ethos* carries much the same meaning as the word *athos*. Typically, *ethos* is translated “want to.”

 - 3. ἔθω (*Etho*)
Found only 3 times in the New Testament. *Etho* carries the idea of “to be accustomed to.”

- C. The discussion of ethics.
All ethical systems may be generally classified thus:
 - 1. Philosophical ethics—systems that result from man’s reason.

2. Theological ethics—ethical systems claiming to express the authoritative principles of God.

To the world, ethics is the science of behavior. This “science” is constantly in flux. “Postmodernism assumes that there is no objective truth that moral values are relative, and that reality is socially constructed by a host of diverse communities.” (Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *Postmodern Times*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994,193).

To the Christian, ethics is the study of God’s expectations for His people. “Bible believers have always had a God-centered system of ethics that they found revealed in Scripture.” (Stewart Custer, “The Place of God in Ethics,” *Biblical Viewpoint*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1996, 1).

XI. A synopsis of ethical systems

In order to appreciate where our study stands in relationship to the varied ethical systems and theories available, the following shorthand description of ethical systems is offered:

A. The 10 most significant ethical systems in history

1. Might is right. Set forth by the Greek philosopher Thrasymachus, who said, “Justice is in the interest of the stronger party.”

Examples:

Problems:

2. Mores are moral. Existing conditions form the basis of morality. “Right” is what each community determines.

Examples:

Problems:

3. Man is the yardstick of what is right. Protagoras produced the statement, “Man is the measure of all things.” This philosophy is individualistic. What is right for me is right.
Examples:

Problems:

4. Humanity is the yardstick of what is right. This system proposes that the entire human race is to be used in judging right from wrong. Examples:

Problems:

5. Moderation is right.
Aristotle’s philosophy—Moderation is “the mean between indulgence and insensibility.”
Examples:

Problems:

6. Pleasure is right.
The Epicurean ethic of hedonism--pleasure is good, and pain is evil.
Examples:

Problems:

7. Right is the greatest good for the greatest number of people in the long run. This is generally called utilitarianism.

There are 2 divisions of this system: (1) qualitative utilitarianism and (2) quantitative utilitarianism.

Explain:

Problems:

8. Right is desirable for its own sake. Right becomes an end rather than a means to the end.

Examples:

Problems:

9. Right is indefinable. The philosophy of frustration.

Examples:

Problems:

10. Right is what God wills.

Explain:

- B. The 6 most significant contemporary ethical systems
Ethical systems are divided into two main groupings: teleological and deontological.

1. Teleological systems—emphasis on ends
 - a. Antinomianism—“no law.” Antinomianism is against any binding absolutes. Every decision is evaluated situationally. All is relative.
Considerations:

 - b. Situationalism—One universal norm--love.
 - (1) Popularized by Joseph Fletcher in the 1960's.
 - (2) Situationalism becomes an ethical system that believes the “end justifies the means.”
Considerations:

2. Deontological systems—emphasis upon duty to a standard
 - a. Generalism (Utilitarianism)

Generalism cannot be classified as an antinomian system. Generalism views all norms as general with no specific, universal norms; however, these rules often allow exception.

Generalists have proposed several different, even conflicting interpretations of what the general rules are, and how strictly they are to be observed.
 - (1) Quantitative Utilitarianism

 - (2) Qualitative Utilitarianism

 - b. Graded absolutism—hierarchicalism
 - (1) Many universal norms come into genuine conflict.
 - (2) When two norms conflict, the lower norm is overruled or suspended in order to keep the higher norm.

 - c. Ideal absolutism—conflicting absolutism or “lesser evil” ethics.

- (1) Many norms conflict.
- (2) Believers must choose the “lesser of 2 sins.”
- (3) While it is wrong to break a norm, the wrong is pardonable.

Considerations:

d. Non-conflicting absolutism

- (1) Many biblical absolutes may be derived from biblical exegesis.
- (2) There is one supreme absolute--love for God.
Love for one’s neighbor is an evidence of the supreme absolute.)
- (3) Righteousness is found in doing God’s will.
- (4) The “law of double effect” is considered.

Explain:

Consideration:

Pastoral Ethics
A Specific Introduction

I. The contemporary need for this study (Ps. 79:4, 8-9).

There are many contemporary reasons to ponder pastoral ethics.

A. Public religious scandals

“Our problem is not that the public has suddenly found sinners in the church . . . No, the public has known about sin in the church for a long time; and somehow the church has survived. Evangelical Christians today are not like a group of school children, standing around blushing because we were caught breaking the rules. We are more like a defeated army, naked before our enemies and unable to fight back because they have made frightening discovery: the church is lacking in integrity . . . We are facing an integrity crisis. Not only is the conduct of the church in questions, but so is the very character of the church.” (Warren Wiersbe, *The Integrity Crisis*, Oliver Nelson, 1988, 17).

Titus 1:7-11; 2:5, 8, 10, 14-15; 3:8, 14

B. A culture without moral anchors

“Ours is an age of ethical uncertainty: (Joe Trull and James Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, Broadman & Holman, 1993).

2 Timothy 3:1-7; 4:1-4

C. The ramifications of ministerial failure are profound.

Titus 1:7-11

1 Timothy 5:19-22

D. The study of pastoral ethics is rare.

Trull and Carter point out that little has been written and few courses have been taught on the topic, pp. 11-12.

RELIGION

Sex, Morality and the Protestant Minister

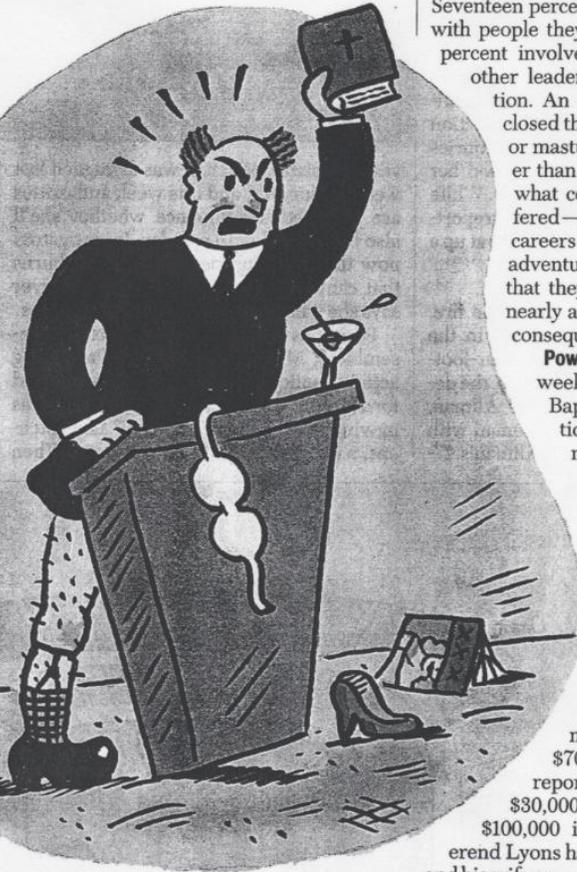
What sexual standards should the clergy obey?

BY KENNETH L. WOODWARD

ALTHOUGH HE WASN'T MARRIED himself, Jesus had some rather clear teachings on the subject. Adultery was sin, he declared, and that included even lustful looks at another woman. He was tough on divorce, too, saying that anyone who divorces and marries another also commits adultery. But the authority of Scripture isn't what it used to be—even for those who preach it from the pulpit. In recent years the divorce rate for Protestant clergy has risen to match the general population's. Now the question is, Are the Scriptures condemning adultery and fornication to be modified as well?

It's not an idle inquiry. Various surveys suggest that as many as 30 percent of male Protestant ministers have had sexual relationships with women other than their wives. This summer three Protestant churches, meeting in solemn assembly, addressed issues involving sexual standards for their clergy. The General Synod of the United Church of Christ tabled a resolution that would have "encouraged fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness" for all ordained ministers. That left in place a looser formulation that enjoins *all* members to observe "integrity and faithfulness" in marriage and in other "covenanted relationships"—a phrase that conservative critics say gives approval to gay and other nonmarital sexual relationships.

In June the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) debated an amendment to its constitution, which requires all church officials to be faithful in marriage and chaste if single. But so many congregations threatened to ignore the amendment that assembly delegates voted to drop the chastity requirement. And last week in Philadelphia, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church opened with delegates steeled for a heated debate over a similar set of resolutions



defining the sexual standards expected of its clergy.

To a large extent, the issue of clerical morality is driven by the debate over ordaining sexually active homosexuals. All three denominations have clergy who are living with members of the same sex, and some of these ministers regard their relationships as more "spiritual" and less "sexist" than heterosexual marriage. Hence this year's effort by traditionalists to tighten up the rules on clerics' private lives. But the new rules apply also to heterosexual ministers. So one unintended result of the debate on gays is the bright light it beams on the sexual morality of straight clergy.

Although religious denominations do not

audit clerical infidelity (or divorce), outside sources do. In 1993 The Journal of Pastoral Care reported a survey of Southern Baptist pastors in which 14 percent acknowledged that they had engaged in "sexual behavior inappropriate to a minister." More startling, 70 percent said that they had counseled at least one woman who had had intercourse with another minister. In 1988 a survey of nearly 1,000 Protestant clergy by Leadership magazine found that 12 percent admitted to sexual intercourse outside marriage. Seventeen percent of these affairs occurred with people they were counseling, and 52 percent involved members, ministers or other leaders of their own congregation. An additional 18 percent disclosed that they had kissed, fondled or masturbated with someone other than their spouse. When asked what consequences they had suffered—in their marriages or their careers—as a result of their sexual adventures, only 6 percent said that they had lost their jobs. And nearly a third reported no adverse consequences of any kind.

Powerful attraction: Just last week the board of the National Baptist Convention, the nation's largest black denomination, gave a vote of confidence to its president, the Rev. Henry J. Lyons, despite considerable skepticism about his relationship with another church officer. A week earlier, Florida police had reported Lyons's wife of 25 years told them she had discovered that her husband and Bernice Edwards owned a \$700,000 home. Police also report that the pair had bought a \$30,000 diamond ring and made \$100,000 in other purchases. Reverend Lyons has denied any misconduct, and his wife now supports his statement.

In all walks of life, charismatic figures exude a powerful attraction to the opposite sex. Charismatic clergy have the added aura of representing God or channeling the Holy Spirit. That's why Billy Graham, for example, decided early in his ministry never to be alone with a woman other than his wife. Few others are so fastidious. A generation ago, philandering clergy usually lost their jobs. That still happens. But in an age when adultery is tolerated in political and other leaders, religious denominations are hesitant to set too high a standard for their own. What some Protestant denominations seem to believe is that sexual behavior is either too personal to legislate or too trivial to condemn. ■

II. The biblical basis of this study

The Bible is fundamentally an ethical manual. From the Ten Commandments to the Sermon on the Mount, the Bible offers the wisdom of the Lord for guiding our pathway aright (Ps. 119:9-11). Therefore, in our survey of Pastoral Ethics, it will be our intent to build a topical reference guide for making biblical and consequently—ethical decisions in our ministry as pastors (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The Pastor and His Family

“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?” 1 Timothy 3:4

The ministry must be modeled at home!

I. The roles of husband and wife—Ephesians 5:23 “The husband is the head of the wife.”

“The term ‘role’ refers to the behavior expected from a person who occupies a given position or status” (Cleveland McDonald, *Creating a Successful Christian Marriage*, Baker Book House, 1981, 57). “The idea of roles is borrowed from the field of drama, and just as the actors must know their parts in order to lay them, so the person with a given status must know how society expects him to play the role if he is going to succeed” (Ibid, 58).

Three new Testament passages are available for our consideration: Eph. 5:18-33; Col. 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

A. The husband’s role

1. A leader-Ephesians 5:22; Josh. 24:14-15
2. A lover-Ephesians 5:25, 28
3. A learner-1 Peter 3:7

1 Peter 3:7 clearly indicates that one’s spiritual life will be impacted by the marital relationship (Col. 3:18-19; 1 Tim. 3:2)

As a leader, lover and learner, the pastoral husband must set the tone in decision-making, discipline, devotions, discernment and dedication to serve.

Problems come in this foundational relationship when the pastoral husband is diverted from his family role by this profession. Therefore, every pastor-husband ought to be forewarned about the following:

- a. Too many evenings away.
- b. Too many extra hours in other employment.

- c. Too much willingness to drop family responsibilities in order to provide help for others.

- d. Too little attention to the needs of the wife because the needs of the ministry have drained all energy (Prov. 5:18).

Discussion: What of the philosophy that says, “I’ll care for God’s business, and He’ll watch out for my kids?” (1 Tim. 5:8)

A number of years ago, a survey was conducted asking Christian women, “What does your husband do that makes you feel loved?” The top seven answers were as follows:

- (1) A sympathetic awareness and understanding of the wife’s simple, everyday problems.
- (2) Thoughtfulness in little things (calling home when he’ll be late for dinner, helping with the chores, bringing home a small gift).
- (3) Verbal assurance
- (4) Physical attention (women are touch-oriented).
- (5) A positive attitude
- (6) Feeling needed
- (7) A right relationship with the Lord.

B. The wife’s role

The pastor’s wife can often feel like a “third wheel” between her husband and his ministry. Often, expectations for the pastor’s wife are unrealistic. It is best to remember that the Bible is the defining authority for her role as wife of the pastor.

1. The wife is to be in submission to her husband (Eph. 5:22).
2. The wife is to be supportive of her husband (Gen. 2:18).

Discussion regarding the ramification of the above statement and the role that the pastor’s wife plays within the church:

Dr. and Mrs. Walter Fremont discuss 8 ways women attempt to control their husbands in their book *Formula for Family Unity*. Fremonts' list includes: scheduling, spending, sex, sickness, sobbing, spirituality, silence, suicide, or divorce threats. "Researchers have found that delinquent children usually come from homes in which the mother dominated and the father lacked authority" (*Formula for Family Unity*, Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1980).

C. The couples' role

God's Word has always placed a high requirement of integrity upon those who lead in spiritual endeavor. The pastor and his wife become the role model couple for the church (Leviticus 21; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1).

1. The pastor and his wife become models of the relationship between Christ and His church (Eph. 5).
2. The pastor and his wife must be models of purity. Failure in this vital area will produce devastating results:
 - a. The removal of God's blessing (Prov. 28:13; Ps. 51)
 - b. The reaping of awful judgment (Gal. 6:3).
 - c. The ruin of the testimony of one's life and ministry (Titus 2).
 - d. The risk of scandalous lawsuits (Titus 2:10).
3. The pastor and his wife must be aware of the primary causes of ministerial infidelity.
 - a. The counseling trap
 - b. The companion trap
 - c. The carelessness trap
 - (1) Be careful of your actions (Rom. 14:16; Matt. 6:13).

Suggestions:

- (2) Be careful of your past (Dr. 22:28-29).

Question: What of moral failure and the ministry? Should there be room for restoration to ministry?

II. The riches of the pastor—Luke 16:1-12

Spiritual stewardship is impacted by financial stewardship (Luke 16:11). The effective pastor must determine to be a careful steward of his wealth!

A. Receiving pay

There are those who live by the “Mueller mentality” believing it to be inappropriate for pastors to be paid. Consider the following:

1 Corinthians 9:7-14

1 Timothy 5:17-18

1. The results of being underpaid may be as follows:
 - a. The pastor’s testimony is marred by his failure to meet his obligations.
 - b. The pastor spends his time in secular employment rather than spiritual pursuit (Acts 6).
 - c. The pastor is tempted to allow his talents to be used elsewhere (another church, itinerant work, etc.).
 - d. Young people hold the ministry in lowesteem.
2. The results of being overpaid may be as follows:
 - a. One’s good is evil spoken of (Romans 14:16).
 - b. Attentions are diverted from the spiritual task to the physical treasure (1 Timothy 6:17).

B. The pastor—a responsible person (1 Tim. 6:10)

The Word of God has a great deal to say about our finances. Each of the Bible’s instruction must be scrupulously followed for God’s blessings to be known:

WHY ADULTEROUS PASTORS SHOULD NOT BE RESTORED

Repentance is not enough for returning fallen ministers to the pulpit.

R. KENT HUGHES AND JOHN H. ARMSTRONG

"Genuine forgiveness does not necessarily imply restoration to leadership," former CT editor Kenneth Kantzer once wrote after the moral failure of several prominent evangelical leaders. Yet the impulse to link forgiveness with restoration to ministry remains strong. Here two pastor-theologians argue for the importance of keeping separate the restoration to the body of Christ and restoration to pastoral leadership.

The North American church is seriously vexed by the question, "What shall we do with an adulterous pastor?" Over the past decade, the church has been repeatedly staggered by revelations of immoral conduct by some of its most respected leaders. How do we respond to those who have sexually fallen and disgraced themselves, shamed their families, and debased their office?

The typical pattern goes like this: The pastor is accused and convicted of sexual sin. He confesses his sin, often

with profound sorrow. His church or denominational superiors prescribe a few months, or often one year, in which time he is encouraged to obtain professional counsel. Then he is restored to his former office, sometimes in another location. He is commonly regarded as a "wounded healer," one who now knows what it means to fall, to experience the grace of God profoundly.

While each situation must be handled with pastoral wisdom, and some fallen pastors indeed might someday be restored to leadership, we believe this increasingly common scenario is both biblically incorrect and profoundly harmful to the well-being of the fallen pastor, his marriage, and the church of Jesus Christ. Our Lord Jesus was tempted in all points just as we are, yet it was his testing, not any failure, that made him strong. If we do not think clearly, we may be subtly encouraging people to grievous sin so they might experience more grace and thus minis-

ter more effectively. Incredibly, in the present context, some are saying things that imply just this notion.

THE FORGIVENESS APPROACH

The commonly held view reasons that a repentant and forgiven minister who was previously qualified for pastoral office remains qualified on the basis of God's forgiveness. Was he qualified previously? Has he confessed his sin? Has God forgiven him? Then we must also.

This logic rests upon the unbiblical assumption that forgiveness of sin is equivalent to the "blamelessness" (or unimpeachable character) required of pastors in 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6. If this thesis is accepted, all God requires is that a fallen pastor be forgiven.

But this confuses the basis of our fellowship with Christ with public leadership and office in church. No one argues that the fallen minister cannot be forgiven. No one should argue that he cannot be brought back into

"A MAN WHO COMMITS ADULTERY LACKS JUDGMENT; WHOEVER DOES SO DESTROYS HIMSELF." PROVERBS 6:32

the fellowship of Christ's visible church. But to forgive a fallen pastor and to restore him to membership in the church is much different than restoring him to the pastoral office.

The "forgiveness approach" is inadequate because it does not deal realistically with two facts: First, adultery is a *great* sin; and second, pastoral adultery is an even *greater* sin.

Of-repeated fallacies sometimes achieve the status of received truth—such as the notion that there is no essential difference between mental adultery and the actual physical act (see Matt. 5:27–28; James 2:10). To the contrary, we believe, in concert with the historic interpretation of the church, that while lust, jealousy, pride, and hatred will send a person to hell as surely as their outward manifestations (adultery, fornication, and murder), the physical manifestations are greater sins because of the damage they do to both the person who sins and the ones sinned against.

Adultery is a great sin precisely because it breaks the covenant of marriage. It violates another's body. It may prove to be grounds for divorce. Mental adultery does none of this. Jesus' intention in Matthew 5:27–28 was not to reduce adultery to the level of lust, but to show that lust would destroy the soul as surely as adultery.

Likewise, compare the mental sin of hatred with the act of murder (see Matt. 5:21–22). In one the person who hates is harmed by the hatred, but in the other a life is taken. There is a difference!

Further, the immensity of adultery is seen in 1 Corinthians 6:18–20, where the apostle Paul argues that sexual sin is "against one's own body." The context of this passage reveals that sexual sin is in a category of its own. Sexual relationships violate the union that exists between a man and woman wherein they become "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). It is the depth of this union, recognized by God with a covenant, that shows how profound its violation is in the light of eternity.

Charles Hodge wrote in the last century that 1 Corinthians 6 teaches that fornication "is altogether peculiar in its effects upon the body; not so much in its physical as in its moral and spiritual effects." Paul is telling the

Corinthians that one's entire body and soul, hence all that a person is as a human personality, is involved in sexual relationship. Hence, profound damage results from such sin.

Hodge further says that adultery is a sin against one's own body because it is "incompatible . . . with the design of its creation, and with its immortal destiny." Contemporary New Testament scholar Gordon Fee writes in the same vein, "The unique nature of sexual sin

here means "not to be hid hold of," or unassailable. William Hendriksen says of this blamelessness, "Enemies may bring all manner of accusations, but these charges are proved to be empty whenever fair methods of investigations are applied."

Adultery is not the only sin that disqualifies a minister from office, but it is one of the more visible and confusing sins plaguing the church in our time.

What is particularly troublesome

It was Jesus' testing, not any failure, that made him strong.

is not so much that one sins against one's own self, but against one's own body as viewed in terms of its place in redemptive history" (emphasis ours).

Pastoral adultery, moreover, is an even greater sin. Why? Some sins are more damaging than others precisely because of who it is that commits them. As the *Westminster Larger Catechism* (Questions 150–51) reasons, persons who are eminent for their profession, gifts, and office are particularly serious offenders because of their influence upon others. This added seriousness is found in every case of a minister who commits adultery. Add to this James 3:1, which suggests that pastors will be held to stricter judgment, and we have a strong argument that pastoral adultery is an even graver sin than adultery in general.

The forgiveness approach, though appealed to by many today as a compassionate response to sexually fallen ministers, actually lacks compassion: it does not deal with the depth of the issue itself.

But why does adultery *disqualify* a minister from office?

THE BLAMELESS APPROACH

Straightforward explanations of what it is that qualifies one for pastoral ministry are given in several places in the Pastoral Epistles. 1 Timothy 4:12 provides a summary statement: ". . . set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." Titus 1:6 further adds, "An elder must be blameless . . ." The Greek word

about this sin today is the abuse of power that often attends it. Deep pain is brought to the sexual partner in a clergy affair, and even deeper pain to the minister's wife. The minister, given an honored office through which he is called to serve abused and vulnerable people, violates that very trust by becoming, himself, a violator.

Anglican Michael Peers, speaking at the Toronto Centre for the Family's symposium on sexual abuse by clergy, explains, "[This] is a deep-rooted and dark" problem, and it is often protected by the twin demons of "denial and control." Don Posterski writes, "When the power [of ministry] is used for sexual gratification it clearly constitutes the sexual abuse of power."

It saddens us that so few "fallen" leaders recognize the abuse of power inherent to pastoral adultery. And even fewer are willing to discuss the destruction of trust that their sins have effected. Many borrow psychotherapeutic concepts such as *healing* and *recovery* as rationales for returning to pastoral ministry, but with no genuine recognition of the pathology that manifests itself in the abuse of power.

The consensus of church history argues strongly that pastoral adultery disqualifies the minister. Lutheran historian Carl A. Volz categorically states in *Pastoral Life and Practice in the Early Church* that the church debarred pastors from public ministry "through moral lapse" and "heresy." He notes that ordination did not protect pres-

byters: what was conferred could be removed. The noted second-century presbyter, Hippolytus, powerfully assailed immorality among church leaders and insisted on their *immediate* removal from office. The early second-century document *The Teaching of the Apostles* states that the one who had been ordained but subsequently disobeyed God's Word should be disqualified, because the man had lied in taking his vows of loyalty and purity before Christ and his church. Such a violation of ordination vows was seen as an egregious breach of the third commandment.

The same views were held by the Protestant Reformers. Calvin, in *The Register of the Company of Pastors*, prescribes: "In order to obviate all scandals of conduct it will be needful to have a form of discipline for ministers . . . to which all are to submit themselves. This will help ensure that the minister is treated with respect and the Word of God is not brought into dishonor and scorn by the evil fame of ministers. Moreover, as discipline will be imposed on him who merits it, so also there will be no need to suppress slanders and false reports that may unjustly be uttered against those who are innocent."

As has been established, the office requires the minister to be "blameless." There can be no doubt that 1 Timothy 3:1-7 requires, among other qualities, that the *episkopos* (or overseer of the church) be a "one-woman man," that is, a man of moral purity whose wife is his only sexual partner. He is required to be a man who keeps the covenant of God and keeps his "marriage bed pure" (Heb. 13:4). Paul stressed to the church in Ephesus, where sexual sin was common among pagan unbelievers, there should not be "even a hint of sexual immorality" in the church (Eph. 5:3).

Tragically, covenant breaking of this type places a lasting reproach on the fallen minister, and this will have long-term consequences. Wise Solomon gave it wistful expression: "But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself. Blows and disgrace are his lot, and his shame will never be wiped away" (Prov. 6:32-33, NIV).

One of the troubling questions

often raised regarding this matter of being "blameless" is this: Is the public knowledge of the sin the issue in the minister being blameless, or is there something in the nature of the sin itself that makes blamelessness a deeper matter than public knowledge? To put it bluntly, can the man become blameless by moving to another community and church and starting over? Here, it is often argued, others will not know of his past failure.

But a change in geography will not diminish the blame, because the sin is so dynamically disintegrative. As such, it will likely come to light again, as John Chrysostom, the early church bishop (347-407) explained: "The minister's shortcomings simply cannot be concealed. Even the most trivial soon get known."

Perhaps some might eventually become qualified to return again to pastoral office, perhaps after being ordained again. And it cannot be exegetically proven that a fallen minis-

preaching the Word of God as his servant, and yet to have been committing adultery reveals a massively toxic character flaw that poisons all of life. One fallen minister, many years after his own failure, writes: "In my case, moral failure was the sin which was visible to the church. There were, much to my chagrin, other issues which were perhaps more heinous to God than that which was visible to man. It takes time to root these out and replace them with godly characteristics."

Sober warning has been given in 1 Corinthians 9:25-27, where the apostle Paul argues that the lack of diligent restraint of the flesh may lead one into apostasy. This danger needs to be weighed carefully in dealing with pastors who have fallen. Consider how subtly sexual sin permeates the whole human personality—whether illicit sex is used to feed a person's sense of power, need for affection, self-image, sense of desirability and attractiveness, hedonistic drive, or all of these—and

Remaining in public ministry will in some cases foster deeper self-deception, leading men to eternal ruin in the final day.

ter can never be restored to office. But this does not argue against the flow of our understanding, for the vital question the church faces in our time is not what might happen in exceptional cases, but rather, how can we protect and help the woman or woman sinned against by the minister? How can we minister to the pastor's wife and children, those most sinned against in this lapse? What can be done to preserve the church spiritually and morally? What are we to do to help this minister begin the long ordeal of sorting out his devastated life?

Adultery establishes that the fallen minister is not able to serve with integrity. The issue is not usefulness to the church or giftedness in the pulpit. To have stood before the flock, leading them in holy worship week after week,

you will sense the danger here. We sincerely believe that remaining in public ministry will in some cases foster deeper self-deception, leading men to eternal ruin in the final day.

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?

The fallen minister who confesses sin, seeks God's grace, and desires to remain in fellowship with the church of Christ, must be welcomed and received as any fallen Christian. He must be forgiven as Jesus commands (Matt. 18:22). But forgiveness and restoration to the fellowship of the church does not mean the former minister now meets the qualifications for holding the office of pastor/elder.

The church is not to punish the repenting man who has fallen. But refusing to return him to the role of

pastoral ministry is not punishment. To remove a fallen minister is to honor God's holy standards; it is to follow the counsel and pattern of leaders over the centuries; it is to protect the man himself and his family; and it is to guard the church body, loved so dearly by the Chief Shepherd.

The Bible tells of several prominent fallen leaders who had significant roles after their failure. Moses, David, and Peter immediately come to mind. But we must not rush to employ these three examples in discussing morally fallen pastors. Consider several important matters. (1) Moses' sin of murder came 40 years before his leadership began, and he spent a virtual lifetime in the desert following this serious fall. (2) David's sin would have brought the death penalty to anyone else. Further, he was a Middle Eastern, harem-keeping potentate, not a domestic role model for New Testament shepherds. Remember also that his kingdom and family never knew peace after his moral turpitude; his throne never regained its full stability. (3) Peter's sin was serious, but it was not "against the body" (1 Cor. 6:18), and while it was a character sin, it was not the kind of volitional and cavalier deception that is characteristic of adultery. Neither was it premeditated, prolonged, or repeated in darkness.

We conclude with the wise plea and rationale of a fallen anonymous minister to his fellow servants who have fallen: "The question is character and integrity. Yours are shattered. I plead with you, face the issue now! God's grace does restore. There is hope. However, that requires a process, much time, and even more grace. Confess, step down. Become accountable. Seek the cleansing and healing you need. Do it this day, do it now!"

R. Kent Hughes is pastor of College Church in Wheaton, Illinois, and author of numerous books, including Are Evangelicals Born Again? (Crossway). John H. Armstrong is director of Reformation & Revival Ministries. Author of Can Fallen Pastors Be Restored? The Church's Response to Sexual Misconduct (Moody), which expands on the ideas in this article.

1. Debt
 - Prov. 3:27-28
 - Prov. 6:1-5
 - Ps. 37:21
2. Lending money
 - Ps. 112:5
 - Prov. 19:17
 - Luke 6:34-35
 - Dt. 23:19-20
3. Saving money
 - Prov. 21:20
 - Prov. 6:6-8
 - Lk. 12:16-21
4. Giving money
 - Dt. 8:16-18
 - 1 Cor. 16:1-2
 - 2 Cor. 8:7
 - Mal. 3:10
 - Prov. 3:9-10

C. The pastor—a right perspective

Phil. 4:19

Matt. 6:33

Matt. 6:19-21

1. The pastor should carefully and clearly communicate his needs to the leaders of the church who are responsible to set his salary (1 Pe. 5:2).
2. The pastor should never allow himself to be hindered in ministry because of personal finances (1 Sam. 8:1-3).
3. The pastor must provide for his household in a God-honoring way (1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Tim. 3:3).
4. The pastor must be “above reproach” as a financial steward to his government (Matt. 22:21).
 - a. S.S.I.
 - b. Taxation
5. The pastor must be careful to avoid financial temptation:
 - a. Easy—access to church funds
 - b. Willingness to solicit financial favors

III. The child-rearing of the pastor

The pastor's ability to manage will be on display each week in the behavior of the pastor's children.

A. Children—our priority—Ps. 127; Prov. 22:6; Dt. 6:7

1. They must be brought up in the ‘nurture and the admonition of the Lord’ (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21).
 - a. Such training requires time.
 - b. Such training requires tenderness (Prov. 4:3).
2. They must be well-disciplined to be well-disciplined. (Dt. 6; Prov. 19:18)
Disciplinary tips:

B. Children—our perspective

Many “P.K.’s” grow up feeling sad about their lot in life. Pastor’s should carefully teach their children . . .

1. That the ministering home is special (1 Tim. 1:12; 3:15-17).
2. That the ministry is shared.

Discussion: What to do when a pastor’s child goes astray—Prov. 17:25.

DOES A PRODIGAL CHILD MAN FROM SPIRITUAL



An evangelist is declared
unfit for ministry because
his teenage daughter
has committed immorality.
A missionary is recalled because
his daughter is rebellious, and
he is therefore deemed
"disqualified." A pastor is
asked to resign because his
teenage son stole from the
local department store.

THE RESULT?

Three potential leaders
are on the verge
of losing their life's
ministry because
their failure as parents
has rendered them unfit
for leadership.

TODAY'S CHRISTIAN PREACHER 4

TODAY'S CHRISTIAN PREACHER

VOLUME SEVEN, NUMBER ONE - SUMMER 1999

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TODAY'S CHRISTIAN PREACHER is published by GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP ASSOCIATION, a ministry dedicated to the spread of the gospel throughout the world, with headquarters at 1809 Wade Hampton Blvd., Suite 130, Greenville, SC 29609. Subscriptions are free. Contributions to this not-for-profit ministry are always welcome and encouraged. Copies can be requested for use by pastors, those involved in Christian ministry, and those training for the ministry. Call 1-800-723-0210 for subscription registration. Editorial and advertising offices can be reached at PO Box 100, Morgantown, PA 19543. Address e-mail to tcpubs@mkpt.com using the world-wide Internet.

Managing Editor- JERRY THACKER
Assistant Editor- ELAINE WILLIAMS
Copy Editor- PAUL PETERS
Graphic Design- DOURNEY DESIGN CREW

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DOES A PRODIGAL CHILD DISQUALIFY A MAN FROM SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP? What if a child of a preacher gets into trouble? Rebels? Resists? Too often the father is quickly removed. But careful reflection might lead us to restore the child and preserve the man and his ministry.
DR. JIM BINNEY

EPHESUS REVISITED An experienced preacher wonders whether the Lord would have the same complaints now that he had with the first-century Ephesian church. Does He have somewhat against us? DR. HAL WEBB

HELPING OTHERS COPE Not often do we have the opportunity to see our ministries as others do. The personal grief of a pastor helps him see how others pastored his own family.
DANNY VON KANEL

PROTECTING THE PREACHER FROM INTERNET PORN All the discipline and safeguards in the world will not protect you from Internet filth if you do not take charge of the private, secret moments in your study in front of your computer. ANONYMOUS

INSIDE ADDITION!

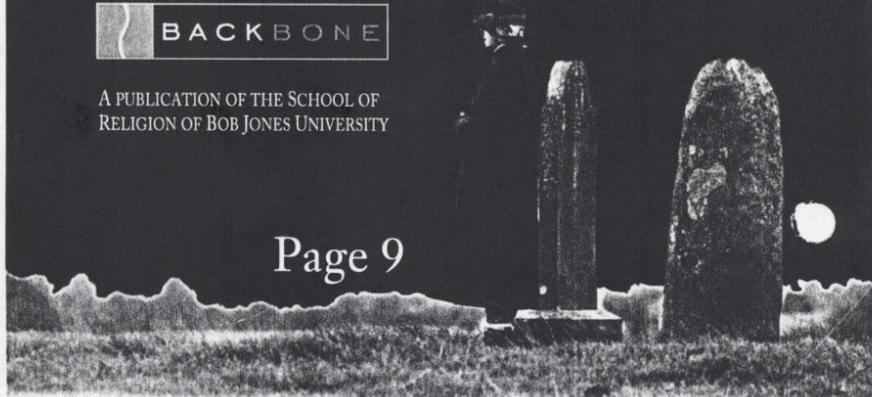


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DISQUALIFY A LEADERSHIP?

Such conclusions are exacting a heavy toll on the church. Pastors and their wives have become discouraged by the pressure to rear "perfect" children. Parents of "good" children judge other parents, while parents with "wayward" children carry enormous guilt. Children of leaders resent their fishbowl existence and the unyielding demands of ministry. Christians at large hurl criticism at hurting leaders. Pressure comes for resignations; and, indeed, many conscientious spiritual leaders do resign their positions and leave the ministry. And what happens to children who see themselves as the cause of ministry failure? Does not that "roaring lion" seek to devour these weakest of family members?

Few questions plague the church like the ones swirling around the issue of the leadership qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, and few standards have been more misused than the ones relating to the leader and his children. Many have automatically assumed that any problem in parenting disqualifies a man for service. Hasty conclusions and accusations too often are intended to serve the cause of the "accuser of the brethren" by bringing down a godly leader, rather than rectifying the situation and restoring the brother.

A re-examination of the Scriptures is in order. While there is certainly a need to maintain high standards of conduct for the pastor, the passages cited may be intended

primarily for use before the pastor's call. It appears that the emphasis in these verses is to establish sound qualifications before enlistment or endorsement.

1 Timothy 3 begins: "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Next are listed the qualifications for the office.

The context indicates that the qualifications are for the volunteer

to consider before seeking the office.

Titus 1 bears out the same meaning.

Before the qualifications are listed, Paul clearly

instructs Titus to

"ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee," and then

follows immediately with the qualifications of the elders he should

seek to appoint. On one hand, the seeker

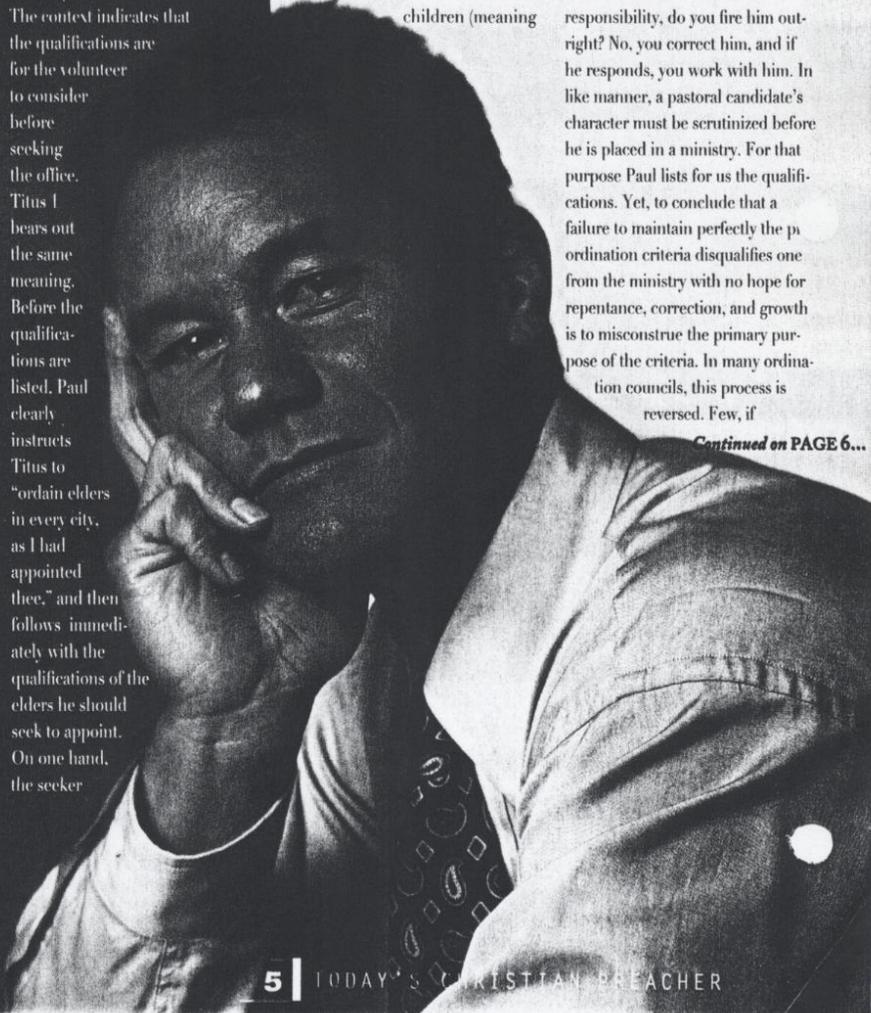
of the office is faced with the necessary qualifications. On the other hand, the appointer of men is provided with qualifications for which to look. Nonetheless, in each case the emphasis is on qualifying the leader before ordination, rather than after.

It certainly makes sense that before a man is ordained he should meet some minimum standards as an indication of his maturity. However, to assume that these qualifications can in no way be transgressed goes too far. A man should be blameless, of good behavior, patient, not self-willed, not soon angry, temperate, and have faithful children (meaning

"children who believe"). But how do we deal with failure after ordination? Which failure in these areas disqualifies a man? Who determines whether it is a sufficiently serious offense? Who is to say that sin or failure in these areas cannot be confessed, forsaken, and forgiven, allowing the man to remain in his ministry?

Before hiring a man to work on your staff you will review his résumé, check his references, and scrutinize his work record. Why? Because you want to take every precaution to insure that the man is qualified for the position. However, if after he is hired he fails in his responsibility, do you fire him outright? No, you correct him, and if he responds, you work with him. In like manner, a pastoral candidate's character must be scrutinized before he is placed in a ministry. For that purpose Paul lists for us the qualifications. Yet, to conclude that a failure to maintain perfectly the ordination criteria disqualifies one from the ministry with no hope for repentance, correction, and growth is to misconstrue the primary purpose of the criteria. In many ordination councils, this process is reversed. Few, if

Continued on PAGE 6...



Continued from PAGE 5..

any, questions are asked about the candidate's marriage, morals, or children. In contrast, questions abound about his knowledge, philosophy,

Who is qualified to say when a PASTOR is actually unfit because of his CHILDREN'S misbehavior? The issues will not always be BLACK AND WHITE.

methodology, and doctrinal persuasion. Why is so little attention paid to a man's character before his ordination and so much emphasis placed on it afterwards? Maybe we need to "accuse the brethren" less after the fact and examine them more before.

The same is true with church membership. We examine new members carefully to be assured of the genuineness of their conversion. Then we accept them into the church family. But does that examination guarantee a sinless life after they join the church? And what if they do sin? We confront them in love and discipline them, if necessary, to the point of excommunication. Why? We do it with the ultimate objective of restoring them.

Just as our goal in disciplining an employee or church member is to restore, so should be the goal in dealing with the pastor's child who has failed. Rod Bell writes of the missionary mentioned above whose daughter rebelled.

"He had to leave the mission board because [they] asked him to come home since his family was not in subjection to him. They said he had disqualified himself from the ministry. I told him to be patient and to love his daughter with tough love and work through the situation. He certainly was on top of the situation. He was a good disciplinarian, and not only that, but a tender and compassionate man. He stayed on the field, left the mission board, and went out

for our church. I counseled him weekly by phone and letters. God gave his daughter the victory. She is

now 18 years old, and God has called her to the mission field. While a man must realize he has a holy obligation to have his family under subjection,

there is not a family on the face of God's earth that does not go through some trials with teenagers. Therefore, we must treat our children as God treats His children."

Look carefully at Paul's reason for these qualifications. "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" (1 Timothy 3:4, 5). The issue is the quality of the leadership, not the perfection of the follower. It is the responsibility of the father and pastor that is under consideration, not the response of the child or church member. Whether a pastor rules well or not is seen in the leader's response, not in the member's misbehavior. If the pastor confronts the sin lovingly and biblically, he has ruled well. In like manner, if the father confronts the sin of his children lovingly and biblically, he has ruled well. Few pastors are asked to resign over a wayward member if they have handled the situation properly.

Ruling well certainly includes discipline, but the need for discipline presupposes misbehavior. To require discipline from leaders on the one hand and to demand the absence of any misbehavior on the other hand is contradictory. It is not the absence of misbehavior that qualifies a man for leadership, but his response to it. John Vaughn elaborates:

"What does it mean for a pastor to 'rule well'? Does it mean he has no disobedient members in his congregation? If one of them requires discipline, is he disquali-

fied? To 'rule well' means to stand in front and lead, to set an example (as an elder) of the truth he is enforcing (as a bishop). To assume that a man seeking the office is permanently unqualified or that a man in the office is automatically disqualified by the disobedience of his child is not illustrated in the many examples of Old Testament leaders whose sons were disobedient. Even the example of Eli teaches that the failure for which he was removed from the priesthood (by death) was that his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not (1 Samuel 3:13)."

There is a link between management in the family and in the church. The home is the proving ground for the leadership needed in the church. The requirements of the church mirror the requirements of the home. Our response to a pastor's leadership in the home should parallel our response to his leadership in the church. The same standards should apply in each.

At some point, of course, a general pattern of disobedience may indicate a lack of gifts, an inability to lead, or an absence of spirituality. This will be revealed first in the home. The leader is required to have "his children in subjection with all gravity" (1 Timothy 3:4). His children must be "faithful, not accused of riot or unruly" (Titus 1:6). Obviously, if five out of five children are publicly insubordinate, disobedient, ungodly, and accused of unrestrained sinfulness, the leader's credentials may require new scrutiny. But what if most of his children are living for the Lord? Dr. Bob Jones, III comments:

"If a preacher has a household of children who are rotten, rebellious, or lewd and dissolute, he is unqualified to preach. I'm not sure, however, if one child goes astray and the others turn out well that a preacher is disqualified. I think that we're unscripturally hard on

Christian fathers in ministry when one child goes bad. We don't take into account the perfidy of the Devil. It is possible for a child to go bad in spite of the best parenting and the best examples from father and mother. Each child is a free moral agent. Adam and Eve were God's children, and they exercised their free moral choice against God and for sin in a perfect moral environment."

Who is qualified to say when a pastor is actually unfit because of his children's misbehavior? That decision will rest upon the conscience of the pastor and the governance of the church body. Earnest prayer, diligent study of the Word, and godly counsel are needed in such a case. The issues will not always be black and white. A letter-of-the-law approach will not work here. Each situation must be weighed individually rather than by a hard and fast rule. As Bell says, "I think each circumstance should be judged on the effectiveness and diligence with which the pastor deals with his family. . . . In each circumstance, everything must be judged upon its own merit." ■

CONCLUSION

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SORTING THROUGH ALL THE ISSUES IN MAKING A DECISION REGARDING THE PASTOR'S FITNESS RESTS UPON THE LOCAL CHURCH. LET THE BURDEN OF PROOF BE UPON THE PERSON WHO IS CHALLENGING A PASTOR'S FITNESS TO LEAD BASED ON HIS CHILDREN'S MISBEHAVIOR. DARE ANYONE TAKE A CASUAL APPROACH TO THIS? CAVALIER CONCLUSIONS AND HASTY JUDGMENTS MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE WORD OF GOD FOR FINAL DISPOSITION. ANY DECISION TO DISQUALIFY A LEADER BASED ON HIS CHILD'S WAYWARDNESS DEMANDS THAT THE ACCUSER BE FULLY PERSUADED IN HIS OWN MIND. ARE YOU?

IV. The recreation of the pastor—Ecc. 3:1-8

Americans desire “free time.” We live in a recreation-oriented society (2 Tim. 3:4; Luke 8:14; Titus 3:3; Prov. 21:17; Ecc. 2:1). The pastoral life is not immune from the temptations offered in recreational pursuit. Ethical pastors live by the following recreational rules:

- A. I will work a 40-hour week (Eph. 5:16).
- B. I will be free from recreational entanglements (2 Tim. 2:4; 1 Tim. 4:8).
- C. I will exercise recreational purity (1 Cor. 10:31).

Leading recreational problems include:

- 1. Viewing habits—Job 31:1
- 2. Abundant expenditures
- 3. Lost time--Ephesians 4:28

The Pastor and His Flock

“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” 1 Pe. 5:2-3.

“Relationships are more important in ministry than in any other profession” (Trull and Carter, 94).

Before discipleship comes friendship. As the pastor performs the work of edifying the flock, he must walk before them with a perfect heart (Ps. 101:2).

I. Counseling ethics

A. The ethical duty of counseling confidentiality.

There are 2 kinds of confidentiality: traditional and privileged. Pastors who counsel must be familiar with their ethical duties as they pertain to confidentiality in order to avoid reproach or litigation.

1. What are the implications of a pastor’s confidential relationships?
2. Are there any times when confidentiality should be broken?
3. When is confidentiality most at risk?

B. The ethical duty of counseling care—the Bible is our only source of authority and guidance in counseling (Ps. 1).

1. Counseling women:
 - a. The setting must be above reproach—window/witness.
 - b. The content divulged must be above reproach.

c. Beware of dishonoring a spouse.

- d. Beware of protracted sessions leading to dependence.
 - e. Beware of perpetuated sessions leading to dependence.
2. Counseling couples: Gal. 6:2; Rom. 15:4; Rom. 15:14)

Explain:

“The spiritually superior spouse syndrome”

The need for “couples to counsel couples.”

3. Counseling after care
- a. Take careful notes
 - b. File securely
 - c. Follow-up appropriately
 - d. Never illustrate from counseling sessions.

PASTORAL COUNSELING WITH WOMEN

PASTORAL ETHICS

FAITH BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DR. CHARLES R. PHELPS

100

BY

GREGORY B. LONG

15 JANUARY 1998



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Introduction

God gives several qualifications in His Word for those whom He calls to be pastors. One of the qualifications, listed in 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6, is that a pastor must be “blameless,” or “above reproach” (NIV). Yet many pastors have fallen from this standard, and are no longer “above reproach.”

One specific area where this has happened is the area of moral purity. Although the sin is certainly not rampant, many of us know of a pastor or pastors who have fallen into immorality. Still others have been accused of impropriety, rightly or wrongly, and their ministries have been ruined.

Because of this danger, the pastor’s relationship with those of the opposite sex must be closely examined in every aspect of his ministry, including his counseling ministry. Has the relationship between the pastor as a counselor and a woman as his counselee caused problems? If it has, why is this so? What are some steps that can be taken to alleviate or avoid this danger? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed solution? These are the questions that each church, pastor, and prospective pastor must answer.

The Problem With Men Counseling Women

Is It a Problem?

General Misconduct Among Pastors

One would like to think that the pastor, who is instructed to teach others the principles found in the Word of God and model them in his own life, would never fail in such a serious matter with such grave consequences. This is not the case, though. In the Winter 1988 issue of *Leadership* magazine, the editors reported the results of a survey of around three hundred pastors. Truell and Carter summarized the results as following:

12 percent of the ministers polled admitted having had sexual intercourse with someone other than their spouse since they had been in the ministry. 33 percent of those polled acknowledged “sexually inappropriate” behavior with someone other than their spouse without any definition of that contact. Another 18 percent confessed to other forms of sexual contact with someone other than their spouse (Truell and Carter 1993, 81).

The results of a 1984 survey were very similar:

*M. Almost
misses?*

pastor that he has known who has fallen morally in a counseling relationship had intended to help the person he was counseling and that none of these pastors had intended to fall (telephone interview, 30 December 1997).

The third factor LaHaye mentioned that can contribute to sexual sin is the power of emotional attraction. Mark McMinn, chair of the Wheaton College psychology department, says, "Counseling is an incredibly intense experience, and people need to deal with the issues of sexual attraction in counseling." He supervised the surveying of 900 Christian counselors in 1996 and found that *less than half, only 41 percent, of these counselors reported never experiencing sexual attraction toward a client* (Cagney 1997, 90)!

Why is the counseling experience such an "incredibly intense" one, and why does it lead to such feelings of sexual attraction? One factor, of course, could be the issues that might be discussed. If a woman comes for counseling regarding issues of a sexual or physical nature, it may conjure up feelings or images in the counselor's mind.

Also, the pastor may be flattered by the fact that this woman views him as an authority figure and respects him enough to go to him for help.

Problems can especially occur if the counselor senses that the woman is in any way attracted to him. This would also be very flattering to him, especially if he feels lonely or neglected by his church and/or his wife (Truell and Carter 1993, 83).

The Counselee

The feelings and attitudes of the counselee can also contribute to moral problems in the counseling relationship. Sometimes these feelings can start out unknowingly or unwillingly. Counselees can fall prey to "transference," which is defined as "the process in which people project their own (often unmet) needs onto an idealized figure." This can include dependency or romantic feelings (Blackmon and Hart 1990, 40, cited in Truell and Carter 1993, 83).

Some ministers may downplay this aspect because they do not consider themselves to be handsome or attractive in any way. According to Truell and Carter, though, the attractiveness of the counselor is not the main factor. They say, "These feelings can occur because of the role of the pastor as counselor, not because of the personal attractiveness or qualities of the minister" (Truell and Carter 1993, 83).

Some counselees may even be intentionally seductive and purposely attempt to cause the pastor to fall (Ibid.). Jay Adams suggests that some female counselees purposely use provocative conversation and/or actions with motives that are certainly less than pure (Adams 1970, 205). These women view the pastor as a person of power, and find intimacy with a powerful figure attractive (Ibid.). Or perhaps they

are unsatisfied with their own relationships with the opposite sex, and seek to satisfy their unmet needs in a person who is seen as caring and sensitive.

Suggested Solutions

Obviously, the relationship between the pastor and a female counselee can be a dangerous one. Although temptation can certainly be overcome, the Bible clearly commands to flee sexual temptation, not just resist it (Genesis 39; Proverbs 5:8; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 2 Timothy 2:22). Bad things happen when we put ourselves in the way of temptation (2 Samuel 11:1-4; Proverbs 7). Furthermore, the Bible commands us to refrain from doing things about which other people may speak evil, even if our intentions are good (Romans 14:16).

Therefore, what should be done to help prevent problems as the pastor counsels women? Some, such as Rassieur (and even his wife, who writes a chapter in his book!), say that the pastor should merely acknowledge his feelings, discuss them with his wife, perhaps admit them to the counselee, and continue the counseling sessions alone with her. I find their approach completely unacceptable. For instance, as he discusses his feelings of attraction with the women to whom he is attracted (1976, 106), he is simply bringing up and acknowledging the feelings between them. As stated below, one of the warning signs of sexual impropriety is a desire to turn the subject to sexual matters. The pastor's discussion of his feelings would therefore lead to more feelings!

No, clearly established boundaries and policies must be established before problems occur, rather than after (Blackmon and Hart 1990, 48, cited in Truell and Carter 1993, 87). The responsibility for maintaining these boundaries and avoiding temptation in a counseling relationship falls on the pastor (Lebacqz and Barton 1991, 107, cited in Truell and Carter 1993, 87). Following are some suggested solutions, along with the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Having a Staff Member Close at Hand

The pastor should start by insuring that the counseling session is not completely private or secluded. This can be accomplished by putting a window on the door of the pastor's study, by keeping the door of the room open so others can see in, or by counseling in an area in which others can see, but which still affords some degree of privacy (such as the auditorium).

Advantages

The advantage of this is that the counseling session is not totally secluded. Also, a window on the door can allow for observation, but still keeps the counseling conversation private, so that the counselee does not feel as though others are listening in on her.

Disadvantages

There are several disadvantages to this method. On the one hand, the latter two methods mentioned may cause the counselee to be self-conscious or reluctant to talk because others may be listening.

On the other hand, though a window on the door of the office may alleviate that problem, it goes back to the main problem, which is that feelings can develop between the pastor and counselee. Much of the problem, as will be stated later, can come from the conversation and from body language, none of which can be observed or prevented by the mere presence of someone in the building. Having a window on the door may prevent acts of indiscretion during the counseling session, but may not prevent the arousal of feelings which may lead to later acts of indiscretion.

Also, it requires another person in the building, whether that be the secretary or another staff member. In some small churches, the pastor is the only one who works at the church. Even if he is not, this method prevents the staff member from leaving or going to another part of the building for long periods of time.

Finally, though it would certainly help in reducing the temptations between the pastor and counselee, it could not effectively guard against accusations by one against another. If the counselee were to accuse the pastor of indiscretion during a counseling session, the mere fact that another person was in the building during the session might not be enough. What if the staff member never looked in the room? What if the act (which could be very brief) supposedly occurred when the staff member was not looking in the room? These may be hypothetical situations, but in today's society, an accusation is all it takes to ruin a ministry. And if the counselee charges that the act occurred when no one was observing, it is simply the word of the pastor against the word of the counselee.

The fact that this is a real danger is confirmed by H. Newton Malony, Thomas L. Needham, and Samuel Southard in their book *Clergy Malpractice*. They state:

Churches and clergy, like psychologists, are experiencing significant increases in suits alleging sexual misconduct. The charges include adulterous conduct, verbalized sexual desires, sexual-assault on minor children, and sexual abuse resulting from improper supervision of church activities, day-care centers, or church-related schools (1986, 22).

They quote John Cleary, corporate counsel for Church Mutual Insurance Company, who says that people are much more willing in today's churches to sue their clergy for alleged malpractice, including counseling malpractice (Ibid.). These suits can be costly, even if disproved.

For these very reasons, some churches, such as Grandview Park Baptist Church in Des Moines, Iowa, are taking extra precautions. For a time, every ten minutes the secretary was required to walk by the office of the pastor who was counseling, glance in, and write down on a schedule what she saw (telephone interview with Amy Pirozok, 31 December 1997). Of course, this still would not prevent accusations that something occurred in between observations! This would also severely inconvenience and limit the secretary.

Having an Observer or Co-Counselor in the Room

Another option is to have another person in the room during the counseling session. This person could be male or female, but the better choice would be a man. Having another female (other than the pastor's wife) in the counseling session might eliminate some problems, but might create others! The close working relationship between the pastor and this other woman would create the same situations and might lead to the same feelings as the counseling situation could.

An observer would simply sit in on the session, and would be there only to act as a witness to what is going on in the room. A co-counselor would help the pastor counsel by giving additional insight and Biblical direction to the session.

Advantages

There are many advantages to having another person in the room during the counseling session, whether this person is an observer or a co-counselor. First, just the fact that another person is present can help both the counselor and counselee to be aware of their own personal feelings and to guard against inappropriate behavior. The pastor would probably be much more aware of his feelings, of how the discussion sounds to another person, and even of each person's body language.

Second, the other person can notice conversation or body language on the part of either the counselor or counselee that suggests feelings of attraction, even if the counselor or counselee doesn't recognize it. For instance, an observer may detect feelings on the part of a woman counselee that the pastor does not detect.

Truett and Carter cite the warning signals given by Karen Labacqz and Ronald G. Barton that show an unacceptable level of intimacy in the counseling relationship. These include:

- 1) The 'publicity' test: what would others think?;
- 2) Physical arousal--one's own or the other's;
- 3) Inordinate sexual fantasy;
- 4) Sexual gestures or body language;
- 5) Sexual innuendo in verbal exchange;
- 6) Intuition, instinct, or not feeling right;
- 7) Wanting to share intimacies that are not called for;
- 8) A parishioner wanting too much time or attention; and,
- 9) Wanting to shift the focus to sexual subjects (1991, 65).

Many of these could be prevented by having another person in the room. At the very least, that other person could sense when problems start to develop. Numbers four, six, seven, eight, and nine could be sensed by this other person, and number one would not be a problem, either!

Again, having the door open or having a window on the door may prevent instances of sexual misconduct, but would not prevent the feelings or warnings signs listed above that can lead to later, private misconduct.

Another advantage is that someone is present to act as a witness to what was said so that no one can twist the conversation, words, or intentions of the pastor. This is especially true when sexual issues are raised (Adams 1970, 205). One pastor I talked to confirmed that this is a valid concern. Pastor Rod Bradley of True Bible Baptist Church, Des Moines, Iowa, said that one woman in particular is a “thorn in [his] flesh” in his counseling ministry because she is a “liar” and will lie about what went on in the counseling room. For this reason, whenever this woman calls and requests counseling, he will not do it unless a deacon is available to join him in the room (telephone interview, 30 December 1997).

Finally, team counseling would reduce the chances that a predatory female would dare to use provocative conversation and actions (Adams 1970, 205).

Disadvantages

There are a few disadvantages to having an observer or co-counselor in the room. The counselee may not feel as willing to share her problems or feelings with two people in the room because she might wonder whether or not this other person would keep the information confidential. Or, two men may seem intimidating to her. However, the counselee could be reassured as to the privacy and confidentiality of the session, and to the care and concern of both counselors for her.

Second, having two men in the room with one woman would still not prevent charges of impropriety by the woman against both men. However, this seems a little far-fetched and would be much easier to defend than would be charges against one man.

Finally, team counseling ties up two people during that counseling hour rather than just one (Ibid.). It may be hard to find another person who can come in and join the pastor. Having another member on staff to help with counseling would help might solve this problem, though.

Having the Pastor's Wife as an Observer or Co-Counselor

The third option available to the pastor in the counseling relationship is to have his wife join him as either an observer or even as a co-counselor.

Advantages

There are many advantages to this counseling situation. All of the advantages of having another man in the room as an observer or co-counselor also applies to this option. One additional advantage, though, is that a woman might be even better at picking up signals from other woman who might have inappropriate intentions or who is starting to have inappropriate feelings. Pastor Richard Dayton of Urbandale Baptist Church of Urbandale, Iowa, called it his wife's "radar." He mentioned that once a woman visited Urbandale Baptist Church for the first time, and his wife told him that he should never be alone with this woman. Even though he had not been able to sense anything, his wife sure did (telephone interview, 30 December 1997). The same thing might happen in the counseling room.

Second, a pastor would be much more aware of his *own* feelings and communication with the counselee if his wife is in the room!

Third, on a more positive note, the pastor's wife may be able to help the pastor to counsel a woman. She may more readily identify with the feelings and struggles of the counselee, and may offer valuable advice that comes from a woman's point of view.

There may even be times when the counselee might break down in tears, and the pastor's wife would be able to offer some physical comfort and encouragement that the pastor would never be able to offer.

Disadvantages

There are a few disadvantages to this method. Some may raise a question as to the counseling "qualifications" of the pastor's wife. If she did not go to college or did not major in counseling in college, some may wonder if she should counsel other women. However, although education is certainly valuable and should not be downplayed, it is not necessarily the most important part of a counselor's qualifications. Galations 6:1 says that those who are "*spiritual*" should attempt to restore those trapped in sin. Titus 2:3-5 says that older women must first be reverent, self-controlled, not gossips, and teachers of what is good *before* they can teach the younger women how to live. The most important qualification according to God's Word, then, is spiritual maturity and a commitment to applying biblical principles to life situations.

Perhaps the major disadvantage to having the pastor's wife help in the counseling session comes when the pastor's family has young children or if the family homeschools their children. Who will watch these children while the parents counsel someone? If the counseling is done in the pastor's home, some arrangements can be made, but would still be inconvenient and might result in interruptions. The older the children get, the less this is a problem, unless of course they are homeschooled.

Referring the Counseling to a Woman in the Church

Several pastors I spoke with on the phone indicated that they sometimes refer women who need counseling to other women in the church. Some do this with every woman, others do so only when the subject matter is sensitive. For instance, Pastor Norman Hoag of Ankeny Baptist Church, Ankeny, Iowa, has an initial visit with the woman to determine the nature of her problem. After that, he asks that she come to the sessions with her husband, or else he turns the counseling over to his wife or another woman in the church (telephone interview, 30 December 1997). Pastor Chris Humberg of Altoona Baptist Church, Altoona, Iowa, much prefers to have his wife or another couple in the church do the counseling of women (telephone interview, 30 December 1997). Pastor Rod Bradley (True Bible Baptist Church) is attempting to choose and train deacon's wives to be spiritually mature so that they are able to do some counseling. Other pastors such as Pastor Richard Dayton (Urbandale Baptist Church) and Pastor Jeff Holeb of Fellowship Baptist Church, Des Moines, Iowa, do the counseling themselves unless it involves a sensitive issue, in which case they will let their wives handle the counseling (telephone interview, 30 December 1997).

Conclusion

Although having a window on the door or leaving the door open during counseling is certainly the minimum precaution that should be taken, it seems that it would not fully prevent many problems. Certain inappropriate feelings may arise in the counseling situation that could erode the pastor's defenses against moral sin. Also, the pastor would not be able to easily defend himself against false charges of moral impropriety.

For these reasons, it seems to me that the best option would be to have the pastor's wife either join him in the counseling room or conduct the counseling herself. If this is not possible, the pastor could refer the woman to other spiritually mature women in the congregation. If that is not feasible, either, the pastor should have another man with him in the counseling session to observe or co-counsel.

God expects the pastor to shepherd the flock, which includes comforting those who are cast down and warning those who have fallen into sin. The counseling ministry is a very important one, yet it is also one which has caused problems among pastors. Pastors must take every precaution to remain "above reproach," especially in the private, sensitive, and emotional area of counseling with women.!

9

*Great Paper!
Great Reason!
Great Conclusion!
You are a gifted writer
and should use
this talent for
our Lord
CBB*

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II. Marriage Ethics

A. Marriage

“It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. 2:18).

Marriage was God’s first institution. The home was created as the building block of society.

1. Defined: Marriage is a “covenant of companionship!” (Malachi 2:14; Prov. 2:17).
 - a. Because marriage is a covenant of companionship, infertility does not mean a marriage has failed (Psalm 127).
 - b. Because marriage is a covenant of companionship, impotence does not mean a marriage has failed (1 Cor. 7:3-6).
 - c. Because marriage is a covenant of companionship, immorality does not mean a marriage exists.
2. God’s plan
 - a. Ultimately, God’s plan is one man with one woman for one lifetime (Gen. 2:24-25; Mark 10:1-10; Eph. 5:31-32).
 - b. Pictorially, God’s plan is that the marriage of a man and woman portray the union of Christ and the church.
 - (1) A structured union (Eph. 5:22-24)
 - (2) A beneficial union (Eph. 5:26-27)
 - (3) A lasting union (Eph. 5:27)
 - (4) An intimate union (Eph. 5:30)
 - c. This portrait is so vital that the pastor should certainly consider his marital history as part of his qualification to lead (1 Tim. 3:2; Lev. 21:7).

B. Separation

Though the marital union is to be permanently maintained, there may be times when one would counsel separation (1 Cor. 7:5). A situation of violence or abuse may require temporary separation. If so, the counselor must let the couple know that the separation is temporary and restoration is the goal.

C. Divorce

Let this be clear, God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16). It is fearful to head toward divorce (Mark 10:9). Divorce indicates a problem with sin and a hard heart (Mark 10:5). We should avoid counseling a believer to seek divorce! With this indelibly in mind, note the following:

1. The Old Testament allowed divorce under certain conditions (Deuteronomy 24:1-4).
 - a. The divorce must be done thoughtfully (v. 1 “he hath found some uncleanness”).
 - b. The divorce must be done officially (v. 1 “a bill of divorcement”).
 - c. Remarriage was then allowed (v. 2).
 - d. After an intervening remarriage, the original couple could never be reconciled (v. 3).
 - e. Because the Lord had already forbidden adultery (ex. 20:14), we must not assume that the second marriage allowed in Deuteronomy 24 should be considered adulterous. To assume a second marriage is adultery would be to imply that God allowed perpetuated adultery. Such could never be!

2. The New Testament allows divorce in 3 instances:
 - a. In case of fornication (Matt. 5:31-32; Matt. 19:9). I personally believe this allows the annulment of illegal marriages (1 Cor. 5:1-4) rather than the allowance of divorcing because of adultery, nevertheless, grace must be given on this matter (Phelps).
 - b. In case of an unbelieving spouse wanting out (1 Cor. 7:13-15). Notice: When the unbelieving spouse leaves, the believer is no longer “in bondage” (v. 15). To say that the believer can never remarry is to keep the divorced believer married and definitely “bound.”
 - c. In case of a temporarily irreconcilable Christian couple (1 Cor. 7:10-11), this departure is condemned (v. 10). If the departure (divorce) occurs, reconciliation must be the goal.

D. Remarriage

When the topic of remarriage is addressed, battle lines are drawn. The following is offered as one considers remarriage.

1. There are those who believe that remarriage is tantamount to committing adultery (Matthew 5:31-32; Romans 7:1-4). A simple reading of these passages could definitely lead to such a conclusion. Yet, one needs to consider the following apparent contradictions:

- a. Does this mean the Lord allowed “*adultery*” when He allowed remarriage in Deuteronomy 24?
- b. Doesn’t 1 Corinthians 7:15 teach that a believer is no longer “*bound*” if his/her unsaved spouse leaves? How can we say “you are divorced and you cannot re-marry, because to do is to commit adultery” while teaching that a believer whose unbelieving spouse departs “ins not bound?”
- c. 1 Corinthians 7:27-28 indicates remarriage is permissible.
- d. 1 Corinthians 7 clearly recognizes the difference between “virgins” (v. 36) and “unmarried” (v. 8) individuals. Allowance is given for “unmarrieds” to marry.

Explain:

- 2. We must reconcile these apparent contradictions. Beginning with that which is obvious. Let’s review the “*adultery*” charge:

1 Corinthians 7:27-28

“Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou has not sinned.”

- a. There are only two ways to be “loosed” from a wife.
 - (1) Kill her
 - (2) Divorce her
- b. “*Loosed*” indicates the severing of a tie and can be translated as a divorce.
- c. Believing that Paul is counseling against divorce, one can assume he is allowing remarriage.
- d. Romans 7:1-4 is addressed to biblically literate believers (v. 1). These believers are instructed that if they marry another, while their spouse lives, they are to be called adulteress. This fits perfectly with 1 Corinthians 7:10-11. Believing couples are not to divorce. If a divorce comes, they must be reconciled or remain single! To do otherwise leads to an accusation of adultery.
- e. Matthew 5:31-32—Notice the _____ verb. The wife who has been put away is assumed to remarry. When she does so she is “*caused to commit adultery*.” In other words, apart from her choosing, this unfortunate allegation will be cast upon her by the spouse who divorced her. There is no way for her to protect herself

from the charge, nor is she responsible for causing the charge. She is passive.

- f. Mark 10:11-12—Here, the Lord speaks to a group seeking an “*easy way out*.” Their low view of marriage must be considered. The Lord says that a violation of marital vow by a light view of marital permanence is the same as adultery.

3. Who then can be remarried after divorce?

- a. Two believers who are reconciling—1 Corinthians 7:11
- b. A believer whose unsaved spouse has determined to end the marriage is no longer “bound” and thus free to remarry—1 Corinthians 7:15. (Note: sometimes a “*professing*” Christian must be seen as a publican—Matthew 18:17).

4. Are any prohibited from remarriage?

- a. A Christian couple involved in divorce, yet remaining faithful to the Lord may only remarry one another—1 Corinthians 7:11.
- b. If a second marriage occurred, the first marriage should not be re-established—Deuteronomy 24:1-5.

E. Marriage policies and the church

1. The pastor should formulate his personal views! Failure to decide is a copout.
2. The pastor should respect the views of the church he pastors, especially if those views have been long established.
3. The pastor should communicate and hold his personal convictions once policies are determined.

III. Disciplinary Ethics—2 Thes. 3:14-15

People recoil at the sound of the word discipline, but without discipline there can be no discipleship.

God disciplines His children (Hebrews 12).

Believers discipline themselves (I Corinthians 9:24-27).

Parents discipline children (Proverbs 29:15).

The church disciplines members (1 Corinthians 5; Hebrews 13:17).

A. The ethical purpose of church discipline

1. To stop the spread of sin (1 Cor. 5:6-8).
2. To warn the naïve (Prov. 21:11).

3. To silence the gossip (Eph. 4:29; Titus 2).
4. To maintain God's power (2 Tim. 2:21).
5. To restore the fallen (Matt. 18; Gal. 6:1).
6. To chastise unto repentance (1 Cor. 5:5).

The goal of godly discipline is ultimately restoration!

B. The ethical pattern for church discipline

Matthew 18 describes the necessary ingredients of successful church discipline. They are

1. Humility (vv. 1-6)
2. Honesty (vv. 15-18)
3. Prayer (vv. 19-20)
4. A forgiving spirit (vv. 21-35)

The key word in Matthew 18 is the word offences (v. 69). The original term is σκαναλιζω. It pictured a trap or snare. The idea of being stopped, entrapped, or hindered.

Matthew 18 is not dealing with personality problems or common sins within the Christian experience (though these things would not be taken lightly). The Lord was concerned with situations that were concerned to the disciple's fellowship.

1. How to proceed—Matthew 18:15
2. When to proceed—there are 3 specific occasions that require discipline
 - a. Moral purity is lost (1 Cor. 5)
 - b. Doctrinal purity is lost (2 Thess. 3:14)
 - c. Christian testimony is lost (2 Thes. 3:6, 14-15)

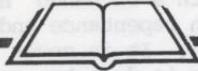
One occasion requires public censure—when an elder has sinned (1 Tim. 5:19-20).

C. The ethical procedures for church discipline with all of the biblical dates in mind, a pastor must be certain of the following:

1. The person to be disciplined is carefully informed. Explain:
2. The church has been protected.

- a. Constitutional considerations
- b. Legal considerations

'CRUSADER'



Evangelist Charles R. Sanders

2249 Park Lake Drive • Boulder, Colorado 80301 Telephone: (303) 666-9530



CHURCH DISCIPLINE

You might ask--WHAT IS THAT?? The reason for such a question is evident because few churches ever administer church discipline. Why do churches neglect the instructions given by our Lord in Matthew 18 and the instructions given in I Corinthians 5:7? Is it because of fear? Fear of opposition to the practice of the truth. As a result of a no discipline policy in many churches--are the churches powerless? Could this be the reason there is no revival...no mighty working of the Holy Spirit? God's Word says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, I will not hear." Ps. 66:18. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isa. 59:2. Is this true of the church as well as the individual? I am sure that we would have to agree. II Chron. 7:14, 15 is truly God's instructions for revival and blessing in the church. There will be no revival without God's people turning from their wicked ways and obeying God's clear teaching as found in the Word of God.

Whenever immorality and open sin are tolerated in the church, spiritual weakness is evident. Great harm has been done to local churches because of a failure to obey God's Word in respect to discipline as in cases of immorality and false doctrine. What does God's Word reveal concerning the instructions for discipline?

There are several passages of Scripture that set forth the guidelines for church discipline. First let us look at Matt. 18:15-17. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

FIRST - THE ACTION IS TO BE PERSONAL BUT NOT PROCLAIMED.

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." v15

We are not to criticize to others or gossip. We truly ought to pray and be burdened to help a brother or sister in the Lord. Gal. 6:1, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

You see, the purpose of this first step is to love and restore your brother back into fellowship with the Lord and His people. It is with heart-felt love and concern that this first step is taken. If he or she refuses to hear--to listen--then the next step must be taken.

SECOND - THE ACTION IS PLURAL BUT NOT PUBLIC.

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." v16

God's Word then instructs that one or two other witnesses be taken with you to the erring brother or sister. The reason for this is that every word may be

established in the mouth of two or three witnesses. Those who are to go no doubt would be the Pastor and deacons in view of the fact that those offices are laid out in the Word of God. The second step also is for the purpose of restoring a brother into fellowship with the Lord and His people. It too must be done with much prayer and with a burdened heart. If he shall neglect to hear them, in other words, does not respond in repentance and the forsaking of his sin, then the witnesses are to tell it unto the church. It is never to be brought before the church until this second step has been taken. This is done to protect the accused as well as the one who has reported the actions of a sinning brother or sister. After this action is taken, then the third step must be taken.

THIRD - THE ACTION IS MADE PUBLIC BUT NOT PAMPERED.

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church." v17

It is very important that God's order be carefully followed. It is not what a believer may think; it is obeying the Word of God that brings purity to the church. The matter of an erring brother or sister not only hurts his testimony for Christ because of his or her actions, but it brings reproach on the church of which he or she is a member. Therefore, it must be dealt with as a body of believers. God's work is marred and disturbed because of sin and if not careful, becomes the laughing stock of the unsaved in the community. If restoration and repentance does not result, then action must be taken by the church. This leads to a fourth step.

FOURTH - THE ACTION IS THAT OF PURGING, NOT PROTECTING.

"But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." v17

If that brother refuses to hear the church concerning his sin, then instead of telling about it to everyone or covering it up, action must be taken by the church. This brings us to a second important passage in the Word of God. I Cor. 5. The account reads that there was sin in the church at Corinth and a member refused to repent and make things right. In fact the church looked upon it lightly. V6, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." "Therefore, purge out the old leaven that ye may be a new lump as ye are unleavened." v7. The church will never be blessed or pure before God until it follows this step. Fellowship is to be withdrawn from the sinning person who refuses to hear his brother, then two or three witnesses and finally the church. The person is to be treated as an unbeliever. The action to be taken is further explained in I Cor. 5. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such an one no not to eat." v11.

No heathen man could sit at the Lord's table or be in fellowship with God's people. This is also true of a believer who is sinning and refuses to repent and forsake his sin. In verse 11 there is a list of sins, and if a brother or sister errs in these, then the steps of discipline are to be taken. Also please note, not just the sin of fornication--the responsibility of the church is to judge them who are within. v12. Therefore, the action of the church toward the unrepentant believer is stated in v13. "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

There are several other Scriptures that reveal this same truth and declare the action that must be taken by the church. II Thess. 3:6,14,15; I Tim. 5:20,21.

In taking this fourth step in discipline, the church withdraws the privilege of fellowship and believers are "to have no company with" the disciplined one that "he may be ashamed." I Thess. 3:14. God's Word is very clear concerning the steps necessary in right discipline. Unless these steps are prayerfully taken, havoc will be present in the church. If a serious wound remains undressed and is not properly cared for, gangrene will set in and eventually lead to the loss of a limb. Amputation will be necessary. It seems in many churches today gangrene has set in. It is time that God's Word is heeded; that right discipline be exercised; that the church might be that pure institution empowered by God to reach a lost and dying world.

"To Be Like Christ, Be Much With Christ"

IV. Communicative ethics

1 Timothy 3 contains the qualification for these who would serve in the office of elder. Only one qualification has to do with personal aptitude. The elder is to be “apt to teach.” All of the other characteristics have to do with the elder’s character and spiritual being.

Communication is a vital part of ethical ministry.

- A. The Bible’s code for ethical communication—Ephesians 5:22-32, five rules of correct communication are concisely delineated in this passage:

Removal	Replacement	Reason
1. (v. 25) lying	(v.25) truth	(v. 25) members one of another
2. (v. 26) explosions	(v. 26) indignation	(v. 26) give place to the devil
3. (v. 28) stealing	(v. 28) labor	(v. 28) give
4. (v. 29) corrupt communication	(v. 29) good communication	(v. 29) grace
5. (v. 30-32) wrong environmnet	(v. 30-32) kind	(v. 30-32) forgave

In summary, these rules may be stated as follows:

1. Honesty, v. 25
2. Resolve differences, v. 26
3. Be industrious, v. 28
4. Speak words that edify, 29
5. Act, don’t react, v.32

- B. The legal code for ethical communication

1. Plagiarism “taking someone else’s message and giving it as one’s own” (Trull and Carter, 105).
2. Copyright
 - a. Be careful of the church’s music file.
 - b. Be careful of the use of the photocopier.
 - c. Be careful in the tape ministry.
 - d. Be careful when performing cantatas and plays.

- C. The practical code for ethical communication

The preaching task is a sacred responsibility. Of all places where the minister must be sure to maintain ethical integrity, none is more sacred than his responsibility as a communicator of God's Word; therefore, the ethical minister is well-advised to . . .

1. Be aware of exaggeration.
2. Beware of making statements without checking one's sources.
3. Beware of preaching/teaching without adequate preparation (2 Tim. 2:15).
4. Beware of preaching pet peeves.
5. Beware of using the pulpit as a whipping post against specific people.
6. Beware of preaching without biblical support.
7. Beware of preaching in areas of personal doubt.
"The teachers doubt will be the student's dogma."
8. Beware of emotional manipulation.
9. Beware of taking a public stand on a crucial issue without careful documentation.

V. Administrative ethics—Ex. 18:23-26; Acts 6:1-7; Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:7

The New Testament minister is referred to by titles: pastor, elder, teacher, preacher. He is also called "bishop" or *episcopos*. The word *episcopos* was used for the office of supervision in the Greco-Roman world. Thayer says that the word describes "a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator or guardian, or superintendent." (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1-2; Heb. 13:7; 1 Peter 2:25).

The leader (pastor) of the New Testament church shoulders many burdens. There is one task that he must willingly and uniquely carry—He must be an administrator. In commenting on the N.T. minister's task, H. E. Dana said, "The chief function of this official (i.e. the pastor) was administrative. He was expected primarily to 'rule well'—to be proficient in administration. He might sometimes labor 'in the Word and in teaching,' but not invariably. It startles—not to say agitates—the present day Baptist minister to remind him that the office of elder or bishop as presented in New Testament was primarily an administrative office and not a preaching function, but it takes bold and radical manipulation of the Scriptures to support any other conclusion." (H. E. Dana, *A Manual of Ecclesiology*, Kansas: Central Seminary Press, 1944).

- A. Understand the people have great value (Phil. 2:3).
- B. Recognize the work that other's perform (1 Cor. 16:10-16).
- C. Give away opportunities to serve (Phil. 3:10).
"Spectators become critic."
- D. Promote with integrity.
- E. Practice godly financial stewardship.
 1. Designated contributions must go to designated causes.
 2. Audits and controls are profitable for preserving integrity.

VI. Candidating and resigning—ethics—Prov. 15:22; Eph. 5:15-16.

A. Candidating

1. Consider the church's mission or purpose statement. Is it compatible with your desire? (Jer. 1:5; Rom. 12:6)
2. Consider the church's constitution--are you in agreement? Note: if the answer to these 2 questions is "no," then be honest with those who have contacted you. It is inappropriate to accept a position with a church with which you disagree on such critical concerns.
3. Consider the church's history
 - a. Have they been turning over pastors regularly? Why?
 - b. Have they a marred testimony in the community? Why: Will they now deal biblically with this problem?
4. Answer all the questions you are asked honestly and thoroughly. The door of the churches God's to open not yours to force (Prov. 6:19).
5. Be careful about your communication with your present ministry and others.
6. Take the time to know the ministry you're considering.
7. Clearly communicate regarding financial needs and obligations.
8. Understand the expectations and authority structure of the church with which you are in contact.

B. Resigning

1. Consider mailing a written resignation rather than dropping “the bomb.” If this method is chosen, care must be given to be positive, appreciative, hopeful and explanatory.

If the resignation is offered during a public service, it should be done during a “family gathering.” (Perhaps following an evening service) and with great care.

2. Allow time for folk to grieve. (See John 13-17.)
3. Preach messages that inspire hope (Acts 20).
4. Counsel for a time of transition.
 - a. The staff
 - b. The pulpit committee
 - c. Pulpit supply
 - d. Regarding interim ministries
 - e. The candidate’s package material
5. Set the house in order:
Explain:
6. A note of thanks.
7. Sever the ties and promote loyalty to a new pastor.
 - a. Beware of frequent return visits.
 - b. If visiting beware of home to home visits. (If visits are planned inform the new minister).
8. If at all possible, always speak well of former ministries.

C. The do’s and don’ts of transitions

(John R. Cionca, *Red Light, Green Light: Discerning The Time for a Change in Ministry*, Baker Books)

1. Do

- a. Develop a vision
- b. Set realistic expectations
- c. Build relationships
- d. Work hard
- e. Maintain regular office hours
- f. Schedule family time
- g. Protect your spouse from unrealistic parish expectations
- h. Focus member on doable tasks
- i. Celebrate successes
- j. Attend social gatherings
- k. Schedule open houses
- l. Establish a disciplined study pattern
- m. Implement change carefully
- n. Retain present leadership
- o. Practice ministry by walking around
- p. Participate in ministerial fellowship
- q. Maintain a sense of humor

2. Don't

- a. Assume what you did elsewhere will work here
- b. Criticize your predecessor
- c. Immediately "kill" programs
- d. Be a revolutionary
- e. Recycle old sermons
- f. Send "you" messages—emphasize "we & us"
- g. Keep hidden agenda
- h. Expect everyone to like you
- i. Play favorites
- j. Engage in power struggles
- k. Accept outside opportunities your first year

The Pastor and His Fellows

In the ministry we are surrounded by people:

VRP's:

VIP's:

VTP's:

VNP's:

VDP's:

The pastor walks regularly in the midst of other ministries. He must walk wisely (1 Cor. 4:1-4).

I. Our predecessors and successors

A. Our predecessors—1 Cor. 3,10-15

1. Loyalty is transferable as is criticism. Never willingly criticize or receive criticism about one's predecessor (Eph. 5:30-32).
2. When possible invite your predecessor to share in ministry with you. Paul looked forward to return visits to the churches he pastored and so should we (Acts 20).
3. Be willing to publicly share news regarding your predecessor's present ministry and family situations.

B. Our successors—Titus 1

1. Be open and approachable sharing information relevant to continuity of ministry.
2. Be careful not to damage your successor's willingness to work with certain individuals by sharing too much information.
3. Teach the people to follow God's man for the hour (Joshua 1: David & Solomon).
4. Never criticize or willingly hear criticism of your successor. Such willingness will cripple his ministry and is in direct disobedience to God's Word (1 Tim. 5).

5. Honor your successor by avoiding return engagements to conduct weddings and funerals. If the

closeness to the individual absolutely merits a return it is customary and honorable to allow the present pastor to conduct the ceremony service while the former pastor assists.

6. If you plan to retire, you may want to plan to move or be booked out. The continued presence of the former pastor can be a genuine source of divided loyalty and intimidation. If you stay in the area, be sure to establish your loyalty to the new pastor. If you cannot be loyal and follow, at least be silent or move.

II. Office practices and staff

- A. Set policies and follow them.

Set meetings and communicate.

It is the professor's observation that the #1 challenge in church staff relationships is communication.

1. Regularly scheduled meetings need to be maintained.
2. A mutual vision must be shared.
3. Lines of authority need to be established and respected.

- B. Demonstrate the importance of the staff to the church family.

1. Plurality of leadership
2. Singularity of headship

- C. General guidelines for good staff relationships

- D. Hiring, firing, removing, and replacing the church staff

1. Follow the constitution carefully.
2. Be certain to treat the staff with utmost respect.
(What goes around comes around.)
3. Speak of "our" staff, not "my" staff.

- E. General office considerations

1. Place your own phone calls.
2. Dress like a professional (see office manual).
3. Establish office hours.
4. Never pirate software.
5. Use the telephone at the office for professional purposes and at home for personal purposes.

6. Maintain a spirit of diligence and dignity.
Examples of inappropriate behavior:

7. Establish basic protocols of professionalism.
 - a. Space
 - b. Expectations
 - c. Reviews

8. Keep a clear desk.
9. Answer your phone calls and correspondence promptly.
10. Missionaries are people too.
11. Design to avoid doubt (windows, restrooms, amenities).

(Refer to section attached—Suggestions for Successful Service)

III. Other parishes and schisms—Prov. 15:22; Luke 6:3

Because you will be a ministry in the midst of ministries, it is well to ponder your relationship to other churches.

A. Evangelical churches

1. When possible fellowship—when in doubt, don't!
2. Be careful not to compromise.
Explain:

3. Be careful not to compete.
Explain:

4. Receive members from other evangelical churches with great care.
 - a. Respect the discipline of another church.
Explain:

- b. Inform the former pastor/church when folk are coming.
 - c. Use caution in the promotion of new member's ("not a novice")
- B. Compromised "Churches"—Gal. 1:9
 - 1. Openly rebuke them when necessary.
Explain:
 - 2. Avoid fellowship with them.
 - 3. Reach their lost members with the Gospel!
- C. Consider your responsibility to fellow-pastors.

The Pastor and His Field

The following topics are selected for further discussion pertinent to ethical pastoring:

- I. The pastor's political involvement—Ps. 94:20; Prov. 8:16; Rom. 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13; Titus 3:1; Matt. 22:21; Dan. 1

- II. The pastor's public persona

- III. Quick tips for ethical ministry
 - A. Borrowing
 - B. Thankfulness
 - C. Power
 - D. Humor
 - E. Interests
 - F. Availability

- IV. Missions—Matt. 5:14; Ps. 96:3; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47
 - A. Financing
 - B. Equipping
 - C. Oversight
 - D. Correspondence

V. Visitation—2 Cor. 5:20

VI. Child care

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