

Chapter 3

A God Placed Pastorate

“Who also hath made us able ministers
...” – 2nd Corinthians 3:6

We have seen so far that it's imperative that we maintain a proper perspective so that we do not become focused on being loved, being accepted by the world. That kind of focus causes the church to attempt to appease the world by adding and subtracting from the plain word of God. The result is the church becomes the world, becomes what people want, and ceases to be what people need. The focus must always remain the same, doing God's business, God's way, for His honor, and for His glory. Our focus is foundational. If you focus on being loved and accepted and desired, everything about the church changes.

We've also seen that we must not lose sight of a God added membership. When we want to be loved or accepted or even desired by the world, the goal concerning church membership, the way we view church membership, changes. That's all due to a wrong focus. When the focus isn't right, improper methods are practiced, and there's a lowering of biblical standards. All of this brings about the church becoming the world, becoming what people want, ceasing to be what people need.

Another thing that is absolutely necessary to being the church that people need concerns the pastorate, the pulpit ministry of the church. The pastorate is an integral part of being the church that people need. When we lose focus of doing God's business God's way, for His honor and His glory, we shift from that focus to being loved, accepted, and desired by the world, everything becomes skewed. The mission of the church, our approach to church membership, and the office of pastor becomes skewed. Because people lose sight of what it's all about, you have a mess. You have something that can not provide what people need, can not truly help people. A God placed pastorate is absolutely imperative if the church is going to be what people need.

In Acts 20:28, Paul is speaking to the elders of the Ephesian church, and he says, *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves”* [the Ephesian elders] *“and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed*

the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” In Ephesians 4:11-16 it says, “*And he*” [that is, the Lord] “*gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For*” [the reason He gave these things, and our concern here is pastor's] “*the perfecting*” [or for the maturing] “*of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom,*” [that is, Christ] “*the whole body fitly joined together and compacted*” [pressed firmly together] “*by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*”

I want to consider the importance and seriousness of the pastorate to the church, which is seen from two facts. The pastor is God called and he is God placed. From both the Old Testament and the New Testament, it's clearly seen that God calls men to preach the word of God. Preaching and pastoring is not a profession, it is a calling. Paul stated that he was made a minister. He was not made a minister by a school, he was not made a minister by a church. He was made a minister by God. God made him a minister.

In 2nd Corinthians 3:6 says, “*Who hath made us*” [the who, referring back to the God of verse 5] “*able ministers.*” In Ephesians 3:7, “*whereof*” [that is, the gospel] “*I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of His power.*” I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God. This came about by the effectual working of His power. It's not just something where someone wakes up one day and

says, “This is going to be my career.” Colossians 1:23 says, *“If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye have heard and was preached to every creature which is under heaven whereof I Paul am made a minister.”* Paul states three times that he was made a minister.

In 1st Timothy 1:1, we see this was by the commandment of God. *“Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our saviour ... ”* Then in 1st Timothy 1:12, he says, *“... and I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who hath enabled me for that he counted me faithful putting me into the ministry.”* Paul says, “I was made a minister, I was made an apostle by the commandment of God, and God put me, set me, placed me in the ministry.”

The writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 5:4, about the office of the Old Testament priest, which it certainly applies to the preacher as well, *“... no man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called.”* This calling leads to a necessity. By that we simply mean, this calling becomes inescapable. It's something that you can not get away from. In 1st Corinthians 9:16 Paul says, *“For though I preach the gospel I have nothing to glory of for necessity is laid upon me.”* It is necessary. Why? Because of a calling *“... necessity is laid upon me yea woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel”*. He's saying this is something that has become inescapable, he could not get away from it, and it became his life.

You have this man, he has been called by God. He now is willing to let go of all future plans, to leave any job, to leave any career, any opportunity, family, houses, lands, to do what God has called him to do. There's a huge difference between a calling and a profession, meaning one choosing a career. This man now is willing to leave whatever he has to leave to do what God would have him to do, and to go wherever God would have him to go. God calls men to preach.

Of these men, and not necessarily all of them, God sets some in the office of pastor in his churches. I know some would disagree, but I do not believe that every one who is called to preach, is necessarily called to pastor. But, I do believe that no one is called to pastor unless they are called to preach. The who, the when, and the where God places pastors in His churches is all as He sees fit.

In Acts 20, as Paul is speaking to the pastors of the church of Ephesus, he said, “... *to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.*” He's speaking of a specific flock, and he says the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers over that particular flock, at that particular time. That is a God placed pastorate. We believe in a God placed membership. We believe in a God placed pastorate. Ephesians 4:11 says, “... *he gave some pastors...*”. He gave them. He gave them to His churches.

In Revelation chapter 2 and 3 it's very clear, as you read the letters to those seven churches, that God knows His churches. He know ever weakness, every strength, and every problem that they have. He not only knows the weakness, strength, and problems they now have, he knows what weakness, strength, and problems they will have in the future. He knows all their trials. This is true now, this is true in the future. He knows who their enemies are. He know the character of every one of those enemies. Churches have common enemies and churches have particular enemies. Home Baptist Church and all the churches like it, we have common enemies. But I assure you, that Home Baptist Church has some particular enemies that are enemies specifically of this church and perhaps of no other church. God knows all about that. He knows all the battles of all His churches. As you view the Lords churches collectively, we have many of the same battles. But, I also believe that there are battles that are particular to certain churches. He knows how His churches are going to be attacked in the future. He knows the needs of His churches. That's true now, that's true in the future. The Lord loves His churches. And the Lord

looks after the well being of His churches. He protects His churches.

With all of that in mind, He gives them the pastors that they need at that particular time. If the church calls the pastor that God would have them to have, he is the best pastor that that church can possibly have at that time, if they follow God's will. Not all do, of course. Really, God knows the pastor that a church needs, who Home Baptist Church needs more than Home Baptist Church knows who it needs. God knows more about what any church needs than what that church may think they need.

My point is, the pastor that a church needs ought to also be the one that they want. It ought to be the only one that they want. The only concern is, "Who does God want us to have." I realize there are doctrinal concerns, but all that works together. God's not going to give you someone who doesn't believe the truth. A God called, God placed pastor is crucial to the church being what people need.

When a church becomes focused upon, "We want to be more loved by the world. We want to be more accepted by the world. We want the world to want to come here. We want wicked sinners to just long to come to Home Baptist Church. This is what we want." If that becomes a focus, that immediately has an adverse affect upon everything a church does including how they go about calling a pastor. We get calls frequently asking, "Is there someone that you can recommend? Do you know of someone who isn't pastoring now that might be interested in coming to our church?" When they ask, "Do you know of somebody that's not pastoring?", my response is always the same. "Why can't they be pastoring? You've set a limitation." "Well we don't want to steal ...", and people have used this terminology, "... we don't want to steal someone's pastor." If God's placing them, you're not stealing them. That's the mind set churches get in. "Well, we got to call somebody that's not pastoring. We want to call somebody that young." What if God wants you to have somebody that's old? "Well, they're not going to

be around much longer. They're only going to be around another 2 or 3 years.” Maybe that's all God wants you to have them for. God does the who, the when, and where. “Well, we need somebody that has a family”, or, “somebody that doesn't have a family, because we can't support a pastor that has a family.” That has nothing to do with anything. It is, "Who does God want?" That is my response every single time. “Who does God want you to have. That should be your only concern.” It's not who I can recommend or who anybody else can recommend. Who does God want us to have.

It is not the responsibility of Home Baptist Church or any other church to place a pastor in another church. It is not the responsibility and it is not the business of any preacher to place a pastor in a church. That's God's business, just as it's God's business to place members in a church. When people begin to lose focus, it has an adverse affect upon how they consider calling a pastor. How the pastor, how the very office is viewed is really determined by our focus. The importance, the seriousness of this is that he has to be God called and he has to be the one that God has given us. God may only want to have him for two months. God may want you to have him for 40 years. That's God's business.

The importance and seriousness is also seen in the qualifications of the office. The qualifications are given in 1st Timothy 3:1-7, and also in Titus 1:5-9. You read through those qualifications. Nowhere are there more strict qualifications than for the ministry. We don't have these kinds of qualifications for the presidency of the United States. (If that were so we wouldn't have the mess we're in.) It's not the church's business to add to the qualifications. The qualifications are plenty strict. You certainly do not need to take from them. I believe the qualifications are given; 1) To protect the church; 2) To protect the ministry.

Let's say a church loses it's focus of doing God's business, God way, for His honor, and for His glory. Now this church says, “We want the world to love us. We want

sinner to just be breaking down the doors. We want them to just want to be here, want to be with us.” Qualifications then begin to be minimized. Qualifications are no longer important. “This man! He's got personality. I'm telling you, this is the guy. He can appease the people.” And qualifications? “Well he's not qualified.” “Oh, that doesn't matter. Because don't you see, he can bring people in.” Qualifications begin to be minimized, and a church is well on the road to being ruined, to being destroyed.

The importance is also seen in the purpose of the office. The pastor is an integral part of being the church that people need. When the focus is lost, when the focus becomes being loved and accepted, in the church's mind, the pastor becomes an integral part of accomplishing that goal. If he's an integral part of accomplishing that goal, we're going to have to rearrange the whole purpose of the pastorate. Now, you see, the purpose has become to bring people in. The purpose has become to be loved, to be accepted, to be desired. “You pastor, are an integral part of that.” The pastor is an integral part no matter what the focus is. He is viewed as an integral part.

In Ephesians 4, we see the purpose of the office of pastor. I believe a lot of pastors and a lot of churches make a mistake by the pastor viewing himself as a CEO of the church. That's not what he is. Read the purpose. Read why he's there. Ephesians 4:12, three things are stated and they are all spiritual. “*For the perfecting of the saints*”. That's one of the purposes. Another purpose is, “... *for the work of the ministry*”. That covers a lot of things we don't have time to go into here. The third purpose is, “*for the edifying the body of Christ.*” A threefold purpose and it is all spiritual in nature.

As you read on in these verses, you will see that this purpose is centered around Christ. The pastor is to present Christ. It is centered around truth. How does he accomplish these three things? Christ and truth. That is his purpose. Again we don't have time here to go into that. You can read

Ephesians 4:12-16, and you see that the purposes are spiritual. The purpose, obviously, is to combat error, that we'd be "... henceforth no more children tossed to and for carried about with every wind of doctrine...". Obviously a pastor is to teach truth. He is to teach truth, he is to get people established, teach them so that they can be established in the truth and doctrine. Everything centers around Christ and truth.

We also see the importance and seriousness of the office as seen in the duties of the office. We see the purpose, but how does this purpose come into fruition? He does this by performing his duties. What are his duties? Many churches have ideas about what a pastor's duties are. But, you read the scriptures and a pastor's duties are spiritual in nature. The main purpose of the office is spiritual. Therefore, the duties are spiritual. The duties correspond to the purpose. The duties help fulfill the purpose.

The duties are clearly seen by the various titles given to this man in the word of God. He is referred to as a pastor, bishop, elder, steward, and minister. All of those titles illustrate the nature, the purpose of the office, and duties of the office. The one title that sums up the duties more than all the rest is "pastor", which is a shepherd. There are basically three main duties that can be summarized under three headings, and they are spiritual in nature. He is to lead, feed and protect. It all centers upon Christ, upon the word of God, the truth.

For a church to be what people need, the pastor must be allowed to and the pastor must carry out the duties of the office. I said be allowed, because in some churches the pastor is not allowed to carry out his duties. He must be allowed to carry out his duties, which are spiritual in nature, and he must be faithful in carrying them out. He does so for the honor and glory of God. He does it, whether people will believe it or not, for the well being of that church. For the church to be what people need, the duties are spiritual in nature.

He is to lead in the path of righteousness. There's many ways in which he does that. He is to lead in the ways of God. He must never ever give the wolves an opportunity to harm the flock. He must not even give or entertain the thought of giving them opportunity. If the wolves get in, they're destruction can be so vast that a church ceases to be what people need.

He has a responsibility to protect the church from the wolves. He must be determined, "I am not going to give this church over to the devil and his crowd." He must be determined. "We're just not going to hand it over to the devil. We're not just going to hand it over to the flesh pleasers. We're not going to hand it over to the spiritually dysfunctional." He must have this determination, the whole church must have this determination. He protects the church.

He protects the church by guarding the pulpit. He does not invite anyone, to his knowledge, to preach that is going to harm or undermine in any way the truth. He has to fight many battles and most of those battles are fought behind the scenes. Most of those battles are fought so that they never have to come into the church. A church usually, quickly realizes when they're without a pastor how many battles that pastor was fighting and how many battles he kept from coming into the church by fighting them outside. It's one of his duties.

He must present the word of God. This pastor, God called, God placed man must preach the word of God. 1st Timothy 4:6-7 says, "... *put the brethren in remembrance of these thing.*" Remind them. So many times people say, "Why do you repeat some things over and over and over?" To remind, because the devil works hard to get it out of your mind. "*Put them in remembrance of these things and thou shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ.*" This God called, God placed man is there to remind people. Not everyone wants to be reminded, but he is to remind them.

"... *nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine.*" Good doctrine! There has to be a foundation.

“Well, we want practical preaching, we want everyday preaching.” You have to have a foundation for the practical and the foundation is doctrine. The foundation is truth. Once truth is established, now you have something to put into practice. The writer in 1st Timothy mentions doctrine. He says to the minister Timothy, “*Refuse...*”, Timothy you concern yourself with putting the brethren in remembrance. You concern yourself with doctrine and, “... *refuse profane and old wives fables*”, which is a euphemism for stupid nonsense. You refuse it all. You don't even entertain the thought of nonsense.

He goes on and he says, in verse 10, “*We labor...*”. Verse 11 “... *these things command ...*”, that's authority, “... *and teach ...*”, there has to be some knowledge, “... *that no man despise thy youth but be thou and example.*” So he is to command, teach, and he's to be and example. This is why qualifications are so important. He tells us there in verse 12, that he's to be and example. Verse 13, he says, “Timothy, I want you to give attention ...”, to three things, “... *reading, exhortation, to doctrine.*” In other words, Timothy, you are to be grounded in the word. He's to give himself wholly to them, verse 15. He's to continue in them in verse 16, “*In doing this, thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.*” He saves his own life and he saves the life of those in the church.

2nd Timothy 2:5 says, “*study*”, which means to investigate, to examine, to learn, “*to shew thyself approved unto God a workman*”, a laborer in the word, a laborer in spiritual things, “*rightly dividing the word of truth.*” 2nd Timothy 4 says, “*Preach the word.*” The pastor that churches need has been God placed and it his duty to preach the word, it's his duty, every Sunday, every Wednesday, every single time the church assembles, he is to preach the word. He's to do this in season and out of season. He's to do it when people want the word, he's to do it when they don't want it. He's to do it when it's popular, he's to do it when it's unpopular. He is simply to preach the word.

Then he gives some aspects of doing that. Reprove, rebuke, exhort. “Oh, if we're going to be loved by the world, we need a pastor that is going to encourage.” Don't you see, if you take reproof, and rebuke, and exhortation you will be encouraged. The reason a lot of folks aren't encouraged is because they don't take what God has for them. 2nd Timothy goes on to say, “*a time will come*”. I believe this time comes, not just in society in general, certainly we're there, but I believe it comes in churches at times. “*The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.*” The time will come.

When that time comes, he says, “... *watch thou in all things, endure.*” You keep on enduring. You keep on preaching the word of God. You see the word of God is what the Holy Spirit uses to humble His people. It's what the Holy Spirit uses to guide, direct, and enlighten His people in the will and in the ways of God. It's what God uses to correct error, to warn, and to comfort His people. It's what God uses to give his people assurance and to exhort his people. It's what God uses to show his people where we are and where we ought to be going. The word of God is what he uses. Therefore, the pastor is to preach the word of God.

You know what happens when a church begin to lose it's focus? They now want to be loved and accepted. “There's visitors in the service. Oh, we sure hope he doesn't preach something today that's going to drive them away.” You've lost focus. As soon that thought comes across the mind, you've lost focus, you lost focus on what it's all about. You ought to be praying “Lord give him what everybody here needs.” “Oh, did you hear what he said? I wonder how they took that?” You ought to pray that God would just drive it home to them. People begin to get nervous about, “Well, what's he going to preach?” In another church I pastored, I've even had a couple people ask me, “Brother what are you going to preach next Sunday because I plan on inviting someone.” I want to say, “Well, it depends on who you're inviting.” That shows they have a fear. They don't want

their friend, they don't want their visitor to be offended. That shows that the focus is all wrong.

The pastor is to get up and he's to preach and he's to preach plainly, exactly, that is according to the word of God, with seriousness. "Oh we we want a pastor that's going to entertain, that's going to make people laugh, people like that." There's nothing more serious than preaching the word of God. It is to be preached with sincerity, order, consistency, fervor, enthusiasm, and conviction, making no apologies for the word of God. It is to be preached with boldness. It is to be preached in a responsible manor and, yes, it is to be preached with compassion. It is to be preached with a burden for souls. When focus is shifted to being loved, accepted and desired, the church begins to hope, "Well we hope he doesn't come on too strong on that subject. We we hope he just kinda stays away from from this area."

You know what people need to realize today concerning the word of God, the preaching of God's word? One of the purposes is to protect. God will use the preached word to drive people away also. A lot of churches think, "Oh that's awful ... you should have said it differently, you shouldn't have said it as loud, or you should have presented it a little different ... they've left!" Did you ever stop to think the preaching of God's word drove them away? God was protecting His church and He drove them away. God uses His word in a lot of different ways. That's one of them. We should not get overly concerned about those things.

The pastor must be a man of firmness, courage, and steadfastness, diligence, resolve, consistency, strength. He is to be a man of maturity, wisdom, knowledge, discretion, compassion, love, care, and prayer. A lot of people have different definitions of love and care. To many love is, "You approve of everything I do." No, love is to tell you the truth. Love is to tell you what you need, that's love and that's care.

The pastor must not be deterred. He must not be deterred by the problems, trials, difficulties, and frustrations that come along the way. He can not be deterred by the

mood swings, criticism, accusations, suggestions and opinions of the people. “Well pastor, I think you ought to preach this and here's how I think you ought to preach it.” He can't be deterred by the suggestions or the opinions of others. He can not be deterred by treatment from others, whether it be favorable treatment or unfavorable treatment. It goes either way. He can not be deterred by, “Well this person treats me nice, I sure don't want to step on their toes.” Oh, you've lost it. He can not be deterred by treatment, murmuring, and constant scrutinizing. He can not be deterred by any of these things. The ministry must be his life. That's the pastor that God will add to His churches.

At all times, the pastor has to stay close to the Lord. He has to keep his heart in a proper condition. The whole congregation can come in in a bad mood. He'd better be right with God, he'd better keep his heart in a right condition. He'd better not be subject to mood swings. You know how long it would take for a pastor to be thrown out if he was subject to mood swings every Sunday? You wouldn't put up with it, but he puts up with it all the time. For a church to be what people need, there has to be a God placed pastorate.

If I drop dead or you vote me out your responsibility becomes, “Who does God want us to have.” That becomes your responsibility. The church has a responsibility toward the office of a God added pastorate. The pastor is the special object of Satan's hatred, Satan's malice, and attacks. The devil seeks to discourage the pastor more than anyone else. He may do that by discouraging you, but he's after that pastor. He is out to deter the pastor from the purpose and from his duties in any way that he can.

We all have problems. We all have a lot of different things. There are hurts, wounds, frustrations, sorrows, loneliness, disappointments, trials, burdens, and heart aches. Though we all have those things, these are peculiar to the ministry. These things are always there. And the pastor, whoever he is, no matter how strong he is, no matter how close to God he is, he's flesh, he's human. Never elevate him

above what he is. He's human. This may come as a shock. That means he has feelings. He has weaknesses. You say, "Oh that's no shock." He has strengths, he has his own inward battles, just like you do. He has his own inward struggles, just like you.

He's got this office. He's got the care of the whole church. It's not just the care of the members of the church, the members' extended families come into it as well. The members' neighbors come into it, and on and on we could go. The pastor stands in special need of help. He stands in special need of prayer. Paul requested prayer on many different occasions of the churches. If a church is going to be what people need, they have to have a God placed pastorate. It has to be there.

The pastor has to protect the church and the church protects the pastor as well. The church does everything they can to help him. They do everything, they pray and pray and pray just like Arron and Hur upheld the hands of Moses.

The pastorate can not be neglected by the pastor, it can not be neglected by the church. He needs to be prayed for. There's nothing wrong with telling, pouring your heart out to a pastor, pouring your burdens upon him. When you do that, keep in mind that you may not be the only one that's done that that day. Have enough concern that once you have done that, "You know what? I have put all that on him, I'd better, I ought to pray for him, I ought to pray for him." I don't want to discourage anybody from coming, but when you come, pray.

We need to realize the importance of a God placed pastorate. That's true on my part, that's true on your part as well. We can't be the church that people need without this being in place.