

Ask Your Pastor?

by Wayne Goff

From time to time we discuss the Bible with friends, family and neighbors. When we talk with them about the Bible we are frequently faced with a problem -- a wall is placed between us and the person we are discussing the Bible with by the excuse: "Well, I don't know about that. I'll have to ask my pastor."

There is nothing wrong with asking a person who is knowledgeable in God's Word what they think about a religious question. Elders are recognized in the Bible as being men of mature faith (1 Tim. 3:2). Paul told Titus that an elder, or bishop, is one "holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict" (Titus 1:10). Likewise, gospel preachers dedicate their lives to studying and teaching God's Word (2 Tim. 4:1-2), so it is only natural that we avail ourselves of the opportunity to glean from their years of study. Men and women who have been Christians for years and have studied God's Word can teach those who will listen to them (Titus 2:1-7). Aquila and Priscilla taught the mighty Apollos the way of Christ more accurately (Acts 18:26). There is nothing more powerful than sound Bible study between those who love and respect God and His Word. Nothing could be more beneficial!

"So is there a problem?" There certainly can be. When you "ask your pastor" about the Bible, be sure he gives you a sound, biblical answer! You should receive book, chapter and verse from God's Word about the question. If you receive "the runaround" instead, then you had better beware! If your minister is offended by the question and asks you who you have been talking to, then you had better see the "red flag"! Something is wrong! Worse yet, if your "pastor" begins to call names and insult honest Bible students, then you know he stands on shaky soil, religiously.

You are not obliged to follow man religiously over God's Word. The apostles were commanded not to speak or teach in the Name of Jesus (Acts 4:18-21; 5:27-30) by the religious authorities in Jerusalem. But their response was "We ought to obey God rather than men!" The Pharisees substituted the "doctrines of men" for the Word of God (Matt. 15:7-9). Jesus denounced them as religious hypocrites! The apostle Paul warned the Christians at Corinth "not to think of men above that which is written" (1 Cor. 4:6, KJV).

Yes, when denominational pastors lord it over believers and substitute man's doctrine for God's doctrine, there is a problem. It behooves you to study and learn God's Word well enough to know the difference! Do not passively accept their word for it.

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