

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES
"The Truths That Elders Must Promote"
(1 Timothy 6:20-21)

Introduction: (To show the need for the message...)

(1) Some nationally recognized Evangelical leaders think that the beliefs we have in our doctrinal statement are too strict:

(a) David Briggs (AP) reported from New York recently that "leading Catholics and Evangelicals are asking their flocks for a remarkable leap of faith: to finally accept each other as Christians...They urged Catholics and evangelicals to no longer hold each other at theological arm's length and to stop aggressive proselytization of each other's flocks...'We together, evangelicals and Catholics, confess our sins against the unity that Christ intends for all his disciples,' the statement says...'All who accept Christ as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters in Christ,' the declaration says...What has brought the two communities to this point, some of the signers said, are the experiences of worshipping together in the **charismatic movement** and working together in political causes...'More people are going to call up and say, 'Praise the Lord you did this' than will be upset,' (another leader) said." (Reg.-Cit., Torr., Ct.)

(b) These leaders would think that our affirmation of the "Spiritual Gifts" section in our bylaws is too strict as it isolates us from Charismatic believers. They would include the need to eliminate our section on the gospel, the priesthood of the believer, and the ordinances as it separates us needlessly from Catholics.

(2) Here's one for you(!): The April-June 1994 Book Reviews section of Dallas Seminary's scholarly publication, the Bibliotheca Sacra, has a book review on a book entitled, "Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: A Former Dallas Seminary Professor Discovers that God Speaks and Heals Today," a book authored by Jack Deere who was removed from his professorship for adopting the Charismatic position. Since I, your pastor, am a graduate of Dallas Seminary, am I drawing the line too strictly on Charismatic teaching in our bylaws since a former professor of Dallas Seminary now believes in the current Charismatic Movement? !

(3) In light of these facts, we move to our "Need" section in the Sermon outline...(over)...

Need: "Though I love Nepaug's desire for truth, how does the pastor justify including all of those beliefs in our Church Bylaws?!"

- I. **Paul told Timothy to guard God's truth entrusted to him, 6:20f.**
- II. **We view Scripture to see what truth God wants elders to guard**
 - A. God expects elders to guard the belief that Scripture alone is the **basis** of one's defining the truth (Epistemology):
 1. In 1 Tim. 1:4a, false teachers **errantly** used the extra-biblical Jewish Talmud for truth, cf. Hendriksen, I-II Tim.-Tit., p. 58f.
 2. If prophets spoke, their words were accepted **only** if they agreed with the **canon** (Rom. 12:6's **analogia**, Hodge, Rom., p. 390f).
 3. Thus, Scripture alone is one's **basis** for reality (Dt. 13:1-4).
 - B. God expects elders to guard the beliefs of 1 Timothy 3:14-16:
 1. Paul wrote that the Church is God's current **vehicle** of truth, 15.
 2. He wrote that this truth was the **following** held as a "Statement of Faith" ("**common consent**" = **homologoumenos**, v. 16a, cf. Guthrie, The Past. Eps., p. 89) by believers in the Early Church:
 - a. This truth includes the incarnation where God permanently became man in the Person of Jesus Christ, 16a.
 - b. It includes Christ's being the Messiah ("justified in the Spirit," Isa. 61:1) who ascended to the Ancient of Days in heaven ("received up into glory," Dn. 7:13f), 3:16b, & f resp.
 - c. It includes Christ's death and rising--the Gospel, 16d,e.
 - d. It includes the task of discipling the nations, 3:16d, e.
- III. **Also, elders must so cleave to good doctrine that they edify others in teaching it and refute its opponents, Tit. 1:9!**
- IV. **Thus, the pastor is to promote the following in our Bylaws:**
 - A. I reaffirm Sec. 1, "The Word of God," to obey the order to guard using Scripture alone as our basis of truth, cf. "II,A" above.
 - B. I reaffirm Sec. 2, "The Trinity," to defend the doctrine that Jesus is God against those who resist His deity in the Trinity ("II,B,2,a").
 - C. I reaffirm Sec. 3, "God the Father," to guard against Sabellianism ("the Father became the Son, Who in turn became the Spirit") as it denies a **permanent** Incarnation, cf. 1 T. 3:16a ("II,B,2,a").
 - D. I reaffirm Sec. 4, "God the Son" to guard the Incarnation "II,B,2,a"
 - E. I reaffirm Sec. 5, "God the Holy Spirit," for "II,C,3"'s reason.
 - F. I reaffirm Sec. 6, "Salvation," to guard the "II,B,2,c" Gospel.
 1. Paul wrote that if one added any human work to faith for salvation, he made a different gospel, and was to be excommunicated, Gal. 1:8-9; 3:3; Ep. 2:8-9 (R.S.B.,KJV ftm.).
 2. So denying eternal security for failing to **live** uprightly, or to **add** baptism, communion, sacraments, etc. to faith to enter heaven demands our response of church discipline, cf. Gal. 3:3.

- G. I reaffirm Sec. 6's word that God created without use of evolutionary processes to defend the Second Adam, Christ's everlasting resurrection life in salvation (B,2,c), a stand not possible if mortality (via 'survival of the fittest') existed before the first Adam's sin.
- H. I reaffirm Sec. 7, "The Church," to defend God's **vehicle** of truth to be the local church as some oppose it versus "II,B,1" above.
- I. I reaffirm Sec. 8, "The Believer's Walk," to promote our task of disciplining others against Liberals who oppose it ("II, B, 2, d").
- J. I reaffirm Sec. 9, "The Ordinances," to defend the Gospel of salvation by faith alone as many teach these ordinances to be added conditions for going to heaven (see "II,C,6" above).
- K. I reaffirm Sec. 10, "The Priesthood of the Believer," to defend the **transmission process** of truth: the Spirit's illuminates the Word directly to each believer and not, as some teach, through a mediating mortal priest. (1 Tim. 2:5; 2 Tim. 3:16f) ("II,A")
- L. I reaffirm Sec. 11, "Spiritual Gifts," to guard against the error of the Charismatic Movement, for its beliefs arise from experiences that contradict Scripture, a breach of the Epistemology in "II,A".
- M. I reaffirm Sec. 12, "The Last Things," to guard the "I,B,2,b" stance:
 1. I must reaffirm that Christ is the Hebrew Messiah of the earthly Messianic reign, cf. 1 Tim. 3:16 and what "justified in the Spirit" **literally** means in Mt. 11:4ff & Is. 61:1.
 2. I must **also** reaffirm His ascension though that reign has not arrived, 1 Tim. 3:16f's "received to glory" (Dn. 7:13).
 3. The **only** way to reaffirm **both** "L,1" and "L,2" above is to assert the **exclusively** dispensational, premillennial, pretribulational view that Christ's earthly Messianic reign was postponed (Chafer/Walvoord, Major Bible Themes, p. 332).

Application: (1) As an "elder," I must as pastor heed the "Lesson" section above to obey God. (2) As one who attends Nepaug Church, one must (a) believe on Christ to be able to adopt the views in our Church Bylaws (1 Jn. 4:1-3) and (b) rely on the Spirit of truth (Jn. 16:13; Gal. 5:22-23) to accept each of them!

Lesson: God asks elders to promote all of the beliefs in our Bylaws.

Conclusion: (To come to a doctrinal conclusion on our subjects introduced in the introduction to our message under "Introduction"...)

(1) Regarding the call of evangelical and Catholic leaders for their people to unite, overlooking doctrinal differences:

(a) The Catholic Church teaches that one must not only believe in Christ, but also perform the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance and extreme unction to go to heaven with eternal life, cf. Boettner, Roman Catholicism, p. 189 (as he quotes from the 1439 Council of Florence of the Roman Catholic Church).

(b) But this is another gospel in opposition to Galatians 1:8-9 with 3:3 and 5:2, for it adds works to faith. In accord with Gal. 1:8-9, we must not tolerate ecclesiastical union with Catholicism. (c) Thus, we cannot heed the call of the Evangelical leaders to join Catholicism ecclesiastically.

(2) Regarding Jack Deere's book as a former DTS professor on his defense of the Charismatic position:

(a) Robert Pyne, the one who reviewed Deere's book, "Surprised by the Spirit..." in Dallas Seminary's Bibliotheca Sacra writes as follows: "Deere's thesis (is): no biblical arguments...support cessationism (the belief that the sign gifts of tongues, healings, etc. had to stop at a given time in the Church era), and **experience** demonstrates that the miraculous and prophetic gifts are being given today. Deere is correct in arguing that no text directly states that the gifts would cease...but he does **not** give **adequate** attention to the fact that that evaluation must be **based on biblical criteria** ...better discussions of tongues make no effort to prove their cessation by appealing to 1 Cor. 13:8. They **instead** demonstrate that the biblical gift enabled one to speak in actual, unlearned, foreign languages, and they then relate that to linguistic analyses that reveal contemporary Christian glossalalia (speaking in tongues claims) to be something **other** than language." (Bib. Sac., April-June, 1994, p. 233-234)

(b) Since former professor of Dallas Seminary, Jack Deere, bases his defense of belief in the modern Charismatic Movement on criteria of experience that actually **counters** the Biblical claims of what **true** tongues speaking **should** be. We have to view his beliefs as in error that violates our epistemology, belief that Scripture **only** is our base of truth. As an alumnus of Dallas Seminary, I agree that Dallas Seminary was right in releasing Jack Deere, and that Mr. Deere is very wrong!