

WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER

Leave Not Your Place

- I. **A pastor is a shepherd and he feeds/leads/protects (Not to do your weddings, funerals and shake your hand after the service)-Ep4:11-Pastors (shepherd)-Ps23:1-AC-THE LORD is my Shepherd [to feed, guide, and shield me]-1Pt5:1-The elders (preside over assemblies) which are among you I exhort...² Feed [Tend (watch, guard, protect) as a shepherd, feed, rule] the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint (compulsory) but willingly (voluntarily); not for filthy lucre (covetously), but of a ready mind (cheerfully);³Neither as being lords (control) over God's heritage, but being examples (pattern to imitate) to the flock-1Pt5:1-AC-I warn...counsel the elders among you (the pastors/spiritual guides of the church)...²Tend (nurture, guard, guide, **FOLD**-Confine sheep in a fold) the flock of God that is [your responsibility]...not motivated by the advantages..profits [belonging to the office]**
- A. Sheep have tendance to wonder
- B. You don't take the office for your benefit (money, title, authority)-Mt23:5-All their works they do for to be seen of men...⁶And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi
- C. Purpose of leadership isn't to control-We lead, you choose to submit and follow and if you don't, then you don't; Leading is guiding, not controlling or forcing to follow-Hb13:17-Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls
- D. Having received from God a pastoral gift and actually standing in the office (not just using a title) they have an anointing from God to feed, lead, protect-They'll see dangers you don't, not because they're smarter or more spiritual but because of the anointing (Like a parent and child)
1. Title doesn't equal office and anointing-Men can ignorantly give the ttle pastor, but only God can call to the office and anoint; A lot of empty cans with labels
 2. To often too many of my people think they known better than their leader-K.Hagin's public warning about services K.M. was going to
- E. God will feed you, lead you, protect you through your leadership/pastor-Not all of God's leading, feeding and protection come directly from the Holy Spirit to you-Hb13:17-They watch for your souls
1. Years agon people were too dependent on leaders-Now there has been on overcorrection
- F. As leaders God put us in this position to lead-"If all you're ever going to do is pray and ask Me to lead them, then what do I need you for."
1. If God can't get it across to them what makes you think you can-It's not me trying to get through to them it's God by another avenue; Often He is dealing with them by The Spirit but they aren't listening, so He uses a leader to address it

- II. **Be careful about what you hang around-1Co5:6**-Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ¹¹I 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.
- A. Spiritual things spread; Wrong things in someone else can get in you-1Co15:12-If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some of among you that there is no resurrection of the dead; ³³Be not deceived: Evil communications (AC-Associations) corrupt good manners
1. What you associate with you open yourself up to
- B. You never become so developed that you don't have stay on guard-Mt24:4-Take heed that no man deceive you.⁵For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ²⁴...deceive the very elect
1. A person deceived doesn't know they are deceived or even that they are deceiving others
 2. The people in the most danger of getting the wrong things in them are the ones who think they are so developed that they can go into any environment and not be affected-I guard against confusion and deception because I know I am susceptible to it-1Co10:12-Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall
- C. Just because a thing is Christian doesn't mean it's safe-Church services you don't need to attend, Christian articles you don't need to read, Christian podcasts/ministers/songs you don't need to listen to
1. The spirit and heart can be wrong NOT just doctrine
 2. You don't need to judge them-You need to judge if it's right or wrong for you NOT them
- D. The less mature, the more easily deceived-Ep4:14-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
- III. **The devil wants to sever what God has joined together-Mt19:6**-What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.
- A. God joins you to leadership, to people NOT a church-He decides not you-**1Th5:12**-We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord...¹³...esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake-**1Co12:18**-God set the members every one of them in the body as it has pleased him
1. People pick their church for all the wrong reasons-Programs, length of service, vibe, music, dress, who else goes there
- B. One of the initial areas the enemy attacks every believer is severing them from the leaders God joined them to-Ecc10:4-If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place
1. Lot did well until He unhooked-Gn12:4-Lot went with Him-**Gn13:7-8**
- C. It takes fortitude to stay hooked to who The Lord has hooked you to

1. Ruth wouldn't unhook-The reason Boaz helped her was because she stayed hooked to Naomi-**Ru1:16**-*For where you go, I will go; and where you lodge, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: ¹⁷Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me-**Ru2:11**-*It hath fully been shewed me, all that you hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband**
 2. Elisha wouldn't leave Elijah-**2Ki2:6**-*As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.⁹...What I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee...let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. ¹⁰...if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so unto you; but if not, it shall not be so*
- D. By following the ones He's hooked you to you become something-**Mt4:19**-*Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men*
- E. Receive from different ministries, but generally there is one that has more influence than the rest-**1Co3:22**-*Whether Paul, or Apollos or Cephas...all are yours-**1Co4:15**-*Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.¹⁶Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me**

IV. We need to be very cautious about doing anything that causes someone to disconnect from what God has joined together

- A. The devil is using believers to severe God ordained connections-You got believers who leave a church and then start inviting people to their new church; Pastors treating growing their church like selling a car (J.McKay-Wouldn't let people from his old church come)
1. The enemy is a taker-**Jn10:10**-*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*
 2. EX-What we do if people are between churches or has a church-It's called Spiritual integrity and not being a charlatan
- B. We don't pastor in fear of people leaving-If someone is supposed to go we gladly release them; We have much bigger vision than a few people; Not okay with the devil subtly trying to sever what God joined
- C. The enemy tries to play off what is dangerous as innocent and harmless-If Amber is busy one night and I find another woman to spend time with and we fellowship, talk about The Lord and I say it's innocent because there's nothing sexually immoral going on; Where do you think the enemy wants this to end? Severing what God has joined
- D. It's come to our attention that some of you have been invited by an indivial who used to go here to attend services at a different church-As your pastor I felt directed of The Lord to address this

- E. We don't treat getting people to come to Northsmoke like selling a used car ("What do we have to do to get you to come to here")
- F. If people are in between churches we say, "We believe God has a specific place for everybody and if that's hear great and if that's not hear great, but we will be in agreement with you that God will make it clear to you where you are supposed to be." - **THAT'S CALLED SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY**
- G. Jer3:15-I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding
- H. People think, "Great, I don't have to follow."-There are great consequences to following the ones God put over you
- I. Ours is Brother Keith-We've submitted to Him
- J. If a person leaves a church on good/bad terms it's not right for them to try to pull people with them-That's being a taker and that's what the enemy does God is a giver