

## LET THERE BE PASTORAL CARE

Some fellowships have little real pastoral care, other churches seem to be covered by a soulish co-dependance. Elders are to be welders of God's people to make them a loving unit, fit for the purposes of God. Leaders should be on the look-out for those of character, who can become members of a ministry team, or those involved in collective servanthood. There are three contemporary issues and you dear reader, will be thinking of many incidents that have caused grief in the body of Christ.

Firstly, we need to see the traits of co-dependancy and bring souls out of these insidious traps.

The co-dependant believer can be discerned by:-

- \* compelled into compulsive behaviour (habits, drugs, addictions, racing thoughts etc.)
- \* replay the memories of a dysfunctional family to the extent where they are bound in self pity.
- \* worthless feelings, and low self-esteem. A negative pattern of words and thoughts pre-dominated, so the sufferer feels they live in a valley of dry bones.
- \* feels inordinately responsible for another (see John 21:21).
- \* improvises change by controlling another's life. Sometimes wrong prayers kick in creating a climate of confusion.
- \* constantly looking for significance in another person, so a soul-tie happens.
- \* being a child loving a cruel parent and coming under their ungodly control.
- \* pornography, prostitution, promiscuity all prevent emotional and mental well-being, because your soul is being destroyed (Prov. 6:32).
- \* control of perfectionism that destroys freedom in a relationship, so a blindness exists concerning other people.

We could go on, but the snare is simply that there can be little or no godly imparting of divine life to those in ungodly relationships. When people cap the real personality under the mask of false self, and cap demons under the false self, the potential for ungodly relationships in a church setting will soar.

Let there be love.....pastoral care with huge doses of discernment.

Secondly, elders and leaders by exhibiting the Shepherd's love, have a holy obligation to multiply the ministry in the local church. This takes time, births equal amounts of despair and joy, challenges our spirituality. We are to commit spiritual things to people of character, (see 2 Timothy 2:2). FAITHFUL is Paul's key word to Timothy, and about Timothy (Philippians 2:19-22). Some folk in church go to all the conferences and courses and think that qualifies them to minister. To minister frontal

love information is not pastoral care because it must come from a deeper source, the human spirit infused by the Holy Spirit. We are to be faithful firstly to our vertical relationship with the Father and then horizontally with those under our charge. Brennan Manning was once asked about 7 day silences, "what do these retreats do for you?" He replied "God likes it when I show up". Faithfulness!

Out of the sanctuary stillness comes fresh revelation. Are we faithful to the rhema God would impart for someone else? Will the Spirit of counsel come upon us? Babies-in-Christ need counselling desperately, and mentoring if they desire maturity through ministry.

Thirdly, leaders need the Spirit of counsel, and supernaturally think beneath the surface of the problem. We have to see the battle with sins, self and evil spirits.

|           |              |                  |
|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| Check out | John 3: 1-21 | Nicodemus        |
|           | John 4: 7-26 | Woman of Samaria |
|           | John 8: 3-12 | Woman (adultery) |

where Jesus strategically handles personal problems with the Spirit of counsel, knowledge and understanding. Jesus in these passages does three things - sees beneath to the perils of the situation, sees the future path, and sees how we can enter His purpose.

| <u>PERIL</u>            | <u>PATH</u>                | <u>PURPOSE</u>           |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| What is happening       | Where you can go           | How to get there         |
| John 3: 6, 17,<br>FLESH | John 3: 8<br>12,13<br>WIND | John 3: 16<br>BELIEVE    |
| John 4: 18<br>HUSBANDS  | John 4: 14<br>WATER        | John 4: 23-26<br>WORSHIP |
| John 8: 7, 6<br>ACCUSE  | John 8: 11<br>SIN NO MORE  | John 8: 12<br>LIGHT      |

We are never to shrink the gospel to the benefit of recovery only. Jesus will listen to her pain and listen to his frustrations....he says in effect, "I see the battle within your heart Nicodemus, you want to believe but are held in bondage by your traditions."

The first step for the counsellor is James 1:19

*"let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."*

Then we paint the sin-free path of living water and blowing wind. If Jesus is

manifest in our counselling we will have a passion to reveal how the brother or sister can enter His purposes.

At this point PRIORITIES looms large. Take Matthew 6:33 where the two statements of “seek first the Kingdom”, and “all these things shall be added” must be in the right order. Jesus knows our hearts - are the first things actually first or the blessings paramount? Only as righteousness pervades our motives can the blessing of peace flow.

*“The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.”*

Isaiah 32:17

The counsellor also needs super-sensitivity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Without a sense of “help” we are just “fools on the hill”. God is never the route to narcissistic goals or the narcotics of pleasure. We live for His pleasure and glory by brokenness and vision. Our agendas have to be broken. Read Jeanne Guyon’s Spiritual Letters and you will find the cross where we die to self etched on every page. Pastoral care minus discernment and the dealings of the cross is sentimental, soulish, inadequate empathy.

Focus of true counselling is how do I live my life in dependance on the Trinity? John 14:23 and 2 Corinthians 1:3-6 need urgent meditation. Two thoughts come from these verses.

- (a) only Father and Son can fulfill you in adventure, recognition, security and love.
- (b) all your experiences, primarily are certainly not for you.

As we enter the aching heart of the needy, these two truths spoken from a heart that knows the Father’s love do begin the healing process.

When we lead with the ears, and follow with our tongue we will need

- a) words of Knowledge and wisdom  
(GIFTS of the HOLY SPIRIT)
- b) word of truth - John 17:17  
(SCRIPTURE KNOWLEDGE).

Remember the hidden story behind what the counsellee shares. Also within the background key events will have taught the person wrong belief systems so the spirit of error must be detected.

Let's pray:

“Father in heaven I praise You for Jesus, the wonderful counsellor, the Great Shepherd. Cause me to get beyond my masks and the deceitful heart to the place where you can reign as indwelling Lord and Redeemer. In Jesus all-prevailing Name. Amen.”

Let there be love. The same quality as the Father loved the Son, and the Son loved His disciples. Truth must be spoken in discerning love for maturity to come in the church. Let there be pastoral care in the redeemed community of our Lord Jesus.....without it, the world cannot be moved. As we love one another then the world will know we are His disciples!

It should be a point of spiritual honour that I do not hoard spiritual blessings for myself. When we spend others for His Kingdom in discharging my debt to God

IT WILL RETURN TO YOU IN MORAL,  
PHYSICAL and SPIRITUAL RECREATION.

Pastoral care takes energy, but as we wait on the Lord the quickening and renewing will come. Do we realise we are not our own but bondslaves of Jesus Christ?

## **PASTORAL CARE IS A MINISTRY OF THE WORD**

Ministry begins at the point you change your thinking by the word of God. Depth of ministry is proportional to how the death of Christ is related to our lives. Pastoral care involves the word of the cross, a cutting edge that exposes sin. We are not free to think our own thoughts. Ministry **DISCOVERS** truth. Truth must be worked out prayerfully with others. If the ministry of pastoral care is right then others will come to see it. Lets look at different kinds of counselling using the Greek words to make specific.

(a) **Elencho** “to reprove, convict.”

John 16:8 speaks of the Holy Spirit bringing home to the world its own sin. Counsellors may doubt a person's salvation if there is no conviction of sin. True counselling begins with the universal fact of sin. John G. Lake was confronted by a woman needing deliverance from alcoholism, but the targeting of the word of Knowledge came, “what about £250 of jewellery you stole from that house?” Pastoral care goes to the root of sin.

(b) **Elego** “to speak kindly.”

1 Thessalonians 2:7,10,11 reveals Paul as a comforting nurse and an imploring father. Part of counselling is the encouragement to those who are weak in mind, will and body. Listeners feed on your spirit as well as your words. Divine power is never carried by words alone, but by relationship. Jesus knew **WHAT** to SAY AND **HOW** to say it (whether in mercy or in anger!)

(c) **Noutheteo** “to train by the word”

We see the confrontation of directive input in 1 Corinthians 4:14 and Acts 2:36. God will warn us and put us on the spot! His love lies behind His rebuke. Paul warned with tears in Acts 20:31. Admonition - to rivet your mind to the seriousness of the warning is seen in Titus 3:10 and 1 Corinthians 10:11. The Holy Spirit does not need C.J. Jung or Freud or Adler. He will use counsellors to discern root issues and speak a word of warning.

(d) **Parakaleo** Romans 15:4

The encouragement of the Scriptures is that they come alongside, with divine capability to help us. The comfort can be supernaturally dramatic through the gift of prophecy.

(1 Corinthians 14:3). Pastoral care should have a prophetic input. Tychicus had this ministry (Ephesians 6:21,22). The young converts at Thessalonica, a church born in a riot, needed comfort (see 1 Thess. 3:2, 1 Thess. 5:11).

(e) **Paideno** Hebrews 12:3, 5-8.

The chastening of the Lord was given to leaders in 1 Corinthians 5:4,5. The context is incest and not adultery. Chastening can be more than mere training by instruction, there is the aspect of the rod (1 Corinthians 4:21). God cannot speak to those who have not known the rod of Scripture. (Deuteronomy 11:2). It produces true sonship, prevents illegitimacy, causes a partaking of His holiness, and the peaceable fruit of righteousness. This includes the benefits of deliverance, protection, provision and fulfillment. (Job 5: 17-27).

(f) **Didasko** “to teach” Colossians 3:16

Counselling gives an opportunity for tailor teaching to be relevant to the problem. The depth of the counsel is related to the wisdom of the counsellor and how far he or she has progressed in matters of truth and life. Romans 1:15 says:

“as much as is in me  
I am ready to preach.....”

Truth must be blood-bought to be blood-taught.

(g) **Pomaino** “to tend as a shepherd.....”

The context of John 10:1-6 is the excommunication of the blind man. Jesus goes after the scattered, the confused, the lost. The sheepfold today is the church.....who will be equal in reality to her Bridegroom. The door is the law and the prophets..... the narrow gate of Matthew 7:12, 13. The doorkeeper was Moses but is now your elders. The voice of strangers can be the world, religious leaders without the Holy Spirit or even Job's friends or your own counsel that emanates from your soul and not your spirit. Counsellors who follow the Lamb must give their lives

to the sheep. The Lord is your good Shepherd and pastoral care comes from His interpretation of all you are going through. The negative things of our lives as well as the positive things come from His sovereign hand. May we know Him in the depths personally and intimately because He works a forever thing in our hearts. Jesus is our ticket to ride into the pastoral relationships of the Trinity.

## **A WORD ON DEACONS**

Pastoral care on a daily basis has to be extended in many churches to deacons or housegroup leaders. 1 Timothy 3:11 'wives' should read 'deaconesses' and so gender should not be an issue. Deacons need to be upgraded from denominational preconceptions to gifted ministers of the new covenant, anointed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3) and recognized by the people of God. The only doctrinal qualification that separates deacons from elders is that the overseers must be apt to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). The deacons encourage the life force of the church, which is agape love, by a lifestyle of serving.

Serving starts with hearing God because duties must be come out of revelation. Dynamic of the Holy Spirit is needed, for duties to be seeded! Duties include instigating, administrating, listening, reading the Bible, laying hands on the sick, helping practically, being an example (John 13:17), discerning and generally operating in faith and love. Two out of seven in Acts 6 were evangelists with sign ministries. The honour of being a deacon is surely that wonder of "holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience." If deacons live in that truth then the sickness of sameness can be a thing of yesteryear.

Can the Holy Spirit enter a deacon's meeting? Will the foundation stone of prayer lead a deacon to His presence, the one thing needful that Mary discovered at His feet? Let there be pastoral care through deacons. Church order that satisfies God will bring multiplication, imple Act 6:7.

Deacons must be people persons able to relate to the body of Christ AND seekers AND those who have recently come to the Lord Jesus. May they grow in the mystery of the faith to discern the area of serving in all the committed.