

The Book of First Peter

"A PLEA TO PASTORS"

1 Peter 5:1-4

Introduction

1. The position of pastor in a local assembly is related to the gifts of our Lord to His church. (Eph. 4:7-16).
2. There are two major connections which this passage sustains: a. To submission (2:11ff.)
b. To suffering (4:19).
3. Three aspects of the plea to pastors are detailed by the apostle Peter for us. Note them with care:
 1. The PRESENTATION of the plea. v. 1.
The common word for "exhortation" is employed to connote the fact that Peter sought to beseech Christian leaders in their ministry. It is the same Greek term used for "Comforter" in relation to the Holy Spirit. What a gentle manner of approach!
 2. The JUSTIFICATION of the plea. v. 1.
Three reasons are advanced by Peter for the plea which he advances:
 - a. His position. "fellow-elder." Only used here in the N.T., the word notes that Peter shared the place of an elder in the church of Christ.
 - b. His affliction. As a witness (term for martyr in Greek) of the sufferings (passion) of Christ, Peter pleads. This ties in with 4:13ff. Peter knew how elders suffer!
 - c. His glorification. Because of his participation in suffering, Peter affirmed his right to share (same word as "partaker" in 4:13) in the glory to come.
 3. The SIGNIFICATION of the plea. vv. 2-4.
By this we mean the contents of the plea. What did Peter actually beseech the elders (pastors) to do?

- a. Be properly motivated in the work.
- 1) Be a willing worker--not forced to do it. v. 2. An elder must be one who is a volunteer and not a man pressed into the situation. In times of persecution and suffering there is the temptation, an elder will regret his prominence!
 - 2) Be a freewill worker--not rewarded to do it. v. 2. This does not mean an elder works free, but as a freewill offering. The basic purpose of performance is not for base gain.
 - 3) Be a humble worker--not lording others to do it. v. 3. Tyranny in any form is despicable. When related to the ministry its ugliness is heightened. Humbleness like all real Christain graces is a matter of "becoming" (proper rendering of "being"). Growth in a pastor is as patent as in any believer. None can claim "I have arrived."
- b. Be properly orientated in the work. The key verb here is "feed." The Greek word employed means to "tend." More than feeding is involved. Leading, protecting, providing, etc. is involved. Common verb form which "shepherd" comes.
- c. Be properly alerted in the work. v. 4. As the elder exercises oversight over a portion of the flock, there is a Chief Shepherd to whom the local shepherd must give an account. When He comes, the local shepherd will receive back what has been promised him (cf. 1:9 and Heb. 10:36 for same verb). The promise is a crown of glory which is an amaranth (cf. 1:4).
- Conclusion: One's calling as a pastor (elder) is a high and holy one. Paul gives us a needed aphorism for today--1 Tim. 3:1.