

TRUTH & RIGHT

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PASTOR OR PREACHER?

This question was asked, “When I said, ‘Good morning, Pastor,’ to the speaker this morning, he told me that he was a preacher, not a pastor. What’s the difference?”

In the New Testament, the work of “pastoring” deals more with the oversight of a local congregation, whereas “preaching” is the work of proclaiming the gospel. There is a distinction between the “offices” and their functions, and relatively few men serve in both of them simultaneously.

The word “pastor” is used only in Ephesians 4:11 and is a rather poor translation from the Greek than a much simpler word, “shepherd.” In that passage, it is used as a noun, but the same root is used as a verb in Acts 20 and it is there that we truly discover the identity of the pastors.

In Acts 20:17, Paul summoned the elders of the church in Ephesus

to visit him and he commanded them to “shepherd the church of God” where they were its overseers (verse 20). Pastoring, then, is a work given to the elders of the congregation, not its preacher. These older and wiser men are chosen to feed the flock and tend to each sheep as precious in God’s sight.

The qualifications to serve as an elder are revealed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and it is vitally important that every congregation seek to appoint a plurality of them as soon worthy men who desire the office can be identified.

Timothy, on the other hand, was a younger man as he interacted with the apostle and is never referred to as a pastor. Likewise, Titus is enlisted to appoint elders on Crete, but is not referred to as a pastor.

In fact, five New Testament

words have reference to this same office. They are bishop (Titus 1:5,7), elder, overseer, presbyter (1 Tim. 4:14) and pastor (Acts 20:17,28). The words all derive from three Greek terms and are used interchangeably by inspired writers to emphasize certain aspects of their work. Ephesians 4:11 shows them to be distinct from other offices in the church.

- J.S. Smith

RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

When a discussion of the Holy Spirit is entered into, folks often become "mystical." This is true of various points about the Spirit, including receiving the Spirit. What does it mean to "receive the Spirit?"

John wrote, "I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes... does not receive us" (3 John 9). To reject John's teaching was to not receive him. Thus, to accept his teaching would be to receive him. Paul told the Colossians, "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him" (Colossians 2:6). Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who

sent Me" (John 13:20).

Therefore, to receive the teaching of an inspired man is to receive the inspired man. To receive the inspired man is to receive the Lord. To receive the Lord is to receive the Father.

Question: Who inspired John?

Answer: The Holy Spirit.

Question: Whom did Jesus send to inspire men?

Answer: The Holy Spirit. Is it too difficult to see that when men received the apostles and prophets, they not only received the Lord, but the Spirit sent by the Lord to guide those men into all truth?

Friends, we receive the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by submitting to the gospel. It is that simple!

- Steven Deaton

SPIRITUAL ILLUSIONS

A friend recently sent me some optical illusions via e-mail. Looking at them got me to thinking about spiritual illusions that deceive many souls. Here are a few for you to contemplate, with the hope that we may clearly see the difference between man-made illusions and divinely revealed truth.

1) "One church is as good as another." This illusion assumes

that all the churches men have established are good in God's sight. But, Jesus built one church: one body over which He is the head (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4)

2) "Join the church of your choice." While God has indeed given mankind freewill, He did not give man free rein to build churches and then offer them as some sort of commodity to the masses. Jesus purchased His church with His blood (Acts 20:28). Why choose a church of inferior value?

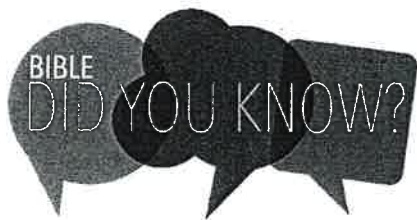
3) "Doctrine is not important as long as you are sincere." The illusion is that sincerity of heart equals remission of sins. But it does not. Only the blood of Christ cleanses the sin-stained soul (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Only when the sinner obeys "from the heart that form of doctrine" delivered by Christ's apostles will he be saved (Rom. 6:17-18, 3-4). Recall that Saul was sincerely persecuting Christians and Cornelius was a sincerely moral man, yet both were lost in sin until they believed and obeyed the gospel (Acts 26:9; 23:1; 10:1-2; 11:14).

4) "We must be doing something right, look how big our church is!" The adage "might makes right" is adapted to religion, and millions are comforted by the illusion that

numbers represent divine approval. They forget Jesus' warning that "few" find "the way which leads to life" (Matt. 7:13-14).

Optical illusions play tricks on the eye. But, spiritual illusions fool the soul and have eternal consequences. So, remain focused on God's word of truth. "When eye is good, your whole body also will be full of light" (Luke 11:34). Never forget, "there is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death" (Prov. 16:25).

- Joe R. Price



While there were at least 40 different people who wrote parts of the Bible, some were more prolific than others. The Apostle Paul wrote at least 13 books of the Bible. He may have also been the author of the book of Hebrews. Moses wrote the first 5 books.

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. **What does "Eve" mean?**

- a) "matron of the earth"
- b) "mother of all living"
- c) "new beginnings"
- d) "daughter of God"

2. **Who married Abraham?**

- a) Rachel
- b) Sarah
- c) Anna
- d) Rebekah

3. **Looking for a wife for Isaac, Abraham's servant found:**

- a) Michal
- b) Rebekah
- c) Leah
- d) Rachel

4. **Jacob agrees to work seven years for the hand of:**

- a) Gomer
- b) Hagar
- c) Rachel
- d) Isabel

5. **This woman promised the Lord that if He would bless her with a son, she would dedicate the boy to Him. She later bore Samuel.**

- a) Jezebel
- b) Bathsheba
- c) Hannah
- d) Leah

6. **David's original wife was:**

- a) Leah
- b) Michal
- c) Miriam
- d) Bathsheba

7. **This woman remained with her mother-in-law, Naomi, after Naomi's husband and sons died.**

- a) Ruth
- b) Hannah
- c) Miriam
- d) Esther

8. **This woman rumored that Joseph tried to commit adultery with her.**

- a) Potiphar's wife
- b) Gideon's wife
- c) Jacob's wife
- d) Pharaoh's wife

9. **This harlot housed spies sent by Joshua to take the city of Jericho?**

- a) Leah
- b) Rahab
- c) Bathsheba
- d) Jezebel

10. **After King David looked upon her lustfully, he had an affair with this woman that ultimately led to the death of her original husband.**

- a) Zipporah
- b) Bathsheba
- c) Rahab
- d) Leah

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS & VERSES:

- 1) C, Reference: Genesis 3:19
- 2) D, Reference: Nahum 1:3
- 3) B, Reference: Genesis 21:3
- 4) A, Reference: Luke 19:2
- 5) B, Reference: Luke 2:22-24
- 6) D, Reference: Ezekiel 37:11

- 7) B, Reference: Luke 5:10
- 8) C, Reference: Acts 1:3
- 9) A, Reference: 1 Kings 6:1
- 10) A, Reference: 1 Corinthians 11:20-22