



Devotional Thoughts :: PASTOR YOURSELF: TAKE HEED UNTO YOURSELF...PT I

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TEXT: ROM. 14: 12; 1TIM. 4:16; HEB. 13:17;1PET. 5:2

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."(KJV)

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."(KJV)

"Be careful Â·in your life and in your teaching. If you Â·continue to live and teach rightly , you will save both yourself and those who listen to you."(EXPB)

"Focus on your life and your teaching. Continue to do what I've told you. If you do this, you will save yourself and those who hear you."(GW)

"Keep a close watch on all you do and think. Stay true to what is right and God will bless you and use you to help others."(TLB)

"Keep a firm grasp on both your character and your teaching. Don't be diverted. Just keep at it. Both you and those who hear you will experience salvation."(MSG)

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."(KJV)

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.(KJV)

Every pastor shall give a detail account of the men and women put under his watch: he is expected to take heed, therefore, to know the present state, condition and pondering of his flock. He should live as "they that must give account." This means God shall put him to the strictest demand of the wellbeing of all under his oversight...when any is lost, he is expected to "go after that which is lost, until he finds it..." it is mandatory for him to "...light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till..." he "...finds it.." This duty is the highest and the most tedious, yet the most rewarding on the surface of this globe.

No excuse is welcome at all! The expectation of divinity would not be qualified and varied in any way: the account shall be strict! If the trust is betrayed, I give us to understand, we shall surely be punished, either in this life or the next. Let no man deceive us! The thundering announcement or order from our homeland is: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof..."

Conversely, turning to the flock, the apostles, posit that every man under the son shall give account of himself. This account shall be equally strict. Whether a man has good and diligent pastor over him or not, will not mellow down the strictness of his account before God. Paul admonishes Timothy to take heed unto HIMSELF and unto the DOCTRINE: this simply means he should take care of his life and his ministry! Life before ministry!

The crux of this meditation is simply this: like the locusts, though without a leader yet move in band, fraternity and fellowship, every one of us should become a pastor to ourselves. The carelessness and insensitiveness of any pastor can ne

ver ground our excuses before God. Every man is responsible for and to himself. Every one is expected to bear his own burden. There is no accusing finger to be pointed at any man before the throne of God on that day!

Every man shall know that he is supposed to be a pastor to himself in one way or the other. This means that a man should see beyond the four walls of his local assembly...pray beyond the corporate prayer meeting. No man should leave himself at the mercy of church programs: let a man organise personal retreat and Bible study time for himself; nourishing himself before God!

Moreover, this admonition is not meant to instigate pride and insubordination: it is useful because of the present disorientation from the original standard in the house of God in our time...many shepherds have become numbed to the needs of their flock and have taken to strange likes and desires. No sacrifice and dedication any more! Many pastors are not feeding well spiritually...spiritual sensitivity is long lost and many of them have been fired by God from their assignment without knowing.

No more freshness of revelation...the message of materialism and prosperity has overtaken many pulpits. In-depth teaching of the truth is rare in our time. Many believers are buying into this new move without knowing the damage this poses to the gospel of Christ.

Some of us are under the delusion that our pastors would save us and provide all our spiritual needs...this is a big lie! With this present trend of showmanship and empire building, few shepherds have time to look into our inner most conditions. They cannot be reached...their phones are in the hand of another man...a lot of barragade surround them...they are cocooned in a thick transparent, sound-proof insulators: our cry and groaning cannot reach them; oh yes, your fear and tears cannot get to them but your tithes can easily get to them; they are oblivious to our mourning but alive to our money! Careless about our pain but anxious for our pounce.

This minister of God's word has only one admonition to us, be a pastor to yourself! Be the both senior and resident pastor to yourself! Take heed unto yourself! Take absolute oversight of your ownself...when you feel lost, go after yourself, until you find you! Light a candle and sweep the house until you see yourself! Look for yourself in the Bible...when a man is preaching, ask whether you are in the sermon! Be diligent over your own affairs...for not many are mindful of you!

Drawing the curtain, we would take the liberty to see the wiles and suggestion of the devil, for which many shepherds have fallen: in Genesis 14:21, the king of Sodom told Abraham, "...Give me the persons and keep the goods for yourself. ..." The people in exchange for material things! This is what many are doing in ministry, exchanging the destiny of men for the goods of this life! We shall come upon this subsequently. Men and brethren, stock of the seed of Abraham and to all that fear the coming strict account, to you is this words sent: "Focus on your life and your teaching. Continue to do what I've told you. If you do this, you will save yourself and those who hear you." To be continued!