

Pt. 6 The Price of Pentecost – Godly Leadership

Acts 1:15-26

Intro...*Time magazine medical section:*

1. a man went to a psychiatrist...he was complaining of voices in his head
2. Psychiatrist..... *said, oh boy! what kind of voices?*
3. Man...*they sound like radio broadcasts*
4. Psychiatrist....*Can you hear them right now?*
5. Man...*I sure can real clear!*
6. Psychiatrist... *what's on?*
7. Man...*I can hear Rudy Valley broadcasting live from Atlantic City*
8. Psychiatrist said ... *that's odd!*

(So he pulled out his own radio and searched thru stations...and sure enough, it was on!)

Come to find out...

- a. the man worked at a glass factory
- b. had gotten some silica crystals caught in the cavities of his teeth
- c. the combination of silica crystals, saliva, and bridgework had literally transformed the man into a walking radio receiver!
- d. He was referred to a dentist who removed the crystals and the man immediately went **“off the air!”**

A lot of churches have gone “off the air” with God!

- a. They used to be tuned in to a heavenly frequency.
- b. But, over time they've moved in small increments away from God.

Most likely....

1. They were disobedient...losing focus on the mission of the church
2. Or...they allowed disunity to scramble the signal!
3. And then...they never seriously prayed in order to get **“retuned”** to God's heavenly frequency.
- c. And now you can write over their door, **“the church of the blessed memory!”**
 1. Their memories are greater than their dreams...
 2. they have substituted motion for direction [going thru the motions]
 3. They're gatekeeping not trailblazing
 4. They're **“keepers of aquarium rather than fishers of men”**...

We've been talking from Acts 1 about how to stay “on the air” w/ God..in tune w/ His signal...

1. It costs quite a bit to receive the signal...the **Price of Pentecost!**
2. Great churches don't just happen by accident!
 - a. They are not determined by location, facilities, or the economy--any more than by climate or skin color!
3. Great churches occur when God's people become willing to pay...**Price of Pentecost!**

4. Great churches are made up of great families and individuals...

5. Great families have 4 Traits of Greatness:

obedience, unity, prayer, and leadership...

Churches, do too! According to Acts 1...we've looked at the first 3...

Statement....."Nothing Rises Above Leadership!"

Now, what it all rises and falls upon, leadership:

Judas turned out to be a devil, forsook the Lord, committed suicide, and then there were only 11.

Had to be 12 for a reason: had to correspond w/ 12 tribes of Israel [*another sermon altogether*]

Today consider: what kind of leader were they looking for?

And what kind of leaders do we then need to have in order to be a powerful, spirit-filled church? [acts 2]

When I say leaders, don't think we're just talking about church staff...we're talking deacons, s.s. teachers, workers, cmte. members, those who serve in any capacity...Jesus said servants are the true leaders...those who get out of the boat/realize we're not saved to sit but to serve!

In sign language, the gesture for a servant is hands out in front with palms up, moving back and forth between the signer and the signee. This simple motion communicates powerful component qualities about a servant and servant-leadership: trusting, being open, offering help, caring and being willing to be vulnerable.

"Must" of a Biblical Leader:

1. Leaders must be genuinely converted ...v. 22

- isn't it a tragedy the way some churches recruit leadership?
- On basis of personality/talents/or just willingness!/social status...
...first and foremost, a leader must be born again...genuinely converted!

The 11 remaining are being very careful, because they got burned by Judas!

A tare among the wheat...a counterfeit Christian...a fake!

And he was a leader! One of the 12!

Evangelist Bailey Smith gave some statistics after 30 years of ministry:

57 pastors saved/69 pastor's wives/139 deacons/171 deacon's wives/17 missionaries!

You can be any leader at any level...but you still must be born again!

It's one thing to profess Christ/another to possess

Claim His Name/another to submit to His person!

2. Leaders must have convictions...vs. 15-16 powerful verse!

3 things Peter believed about the Bible:

1. Authority of God's Word

[Judas' betrayal was prophesied hundreds of years prior!...it must needs be fulfilled/it had to happen!]

Every leader must believe this or step down, do the honorable thing...otherwise it's the blind leading the blind!

There's no such thing as a growing, soul-winning church that is not also a Bible-believing church!

Oh, you can draw a crowd in several ways w/out the Word of God, but you cannot build a true church on anything less... "How Firm a Foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!"

G. Campbell Morgan, a great preacher of last century, said he was raised all his life believing the Bible was the Word of God, but he left home, and the agnostics, atheists, liberals, planted doubts in his mind...he got confused!

Started reading as much as he could on both sides of the Bible issue...when he got done he was more confused than ever...decided to do something different and just read the Bible itself/asked God to reveal it to him if this is His Word! He said, when I walked out of that room I didn't *think* it was the Word of God, I *knew* it!

Godly leaders must believe in the authority of God's Word...

2. Authorship of God's Word

v. 16 the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake!...

[the dual authorship of the Bible!] [breath thru instruments]

Men writing what God told them to write by Inspiration!

2 Peter 1

1:21

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

40 men from different backgrounds, over 1,600 years, wrote 66 books which have come together as the all time best selling, literary masterpiece, w/ 1 common theme: redemption of mankind, 1 common hero: Jesus Christ! It's only possible by there being 1 Author overseeing the whole project! God Almighty!!

2 Timothy 3

3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God...

Godly leaders must believe in the authority/authorship of God's Word...

3. Accuracy of God's Word

v. 16 ...concerning Judas!

If Judas had ever bothered, he could have read about himself in the Bible...and so can we! [*dividing asunder!*]

Every jot/tittle comes to pass!

Let me tell you precisely why so many people avoid Bible preaching churches: they don't want to be confronted by the mirror of God's Word, because they don't want to see themselves as they really are!

Many don't want to be confronted w/ their sin/lack of obedience...just keep that mirror of the Word away from me...ignorance is bliss...if I don't look into the mirror I don't have to worry about what I look like!

Joke—mountain man from TN/never seen civilization, or a mirror/came upon a vacated campsite/people had left some food, supplies...and a mirror!/looked into it, and it scared him...I'll be, a picture of my old pappy!/sentimental, wanted to keep it/tho't wife wasn't looking, hid it under the mattress/wife HAD seen!/when he was gone, she went and got it, looked into it!/startled her, too/said, so, that's the old hag he's been running around with!

I hope you're here to see yourself as you really are...not playing church [hospital for sinners, not display case for saints!]

If we are going to be the church God wants us to be, we have to have leaders of conviction about the authority/authorship/accuracy of God's Word.

[*action*]

Leaders must be converted, convicted...

3. Leaders must be Committed v. 21 "all the time"

They weren't looking for someone there one week and gone the next! But "there all the time"! When up, when down, they show up/consistent, committed!!

They're on board, in unity, and if not, have the decency to go to authority and try to make it right, or step down!

Ill.—treasurer who wouldn't go to s.s./evening services!

Leaders are to be examples, in the public eye! If you won't practice it, don't preach it!/don't walk it, don't talk it!/not willing to follow leadership over you, don't expect to be able to lead anyone/don't tithe, don't volunteer to collect it!

You can't build anything w/ uncommitted people...not a chicken house, much less a church!

Characteristics of Godly Ministry 1 Thessalonians 2

1 Thessalonians 2 we are given good insight on what characterizes godly ministry.

1st ... He was steadfast in his commitment to fulfill his calling in spite of all the opposition.

- a. Notice that Paul is opposed by certain people vs 1-2.
 - almost anybody that's doing anything faces a certain amount of opposition.
 - Certainly there were those who would readily defend Paul and his team.
 - But there were others who had all kinds of negative things to say about him.
 - Jesus said, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets."
 - I have found it absolutely impossible to be obedient to God and please everybody at the same time.
 - If you say what God tells you to say, it will at times step on people's toes.
 - The response of some people is to humble themselves and get right with God.
 - The response of others is to attack the messenger.
- b. In verse 2 of our text Paul talks about the fierce opposition he encountered at Philippi.
 - You may recall from Acts 16 how he was beaten and thrown in prison.
 - Praise God the jailer got saved. But the treatment was insulting and painful.
 - It would have been very easy to quite the ministry at Philippi.
 - It would have been easy to decide that it was not worth it and go do something else.
 - But we see that Paul is the real thing by the way he responds to all that.
 - He gets up and goes to Thessalonica and risks the same thing all over again.

2nd ... Pure motives (vs 3-5)

- a. Notice...Paul said in effect we were not playing some kind of game of deception.
 - We were not presenting ourselves as one thing knowing in reality we were something altogether different.
 - We were not pretending to have one goal but in reality really have some hidden agenda.
 - Paul deals with this issue on three levels.
 1. **First**, he talks about his purpose or goal. His goal was to please God in contrast to pleasing people.
 - How can I tell the difference between someone who seeks to please God and someone who seeks to please men?
 - The person who seeks to please men makes decisions based upon expediency—what is the line of least resistance and what is popular with the people, especially the powerful people.
 - In contrast to that, the person who seeks to please God makes decisions based upon principle—especially principles found in the word of God.
 2. **Second**, Paul talks about flattery. Verse 5,
 - One evidence that a person has a hidden agenda is flattery.
 - What's the difference between flattery and a complement?
 - (a)The key difference is sincerity.
 - (b)Do I really mean what I'm saying or am I actually saying something I don't really believe?
 - (c)Flattery is spoken not to encourage but to manipulate—to gain favor and confidence which will create vulnerability.
 - (d)Paul is pointing out the usual motive behind flattery—greed.
 3. **Third**, Paul says that he was also not seeking their praise.
 - We all want to be respected and appreciated.
 - But our basic need for affirmation must come out of our relationship with God.

3rd ... Hard work (vs 6-9).

- a. Hard work and personal sacrifice are characteristics of godly ministry that is usually absent in the counterfeit.
- b. The charlatan may work hard for awhile to get what he wants—but it will not characterize his life and personal sacrifice is certainly not in his plans.

4th ... Blameless and nurturing life-style (verse 10-12).

- a. Paul says in verse 10, examine my life—look at the way I live. I live an upright, devoted life that is above reproach.
 - Paul's life contained no hidden scandal.
 - He was an example of how a Christian ought to live and people could safely follow him.
- b. Our lives reflect what we really believe.
 - If I say I believe in tithing but only give sporadically—I am deceiving myself.
 - If I say I believe in servanthood but I never serve, who am I fooling? I'm just fooling myself.
- c. What we do reflects what we really believe and what we really are.
 - So Paul says, take a look.
 - I think you will find a consistency between what I am saying and what I am doing.

5th ... Encourages obedience to God (verses 11-12).

- a. Like a good father Paul exhorted them toward righteousness.
 - He encouraged them in the face of their trials and tribulation.
 - He urged them on in their walk with God—to live lives worthy of God's kingdom and glory.

6th ... Preaches the word (vs 13-16).

- a. There are lots and lots of things we could talk about when we come together.
- b. If the word of God does not remain central then the whole endeavor will drift off course.
 - It is easy for people to come together (not around God's word) but simply around social activity. Relationships are important and place should be given for that.
 - But when a group of people are no longer hungry to hear what God has to say, they are in trouble as a movement.
 - Ps 119:11 "*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*"
 - Matt 4:4 "*It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*"

7th ... Incurs resistance from Satan (verses 17-18).

- a. Paul longed to come to these new believers and establish them in the faith.
 - He tried over and over but failed.
 - Why? Because Satan stopped him.
- b. The Greek word translated hinder in the KJV and stopped in the NIV is enekopsen.
 - The root meaning is to cut up a road and make it impassable.
 - Have you ever had circumstances so chopped up by the enemy that you were stopped from doing what you sincerely felt needed to be done? That's what happened to Paul.
 - Resistance from the enemy is a part of it.

8th ... Invests in people and lives for the eternal (verses 19-20).

- a. Paul lived for one thing.
- b. He lived for the day when he could present these and others whom he had served to the Lord Jesus as fruit of his labor. The day of the Lord's appearing when we will see Him face to face.
 - b. Paul says I am so looking forward to presenting you to Christ on that day.
 - You will be our crown of glory as we bring you before Him.
 - We are all ambassadors of Christ... We are all to be examples others could follow.

Paul sets before us a worthy goal-which most of us will work on for a lifetime and still not completely reach. We ought to take this list seriously but also graciously and realistically.

The Overlooked Ingredient 1 Timothy 3:1

- a. **First**... he says that a person must **"set his heart"** on leadership.
The verb means to "stretch out in order to grasp," like a football player straining to reach the goal line.
- b. **Second**... he says that a leader must **"desire"** leadership.
That verb means to "eagerly desire" or to "be ambitious for"
- c. Notice... he calls leadership a **"noble task."** Leadership is a noble calling in and of itself.

Statements:

1. Leadership is a noble thing in the eyes of God and it, too, is a form of servanthood.
2. The desire to be a leader is noble if it is accompanied by a desire to grow in grace.
3. Being a leader is a noble work-but it is work!

If a person desires leadership, what does he seek?

- A title? A name? A big office? A platform for greatness? A big salary?
- No, he desires a "noble task."

First requirement for leadership.... A person must want the job!

1. There should be a God-given desire that moves the heart to action.
2. If you have to talk a person into serving, you've probably got the wrong person!
3. If God is truly calling, a person....they should eventually feel a deep inner desire for the job.

Two implications to think about:

1. If leadership is a noble task, then churches should uphold their leaders before the congregation.
Let's uphold leadership and encourage our people to show respect and appreciation for the leaders God has given.
2. Young men and women should be taught that leadership is a worthy calling in the local church.