

Please Don't Call Me "The Pastor"

By George Faull

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1. Because I am an evangelist and not one of the elders of the Church. Even if I were an elder, one never reads of "the pastor," for there is always a plurality of elders.

2. Because it infers that I do not know my job or what my work is. I am to evangelize, not oversee or shepherd the flock. It is hard for a man to do his job if he doesn't know his job description. You cannot very well do the work of the evangelist, if you are wearing the title of an elder or doing his work.

3. Because it infers that I am Biblically illiterate. I know the terms "elder" and "pastor" are synonymous, and that a pastor's work differs from an evangelist's. Note the following Scriptures: 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:17-28.

4. Because it infers that I am a "fad follower." It is "in" now to call the preacher "the pastor." This language of Ashdod shows that some don't think out the fads they follow. I don't use the title "Reverend." I don't use the title "the pastor." They are both fads, and bad ones at that, for they are doctrinally in error.

5. Because it infers that I am "Pasadena oriented" instead of "Jerusalem oriented." The preachers who follow the "Pasadena Church Growth Movement" and the "Super Preacher Concept" are a long way from the Biblical teaching of a plurality of elders, which God set over the Church to feed and oversee the flock. "Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing." Perhaps we should say, "Beware of the Preacher who is wearing the Pastor's title."

6. Because it infers that I am doctrinally questionable. If I do not know my work, nor my title, do I have anything else right? I wouldn't have much faith in a carpenter who calls himself a plumber. Names represent ideas. Words are vehicles of thought. When a man calls himself a priest, I cannot much trust his doctrine, since the priest concept is removed by the priesthood of all believers. When a Mormon says that one of the priests after the order of Melchizedek died, I know he is in error, for a Melchizedekian priest "ever liveth." When a Mormon teenager riding on a bicycle calls himself an elder of the Church, I have every right to question whether he knows anything at all about the Bible. When you call me "pastor," you make my other teachings questionable.

7. It infers that I am denominationally inclined. It says that I have been eating out of denominational troughs and drinking out of the pools of sectarianism, instead of the Bible. "The pastor" is the jargon of sectarianism, not the Bible. It encourages the Church to become "evangelical oriented," instead of having the distinct Church polity revealed in the Bible.

8. It infers that I am not "restoration minded." It says that I don't call Bible things by Bible names. It's saying that I don't speak "as the oracles of God." It says that I am off "the old paths" and am blazing the trail into the Restoration Movement with the ideas of men. The early Restorationists learned not to call themselves Elder Jones or Elder Smith, but returned to using the title "elder" for the overseers and not for the preachers. Johnson started the School of the Evangelists, but today men speak a "pastor's conference." If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). Pure speech is a prerequisite for Christian unity. A thing named wrong leads to confusion and practices which are unbiblical.

9. It infers that I am a proud, preeminence lover who looks for the respected titles of men. One wonders how many "pastors" would wear the name "servant"? It is argued that preachers do the pasturing in today's Church, so they ought to wear that name. If you are a preacher, and you wear the name "the pastor" because that is what you do, then repent. Give the title and the work back to the elders, where it belongs. Words represent ideas. You cannot wear the elders' title, and yet expect them to do their work. A preacher feeds the flock, but that is not his main work. His work is to evangelize the lost. His work is setting pastors over the flock, and setting the Church in order (Titus 1:5). The Lord did not give me the work nor the title of "the pastor." It smells of "chief shepherd." To call a 25-year-old man the "senior pastor" is as absurd and contradictory as to call a 19-year-old Mormon on a bicycle an elder. Since I am not "senior" nor "an elder," don't call me "senior pastor."

Call me an evangelist (Acts 21:8). That is the work I do. That is what I am called to do. That is the ministry I am to fulfill (2 Tim. 4:5). I, along with the pastors, are to mature the saints to do the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-13).