

Pastors Gone Wild!

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Jeremiah 23:1-2; Ezekiel 13:1-7; 22:13-16; 34:1-10; Deuteronomy 13:1-5

Unfortunately, this title is not just a catchy anecdote. There are actual situations both recent and past to soundly expound with detailed examples to support this topic. There are several places in scripture where the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob speaks against this type of behavior in the church perpetrated by its leaders.

Let's begin by putting things into perspective. *Ephesians 6:1-3* specifically teaches the duties and responsibilities of children. Often, the teaching stops here. But add verse 4 in the mix and we see something interesting. Not only do children have responsibilities to the parents but the parents have responsibilities to the children. So then, leaders have responsibilities to the followers.

Jeremiah 23:1-2

- Woe is defined as a word used to express grief, regret or distress.
- Whenever you see woe used in scripture, stop, read slowly and carefully the words of God...the great and wonderful Jehovah.
- So we see the Lord is disturbed with the pastors and leaders of church and He gives His word in verse 2 that He *will* repay the evil that these leaders are now paying to the children of God.
- Today there is abuse, swindling, and other deplorable acts in the church. God will not allow these atrocities to go unpunished.

Ezekiel 13:1-7

- I've heard from quite a few church goers that one should never speak out against a pastor. We read in verse 2 that God commands the prophet Ezekiel to do just that...to speak and prophesy against terrible leaders.
- Once again, we understand that God is disturbed and specifically with those that should prophesy but actually prophe-lie in the name of the Father.
- Be careful and cautious regarding those that claim the Lord said, when the Lord never told them to say anything. Remember *Matthew 7:21-23*. Not everyone who claims to speak for God, speaks for God. You test spirits by the Word of God. Not by how you feel.

Ezekiel 22:13-16

- These verses shed light on the judgment God will deliver. "I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain..." expresses our Lord's anger and contempt with leaders of this low caliber with a similar description as what the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) uses....EBT (Excess Benefit Transactions).
- This is an area that a great number of Christians and non-Christians alike have difficulty dealing with. It's not that God does not want us to prosper, He does. But there is a concept called good stewardess that every Christian church leader should practice. There is an issue with over excessiveness. For a good example of when something good turns to something bad, refer to *eating vs. gluttony*. Eating is paramount to living and good health. But when done excessively is sin. So then, when leaders receive (through solicitation) excessively...well I pray you get the point.

Ezekiel 34:1-10

- Again with the woe. God will strip flocks away from some pastors so that they can no longer prey off the flock. Some churches will close theirs doors permanently due to sin.
- Now if one continues to "flock" to pastors and leaders such as this with a proven track record of abuse, then they too in turn deserve what they receive. If the Lord has removed you, why return to a hurtful situation. If you knowingly place yourself in an

abusive situation when you know or at least feel it is against God's Will.....the shame and blame is imputed to you.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

- We are tested but not tempted by god. Will we choose to follow proper leadership? Will we choose to follow false leadership?
- Imagine that God permits these leaders so that we will learn to choose what is right. Not what is appealing to eyesight or our own self desires and aspirations.
- Equally, God commands us to stay away from some pastors, and prophets, and other so-called leaders.
- God's judgment against false leaders is death. The wages of sin is death. Payment may not always be immediate, but its never not issued.

Conclusion:

Leaders, lay members, and representatives of the Gospel all have a charge to behave righteously. Be ye holy as I am holy, saith the Lord of hosts. Jesus is the great Sheppard of the Christian church.