



**THE DILEMMA OF A PASTOR**

One of the Aesop fables told us about a man and his son going to the market place to sell their donkey. The son was riding the beast and the father leading it with a rope. While on their way, they met several people who immediately criticized the son for being so unfilial by allowing his aged father to walk. To please the onlookers, they changed places.

As they went farther, they encountered another group of busybody who castigated the father for being so heartless by letting his son walk under scorching sun. Upon hearing the unpleasant remarks, both decided to walk.

While on their way on, several people on the roadside expressed surprise at their being so stupid for not riding the donkey. Stung by the mockery, they settled the matter by both riding the donkey.

Meanwhile, they passed by a crowd and heard behind their backs somebody chiding them for being so cruel to the poor animal by overloading it. In order to please everybody, they finally decided on the alternative by carrying the donkey and it started kicking until the rope loosen and the donkey fell into a deep ravine. Both learned their lesson too late.

As human being, traversing the path of life, one is never free of criticisms from his fellow men. Whatever he does, whether right or wrong, there will always be somebody who will be dissatisfied, who will disagree and oppose him.

However, what the common man encountered is insignificant and tolerable compared to the ordeal of a PASTOR of a Church. A Pastor may be doing his very best as a faithful shepherd of his congregation, yet there will always be some parishioners who will be ready to find faults to criticize. Probably they expect the Pastor to be perfect all the time and do not take into consideration that he is just a mere human being who is also subject to some limitations and prone to commit mistakes. Here are some quoted criticisms which most laymen made:

“If the PASTOR is young, they say he lacks experience;

    If his hair is grey, he is too old for the young people”.

“If he preaches long, he is boring;

    If he delivers his sermon short, he probably lacks materials”.

"If he preaches from notes, he has canned sermons and is dry;  
If his message are extemporaneous, he is not deep".  
"If he is attentive to the poor people in the Church, they claim he is playing to the grandstand",  
If he pays attention to the wealthy, he is trying to be an aristocrat".  
"If he uses too many illustrations, he neglects the Bible;  
If he doesn't use enough stories, he isn't clear enough".  
"If he condemns wrong, he is cranky;  
If he doesn't preach against sin, they say he is a compromise".  
"If he preaches the truth, he is offensive;  
If he doesn't preach the truth, he is a hypocrite".  
"If he fails to please everybody, he is hurting the Church and ought to leave;  
If he does please everybody, he has no convictions".  
"If he preaches all the time the people get tired of hearing one man;  
If he invites guest preachers, he is shirking his responsibility".  
"If he receives a large salary, well then they say, it proves he isn't worth much anyway".  
And so on and so forth....

The Bible tells us that Pastors who do their work well should be paid well and should be highly appreciated especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching (1Timothy 5: 17).

Furthermore, the Bible instructs us to "Obey your spiritual leaders and be willing to do what they say. For their work is to watch over your souls and God will judge them on how well they do this. Give them reason to report joyfully about you to the Lord and not with sorrow for then you will suffer for it too (Hebrews 13: 17).

If they don't carry out their tasks or neglect duties, it is not for the laymen to criticize or to judge because the Lord shall mete out the sentence and we can be sure that the punishment will be many times harder than we will ever expect.

So, let's give our Pastor a chance, shall we?