

True Sovereignty of the local church

By Charles Wilson

The subject of “Sovereignty of the local church” has been a topic for discussion from time to time, and therefore I feel to share my own personal convictions at this time.

I have always believed that the Pastor has the oversight of the local church and I believe that this comes under the heading of Church Order which is ordained of God and it is imperative that the Pastor is led by The Holy Spirit in all decision making. This is true Sovereignty. This is vital when you consider that the church [the called out, the ecclesia] is not the Pastor’s possession. The church is God’s possession, redeemed by His precious Blood. The Pastor leads the church by feeding AND by setting an example. Like Moses who gave the children of Israel The Word from The Lord, instructing them to obey It. But when it came to moving forward, it was the Pillar of Fire that led them, and Moses followed It and the children of Israel followed his example.

The danger comes in when the church takes their absolute guidance from the Pastor instead of listening to God’s Voice to them. And when the Pastor expects the laity to listen absolutely to him and doesn’t make room for a person who has had a calling of God in their life just as he also had a calling in his life, then growth is stunted. I say this humbly that I believe a mature Pastor doesn’t forbid his flock to ‘try their wings’ of faith. Like a natural parent watches as their fledglings ‘try their wings’ and doesn’t inhibit their growth but is there to give guidance when needed and then they have the joy of seeing their children succeed in their calling. One has to go past the text books and be willing to grow in The Lord, and to let others learn by their mistakes as he, the Pastor has also made mistakes and learnt by them. There wouldn’t be a Pastor here who would declare that he knew it all when he started out in his roll as Pastor.

To sum it up, a Pastor who has true sovereignty, is one who is led solely by God in all things. He has The Holy Spirit and doesn’t succumb to selfish motives. He does not listen to his peers for guidance. He is like Moses who gave the children of Israel The Word that God instructed him to give them, exhorting them to follow The Lord God. The Pillar of Fire.

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