

AMBITION...

A Hiding Place For Lust

KJV

Philippians 4:6

6) Be careful for nothing...

NKJV

6) Be anxious for nothing...

Another word for anxious is ambitious. Ambition is defined as “an intense drive for success or power; a desire to achieve honor, wealth or fame.” To be ambitious, in the worldly sense, is essentially to be determined to have more than your neighbor. Its motto is “he with the most toys wins”; ambition strives to be number one.

The scourge of Pentecost in this new millennium is seemingly receiving little exposure in print these days. For brevity purposes, this article itself will also fall extremely short of articulating the finer details of this epic ecclesiastical crisis at hand. Be sure, however, that a spiritual pandemic with devastating results has overwhelmed many assemblies and fellowships today, often leaving in its wake decades of wounds and spiritual carnage to overcome. Ministries, churches, fellowships, and yes, even families are being separated long term, if not permanently divided. This dreadful spiritual crisis is a disdainful word we recognize as —“Proselytizing.” This term enjoys several ministerial code names, but one of which is most commonly referred to, and rightfully branded by, is called “sheep stealing.”

Sheep stealing is the unethical behavior by which a pastor receives members from other congregations that have not been properly released or rightfully approved by their pastor to leave their current assembly and arbitrarily transfer membership to any welcoming assembly of their choice. The “new pastor” that obliges the actions of this rogue individual or individuals by participating in this unacceptable behavior is commonly regarded as a sheep thief.

This unethical ministerial transgression is inherently wrong. Depending on the nature of the egregious unethical behavior, it most likely is even sinful. Sinful because the Bible is very explicit concerning this arena of ministerial misconduct. The act of “taking” or “receiving” disgruntled or wandering saints without their pastor’s fullest endorsement or approval violates scriptural principles. It is unethical on its face.

Furthermore, for a pastor to even subtly or perhaps overtly “coach saints” by pulling them away from other congregations and consequently into their assembly is, again, not only a violation of clear and sound Bible teaching, but it also defies all Apostolic Christian scruples. Moreover, the participating minister in this aggressively covert behavior is disqualified in God’s eyes, seeing he is no longer blameless before men due to his unethical treatment towards his neighbor. The underlying and resulting sin is called lust.

When Sin Is Finished

From the precepts taught in the Old Testament under the Law unto New Covenant doctrines regarding covetousness, lusting after your neighbor’s property is categorically prohibited. The consequences are unmitigated pain for not only the abandoned victims in the former assembly, but the potential suffering for the wayward sheep and all those connected to their transgression in the long term.

Deuteronomy 5:21

21) Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour’s wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any *thing* that *is* thy neighbour’s.

What Do I Do With Saints That Just Show Up?

Deuteronomy 22:1-5

1) Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

2) And if thy brother *be* not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again.

3) In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost thing of thy brother’s, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself.

4) Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again.

5) The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.

God associated the sin of lusting after our neighbor’s property and any attempt to justifiably claim it as your own with that of a woman wearing a man’s garment. The perverted view of men and women cross-dressing violates a natural order in God’s eyes. Therefore, the receiving of wandering sheep from another assembly into your assembly as if it is now somehow your sheep is a perversion of spiritual order.

“Cross over sheep” or sheep that have jumped the fence and crossed over into another feeding field must not be received according to scripture without proper authorization from their pastor. The Bible is clear in its instructions. It will never be right in God’s eyes, no matter how popular or trendy it is or how morally righteous it appears. This spiritual perversion of godliness and subtle assault against scripture is condemned in the strongest of terms... “for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God” (v.5).

When Lust Is Conceived

James 4:1-5

- 1) From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?
- 2) Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.
- 3) Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.
- 4) Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.
- 5) Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

We are to be kingdom-minded men. That means we abide by the kingdom principles of humility and honor. Ambitious men will always be looking out for number one. God-fearing men that abide by biblical principles towards their brethren will be known as kingdom-minded men. Ambitious men looking out for their interests will be regarded as empire-minded men. They are protecting their self-interests above all others, no matter what. We will be either kingdom-minded or empire-minded. The determining evidence will be judged by which principles motivate our decisions. Are we guided by humility and submission towards our neighbor and honorably bestow unto him what is rightfully his? Or do we seize upon his misfortune during a crisis by safeguarding our self-interest, thereby accepting his property as our own, thus defrauding our brother in the end? Whose kingdom are we building? His or ours?

Our zealous desire to do big things “for God,” if not humbly submitted in prayer unto the three-fold cord of biblical, spiritual, and personal integrity, can become a sanctimonious hiding place to conceal our own perverted, self-promoting, burning lust for fame. It will no longer be about “pleasing God,” but celebrating our brother’s loss and misfortune for our own self-serving personal gain.

Be ambitious for nothing...

Bill Pitman