

DRAFT

Do Ministers sit on Moses Seat?

By C. M. White
Version 1.5

“So even if I boast somewhat freely about the **authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than tearing you down**, I will not be ashamed of it.” (II Cor 10:8)

“Not that we lord it over your faith, but **we work with you for your joy**, for you stand firm in your faith.” (II Cor 1:24)

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History Research Projects

GPO Box 864, Sydney, Australia 2001

www.originofnations.org

www.friendsofsabbath.org

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The purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.

Introductory Remarks

Many have heard of the Seat of Moses which Christ Himself referred to in Matt 23:2-3:

“Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,
“The scribes and the Pharisees sit on **Moses' seat**,
so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they
preach, but do not practice.”

What exactly is it?

Those with a Worldwide Church of God background should be aware that there was no set doctrine that ministers sit on Moses Seat as far as I can recall; or that they had a double portion of the spirit; or that they were inspired priests or sort of priests. Rather this was assumed by some and taught and enforced as they saw fit, perhaps even at Ambassador College behind Herbert W Armstrong's back. But it was never an approved doctrine as far as I am aware.

In the first instance, let us have a look at how the Roman Catholic Church interprets this Scripture, then let us compare with the Biblical principle. Go to <https://www.catholicconvert.com/wp-content/uploads/ChairOfPeter.pdf>

And now read this from the official Roman Catholic Church's website:

“After Jesus established His Church and gave Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, Peter's chair became the new seat of authority under the New Covenant. This is why, when the Pope officially speaks on a matter of faith and morals with the intention of proclaiming a universal doctrine for the Church (which is rare), we say He is speaking “ex cathedra” (from the “chair”). Jesus' use of the “chair of Moses” certainly shows a continuum of authority as the New Covenant replaced the Old.”
(<https://www.scripturecatholic.com/qa-seat-moses/>)

The origin of the Seat of Moses

Its origin is seemingly found within the book of Exodus:

“The next day **Moses sat to judge the people**, and the people stood around Moses from morning till evening.
When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, “What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning till evening?”
And Moses said to his father-in-law, “Because the people come to me to inquire of God;
when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of God and his laws.”” (Ex 18:13-16)

As we can see, this seat was the place where judgment was carried out as outlined in Deuteronomy. Similarly, when Israel entered the Promised Land, judges were set up in like manner. The custom was for these judges to sit at the gates of the city where they would carry out their judgments.

Thus, those sitting on Moses' seat were the judges in the local synagogue which was comprised of elders and priests by the time of Christ. In addition, many cities had a lower level Sanhedrin (= court or assembly).

Then there was the Great Sanhedrin. Some argue that the lower level courts and the Great Sanhedrin (the supreme court) also fell within the ambit of 'Seat of Moses' given that they sat in judgment. The latter was considered the elite. Further details here <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-sanhedrin>

So, what we can gauge from this is that the seat of Moses means that a group of (neutral) elders were trying cases based on the first five books of the Bible (ie the Torah). Then, the decision (obviously if righteous) must be obeyed and that is what Christ meant when He stated "so do and observe whatever they tell you." This in turn is based on the instructions in Deut 17:10-11:

"Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from that place that the LORD will choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they direct you. According to the instructions that they give you, and according to the decision which they pronounce to you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to you, either to the right hand or to the left."

Although many scholars were of the opinion that the Seat of Moses was to teach the Law, it seems to be more to do with making righteous judgment according to the Law which included the death sentence. In the time prior to captivity, these would have been carried out by Levites. After the captivity the Levites and Elders set up the Synagogue system and over time the Elders rose in power and influence.

Today, of course, the powers of the elders in the Church are limited and does not include the death sentence and such like because they not part of a civil authority. It includes that which is listed in the New Testament which in turn is broadly based on the Old Testament rules. That includes Eph 5:11; ICor 5:13; IICor 2:6-8; IIThess 3:14; Gal 6:1; Titus 1:7-9; 3:10 etc.

From this one may deduce that ministers do not sit on Moses Seat because one cannot find authorisation to fulfil its functions in the New Testament church although there are some principles that still apply today.

What is the Chair of Moses?

We can see that this was a term for those exercising authority in judicial decision-making over major matters. In some synagogues there were literal seats in stone that were sat upon where rulings were carried out.

Christ also condemned many that sat in this seat because of their arrogance and hypocrisy. They were puffed up with self-importance and elevated the self. They abused others, put them down and placed burdens upon the people, negating the true observance of God's Law and way. Jealousy and the spirit of competition was the order of the day.

The phrase in Greek is Μωσέως καθέδρας ("Moses kathedras" = "Moses Seat" or "Chair of Moses").

A related word is βῆμα used in Matt 27:19, Rom 14:10 and IICor 5:10 for a judgment seat. Henry George Liddell's and Robert Scott's *A Greek-English Lexicon*, entry for βῆμα [*bēma*] explanation:

“βῆμα, Aeol. and Dor. βᾶμα, ατος, τό, (βαίνω)

A. step, pace, h.Merc.222, 345, Pi.P.3.43, A.Ch.799 (lyr.); “σπουδῆ . . . βημάτων πορεύεται”

E.Andr. 880; “τοσόνδε β. διαβεβηκώς” Ar.Eq.73; footfall, “ἐρατὸν βᾶμα” Sapph. Supp.5.17; Διὸς εὐφρονη βήματι μολεῖν to journey under the kindly guidance of Zeus, S.El.163 (lyr.); gait, “β. οὐκ ὀρθόν” Hippiatr.27.

2. step, as a measure of length, = 10 παλαισταί, about 2 1/2 feet, Hero *Deff. 131.

3. metaph., step, 'moment', “πρόσδος ἐν τρισὶ β. διισταμένη” Dam.Pr.258.

II. = βᾶθρον, step, seat, S.OC193 (lyr.).

2. **raised place or tribune to speak from in a public assembly, etc.**, Th.2.34, LXX Ne.8.4, etc.; in the Pnyx at Athens, ἐπὶ τὸ β. ἀναβῆναι enter public life, D.18.66; “αἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ β. ἐλπίδες” Id.4.45; also in the lawcourts, Id.48.31, Aeschin.3.207; of a suppliant, “ἐπὶ τοῦ β. καθεδούμενον” Ar.Pl.382; in the βουλευτήριον, Antipho6.40.

b. tribunal of a magistrate, “τοῦ ἡγεμόνος β.” PTeb.434 (ii A. D.).

3. = θυμέλη, Poll.4.123; “β. θεήτρου” IG3.239.

4. base, pedestal, OGI219.36 (Ilium, iii B. C.), 299.15 (Pergam., ii B. C.).”

As we have seen, the seat of Moses means that a group of elders were trying cases based on the first five books of the Bible (ie the Torah) – and they were instructed to do this impartially knowing that God was watching and would deal with them for wrongful decisions. Then, the decision (obviously if righteous) must be obeyed and that is what Christ meant when He stated “so do and observe whatever they tell you.” This in turn is based on the instructions in Deut 17:10-11:

“Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from that place that the LORD will choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they direct you. According to the instructions that they give you, and according to the decision which they pronounce to you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to you, either to the right hand or to the left.”

“If any case arises requiring decision between one kind of homicide and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another, any case within your towns that is too difficult for you, then you shall arise and go up to the place that the LORD your God will choose.

And you shall come to the Levitical priests and to the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall consult them, and they shall declare to you the decision.

Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from that place that the LORD will choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they direct you. According to the instructions that they give you, and according to the decision which they pronounce to you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to you, either to the right hand or to the left.

The man who acts presumptuously by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel.

And all the people shall hear and fear and not act presumptuously again.” (Deut 17:9-13)

“You shall appoint judges and officers **in all your towns** that the LORD your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment.” (Deut 16:18)

“Then the king arose and **took his seat in the gate**. And the people were all told, “Behold, the king is sitting in the gate.” And all the people came before the king. Now Israel had fled every man to his own home.” (IISam 19:8)

“When I went out to **the gate of the city**, when I prepared my seat in the square, the young men saw me and withdrew, and the aged rose and stood; the princes refrained from talking and laid their hand on their mouth; the voice of the nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth.” (Job 29:7-10)

“Her husband is known **in the gates** when he sits among the elders of the land.” (Prov 23:13)

The gates were apparently huge courtyards:

“Based on biblical references and archaeological finds, that space served as a combination of town hall, *ad hoc* law court, Hyde Park Corner, marketplace and park bench ... As the maxim has it: not only must justice be done, it must be seen to be done. And for the ancient Israelites, the one place in the city where transparency was guaranteed was the city gate.

It was an extraordinarily progressive judicial system for its day, but apparently could not entirely prevent official corruption. “*They hate the one who reproves in the gate,*” Amos scathingly noted, presumably referring to himself; and he raged against those “*who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and push aside the needy in the gate*” (Amos 5).” (<https://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/.premium-gates-in-the-bible-not-what-you-thought-1.5310638>)

As such these serious cases were considered in public, not behind closed doors. Surreptitious, underhanded behaviours to force decisions that were incorrect were not permitted.

Moses Seat in the New Testament

Confirmation from archaeologists is that a literal stone chair was located in many ancient synagogues (such as En-Gedi, Chorazin and Delos). As far as one can ascertain, a copy of the law was stored next to the chair and the appropriate sections of the law were read when judgment was carried out.

A number of videos showing the seat of Moses from ancient synagogues are available online at YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=seat+of+moses

Let us read the pertinent Scripture again, this time in context:

“Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,
“The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat,
so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.
They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.
They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long,
and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others.
But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers.” (Matt 23:1-8)

Some interpret this to mean that whatever is lawful and read from the Torah as laid out by Moses,

that you must abide by.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica by John Lightfoot (online at <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/lightfoot-new-testament/matthew/23.html>) states:

“[In Moses' seat, &c.] this is to be understood rather of the legislative seat (or chair), than of the merely doctrinal: and Christ here asserts the authority of the magistrate, and persuadeth to obey him **in lawful things.**” [emphasis mine]

I have wondered if verse 3 of Matthew 23 contains an ellipsis or similar. An ellipsis is essentially an intentional omission of a sentence or word as the listener knows the details and everything does not have to be explained. The original meaning is not altered by such an omission. If it does include an ellipsis then it could read:

“so do and observe whatever [which is lawful] they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.” (other ellipses could be Matt 12:5 and 1Cor 10:23)

This interpretation must be correct as Christ often condemned the Pharisees and scribes (eg Matt 5:20; 16:1-12) because what they did was not always godly.

What commentaries reveal

The Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary online

“3. All therefore--that is, all which, as sitting in that seat and teaching out of that law.

they bid you observe, that observe and do--The word "therefore" is thus, it will be seen, of great importance, as limiting those injunctions which He would have them obey to what they fetched from the law itself. In requiring implicit obedience to such injunctions, He would have them to recognize the authority with which they taught over and above the obligations of the law itself--an important principle truly; but He who denounced the traditions of such teachers (Matthew 15:3) cannot have meant here to throw His shield over these.”

The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible, Volume 5, Q–Z online:

“seat, Moses’. Matthew reports Jesus as saying, “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach” (Matt. 23:2). Archaeological evidence confirms that in the front of the synagogues there was a stone seat where the authoritative scribe (teacher of the law) sat and taught.”

Pulpit Commentary online:

“Verses 2-12. - The moral character of the scribes and Pharisees, and warning to Christ's disciples. Verse 2. - The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. In the seat of the great judge and lawgiver. This is stated as an undoubted fact (ἐκάθισαν), with no idea of blame attached. Literally, sat on the seat of Moses from time immemorial. These (meaning not individuals, but the collective body) are the authorized expounders and teachers of the Law; their position is assured; they are not to be displaced. The scribes were the party chiefly denoted; they were of the Pharisaical sect; hence the addition, "and the Pharisees," by which is intimated, not that these latter, qua Pharisees, had any teaching office, but that the former shared

their religious opinions. The Sadducees seem to have had no popular influence, and were never recognized as leaders. The Levitical priests never appear in the Gospels as teachers or expositors of the Mosaic system; this function of theirs had devolved upon scribes and lawyers."

Encyclopedia of the Bible online:

"Moses' Seat

SEAT, MOSES' (Μωυσέως καθέδρας). The name given to a special chair of honor in the synagogue where the authoritative teacher of the law sat. The teacher in practice exercised the authority of Moses, in whom the written and the main lines of the oral law were regarded as originating. Not many of the Pharisees were actually scribes, among whose number there were also Sadducees. The scribes were looked upon as being the recognized exegetes of the law of Moses (Matt 23:2).

Bibliography E. L. Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece* (1934), 57-61; M. Avi-Yonah, *Views of the Biblical World*, Vol. V (1961), 63."

Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible online:

"Moses' Seat. Biblical expression occurring only in Matthew 23:2, where Jesus speaks of the scribes and the Pharisees as having sat down upon the seat of Moses. In biblical times, the seat which one occupied usually indicated the degree of rank or respect one claimed for himself or was to receive from."

The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Volumes 1–5 online:

"SEAT, MOSES' [Μωυσέως καθέδρα Mōyseōs kathedra]. An expression that describes legitimate teaching authority. Moses provided Israel with the law, but after that time it was necessary for other teachers to expound and apply this law, and those who did so with authority were said to sit on Moses' seat."

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers online:

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.--The words were probably spoken of their collective action as represented in the Sanhedrin, rather than of their individual work as interpreters of the Law. As such, they claimed to be the authoritative exponents of the Law, and our Lord recognises (unless we suppose a latent protest in His words, like that which is veiled in the "full well ye reject" of Mark 7:9) their official claim to reverence."

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised online:

"MOSES' SEAT [Gk *tēs Mōuseōs kathédras*]; NEB CHAIR OF MOSES. In Mt. 23:2, Jesus said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat." Many claim that Jesus was referring to a familiar piece of furniture in ancient synagogues and identify the stone chairs excavated from synagogues in Hammath."

Elders and Pastors

Ministers need to be absolutely sure that they are not assuming to themselves power and authority beyond that which is revealed in Scripture or approved of by the relevant Church ruling body such as the Council of Elders. Anyone thinking they sit on the Seat of Moses, are priests, have a double portion of the spirit, are greatly inspired and such like make these assumptions because they want humans to trust them beyond that which is Biblical. The fruits of such thinking and consequent behaviours are vanity and abuse.

Instead, the role of ministers is that of overseers to assist with spiritual growth by excellent counselling, utilisation of gifts and talents, presenting interesting and in-depth sermons on a large range of topics and Bible studies and organising unifying socials to forge a loving community.

One Church of God group provides an explanation for this topic which I would like to share below:

“When Jesus advised His listeners to obey the Pharisees because they sat in Moses’ seat, did He intend to sanction a particular form of church government? It is true that God spoke to His people through Moses, and God Himself chose Moses’ successor. But how does this “succession of Moses” affect the church?

“We are told that Moses was a mediator between God and Israel (Galatians 3:19). A mediator stands between man and God to make intercession. Israel did not want God to speak with them but asked Moses to be a go-between (Exodus 20:19). From that time forward, God spoke to Moses, and Moses spoke to Israel.

“Who holds Moses’ office in the church? Who is to act as a mediator between God and the Christian? The writer of Hebrews left no doubt. Comparing Jesus’ ministry to that of the Old Testament, he concluded, “But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant” (Hebrews 8:6). Comparing His sacrifice to that of bulls and goats, he continued, “and for this cause He [Jesus] is the mediator of the New Testament” (Hebrews 9:15; 12:24).

“A fundamental change has taken place between the Old and New Testaments. In Old Testament times, God used many mediators. He, “at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, but hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son” (Hebrews 1:1–2).

“Paul told Timothy, “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). This leaves no room for a hierarchy to speak for God—no room for a minister to sit between you and God—no room for another master.” (<https://www.cgi.org/did-god-put-authority>)

The Ultimate Seat of Moses

Christ will sit in final judgment of all (including Christians) to assess their performance, rewards and future. We will be judged in accordance with His way as demonstrated in the Bible and in particular the Torah:

“For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat ... So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.” (Rom 14:10-12)

“We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” (II Cor 5:10)

In that broad typological sense, He sits on Moses Seat. And there is no Levitical mediator between us and God – instead it is Christ of the Melchizedek Priesthood. He is also our final Judge.

Conclusions

From the above we can ascertain how the Seat of Moses operates in judicial matters, viz:

- It is not any decision made at the discretion of a minister based on his feelings or based on rumours no matter the source
- It is not a minister nor one thinking that he has a double portion of the spirit or thinks that he is a priest and who is so inspired he does not have to find out the facts or go through due process
- It is based on the rule of law with no partiality toward fellow ministers or the rich etc
- The fundamental rule of law is the Law of God, the various commandments surrounding judgment and the relevant policies that the Church of God implements in this regard
- A minister making a judgement must do so based on key criteria:
 - It must be a point of Law - not their opinion or a clash of personalities. It must be on matters of someone who sows discord over doctrine. Someone considered a tare may be a difficult personality and it should be remembered that much of the time issues are merely the clash of personalities and not a matter of Law or doctrine
 - The minister should not act alone. Excommunicating or taking some form of action against a member should only be done with proper council with his superiors and those in the know in the company of the person involved - and not without proper evidence being presented and clear patterns of behaviour being obvious. It must also be done with the full approval of the governing bodies and the person advised of his rights of appeal
 - Finally, judgment is only to be executed in the defence of the membership or to genuinely help the sinning member. That is his role: to shepherd, care for and defend the members.

Ministers (elders and pastors) do not sit on Moses Seat as the Priests & Levites and later various leaders of the synagogue did. However, the principle that high level judicial decisions are made on major sins and abuse cases rest with the Church's ruling body – the Council of Elders and their delegated appeals committee. There is some delegation to elders and pastors to make initial decisions based on Bible Law and Church policy authorised by the Council of Elders, but they cannot make up rules and policies outside of this.

The Seat of Moses was a court system and no single person sat on it as such. Ruling on sins and other serious matters involving members of the Church can go through an appeal process to ensure a fair and correct outcome. Members of the New Testament Church were never instructed that they were required to trust any individual completely because God supposedly inspired them.

No elder or pastor are of the same level as apostles, prophets or patriarchs. In fact, we are taught not to completely trust anyone who claims to be in authority. There are numerous verses about false prophets and savage wolves, even among those who claim to be teachers in the Church. Our trust in an individual and their judgments must be based on how their words and conduct reflect what we see in the Bible, not on them as an individual since we are all imperfect.

Thus, all members can appeal abuse so that their case can be assessed and subsequently the abusive party dealt with.

Finally, for those that set themselves up as if they are priests or some inspired person over the brethren, they better be careful. God solemnly warns them:

“With him are strength and sound wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.
He leads counselors away stripped, and judges he makes fools.
He looses the bonds of kings and binds a waistcloth on their hips.

He leads priests away stripped and overthrows the mighty.
He deprives of speech those who are trusted and takes away the discernment of the elders.

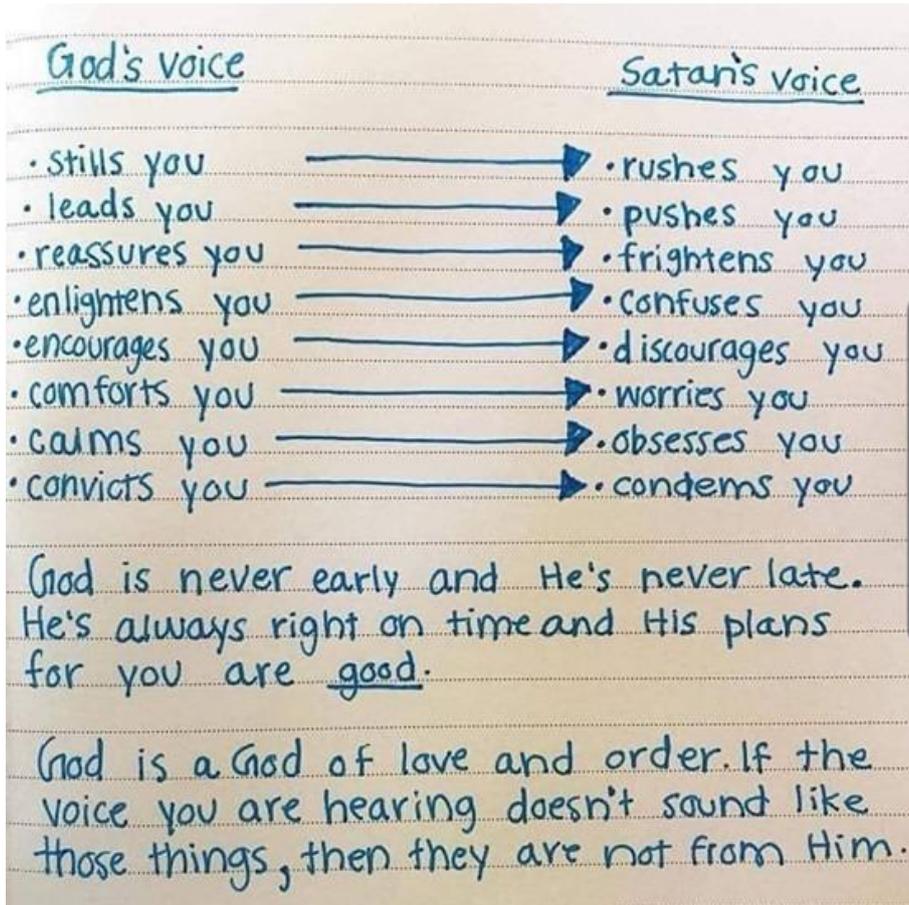
He pours contempt on princes and loosens the belt of the strong.

He uncovers the deeps out of darkness and brings deep darkness to light.

He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away.

He takes away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the earth and makes them wander in a trackless waste.

They grope in the dark without light, and he makes them stagger like a drunken man." (Job 12:16-25)



Source: the internet

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Appendix: The actions haughty thinking results in

How do some deceive the flock into thinking that they are authentic? Those that have been around long enough know the answer, but it needs to be written down and documented. Surely, this has been going on for 2,000 years and there is no difference in approach by some during these last days.

How do sermons come across? Do they build one up and expand our knowledge of God's Word and his doctrines? Or are they repeats and shallow?

For instance, despising the brethren through bitchy and jealous comments constantly (Luke 18:9) does not build up.

Here are some thoughts on how to identify a non-authentic minister and the tactics they employ to gain respect, attention and thus to fudge his role – to palm himself off as a minister and thus draw a salary for doing little. A job is thus protected and made cushy.

1. bullying and snappiness to intimidate people and to try and get them to fear him – thus gaining a false ‘respect’. Getting so carried away with the abuse they become breathless. Lack of shepherd-like leadership skills is evident – they are not followed
2. they have attention addiction and have to have people run up to them and surround them like rock stars, otherwise they get upset and jealous of anyone who is popular
3. sermon contents are shallow, limited and little breadth. Many Fundamentals are not covered and especially any doctrine that takes understanding, a bit of thought and work (eg prophecy, typology, difficult doctrinal issues)
4. laziness – do the minimum possible, including sermon preparation, seldom visiting, no Bible studies etc. Always some excuse
5. members must trust them. Why? Because that way they will follow blindly any wrongful decision made. To them God inspires all their sermons and inconsistent decisions and thus they can get away with doing anything they want. No due process means they can make snap decisions without investigation, fairness, following policy etc because they are inspired. If you believe that, you will “just accept” which is often-times stated
6. have shallow understanding of Scripture as demonstrated by their sermons, refusal to hold Bible studies, cannot explain doctrines etc. Thus they teach in sermons not to study the Bible in detail and to look into it deeply. Contrary to Church teaching
7. no prophecy – they just cannot understand or explain the details
8. don’t want checks ‘n balances or neutral judiciaries so that they can get away with anything. Because they are inspired they don’t need any of this apparently – what they mean is they don’t have to follow Church policies, values, doctrines and thus governance and just ignore them
9. don’t want to operate in the light (eg policies, structure charts, work groups) – they don’t want you to know where everything fits and how it all works. Keep us in the dark so that we are ignorant of what goes on and the modus operandi
10. will not have work groups because they don’t want anything much to be organised in a structured way even though it would produce results and benefit the church. They feel threatened by such work groups and in any event, MAY mean a little more work for them
11. are jealous of others’ success and possess the spirit of competition
12. different rules for different members. That is why they want you to trust them
13. often anyone who understands and believes the doctrines are pushed to one side. It is not just those who are vocal in opposition to certain doctrines that are affected, it can be the faithful too
14. pretend to be super confident and be completely uncompromising – making people crawl and appeal to you. This elevates the self and feelings of self-importance
15. allow for a ‘revolving door’ or members and attendees because the fear is that if people stay for too long, they can forge power groups that might challenge hi. This way one maintains an unnatural order. Is this paranoia?
16. whisper between members to keep them divided among themselves
17. little hospitality as that takes a certain personality and effort
18. dress and talk a certain way; present sermons in a way that people will not notice they are ultra-shallow, repeats and the range of topics is very narrow

19. make statements such as they sit on Moses Seat, have a double portion of the spirit, are inspired etc to try and imprint into the listener that they are authentic
20. when they feel they are under pressure from their superiors to 'shape up' they revert to the same old-same old trick – hide behind their medical issues
21. callously does not care if people leave as to them, they were not called or rebelled – instead of looking at himself and that he is the cause and makes the necessary adjustments. To him they are dispensable and just another number.

So, one can 'fudge it'; one can 'learn the ropes' without ever having the heart of a shepherd. One can have allies backing them up and covering for them. One can use terms such as "I am a minister of Jesus Christ" and such like, but all that is just a cover for their lack of authenticity.

But God's people should be able to very quickly tell whether someone should be followed because they have or have not a shepherd's voice (John 10:4-5). Aspects of these voices are portrayed in the graphic above.

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