

Miango Q&A- Nigeria

There's something that worries me so much, we heard about Paul. When they were in the temple they prayed and then tongues came upon some of them, but in this generation we filled up a church and I've never seen tongues coming upon anybody. Is it that we rejected Him?

Tongues are a sign, but do you know what they are a sign of? The Scripture is really clear what it's a sign of and Isaiah is really clear what they are a sign of. He says to Israel and to Judah, 'I will show you a sign there is no faith among you. I will have people come with strange tongues because you are unfaithful.' They are not a sign of righteousness among a people, they were given as a sign to say the gospel was being taken from the Jews and given to the nations. So do not desire the sign of tongues among you, what it means is that there are few faithful, like Paul who spoke tongues more than any other man. The reason he could speak in tongues more than any other man is because he stood on the steps among many Jews and said, 'You killed the Christ!' It was a sign of judgement on Israel when God does not explain it to us with clear words, words that we can understand. It is because He is filled with fury at people. The person who can speak in tongues is very blessed, but it is a sign that the society he is speaking to is cursed. Isaiah 28:11, "For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people" If you look for the context, it is Isaiah pronouncing the curse of God upon Israel and Judah.

A witch can bind a person, the person that is bound by the witch was wrong to the church and then in the church we will announce we are afraid of the witch that bound the person. The person who was bound by the witch will now be confused, he will now run away to the witch doctor and that is worrying him a lot.

Who gives power? The Bible is clear in Acts 1, where Jesus Christ is speaking to His apostles and He says to wait in Jerusalem until power comes on you from on high. Where is the power of the church? It is in the Holy Spirit for that is the power of the church, that is why the church will succeed where Judah failed because God has given a different power in the New Covenant to the church than He ever did in the Old Covenant. But what is the sign that the Holy Spirit is there? It's not speaking in tongues, it's not healing. Isaiah 36 says exactly why God sends His Holy Spirit. He says He sent His Holy Spirit not for your sake, but to have a people that are holy to God. It is for His sake that He sends the Holy Spirit. What is the sign that the Holy Spirit is in a church? The people are holy. A church that is just like the world has no power. If they are running from the witch doctor and they are running to this church that is just like the power, they are running from the world to the world, why should they expect to be healed? Why should they expect the Holy Spirit to move? The reason why the church doesn't have power is because you do not deal with sin. You allow the church to be like the world and don't whine to God that you don't have power because He did not send His Spirit to show power among the people. He sent His Spirit to set aside a holy people set aside to honor Him. To put it another way, the church is the light of the world. If a witch comes into the true church and the light is shining forth, what will happen to that person? Darkness hates the light. This is why they could cast out demons, but it's because they have power because they are holy. Repentance is the solution to the problem.

What is the right way for a member to correct his pastor?

The key thing is to remember who an elder is. Again I would make a smaller difference between elder and the pastor than ECWA does. I would consider myself both an elder and a pastor, but there's a verse that says elders are ensamples to the flock. In the King James Version, it doesn't describe an elder as an example or sample. There's two different words. Jesus Christ is an example, meaning a sample from outside as opposed to an elder who is an ensample, a sample from inside. So we have to recognize the relationship between a member and an elder or pastor. They are not categorically different, they are both members of the flock. The best example of a relationship between a member and an elder, which what I said yesterday, an elder is a mature member of the church, so the best way you should think to confront an elder in their sin would be as if you consider yourself the younger brother correcting the elder brother because that's the picture He has given of the church. We are all brothers, but the elder is the older brother in the church. In Nigeria I think you have kept the sense of honor better than in America so my expectation is that if you went to a brother who was twice your age, you should go showing some honor, but it doesn't mean you don't have the right to go. Think of it as if you have a joint inheritance because the church has a joint inheritance in Christ. If you saw your older brother abusing your family's inheritance, even if you were the younger brother, you would say something. As members of the church, it works exactly the same way. Going back to the story of Cain and Abel, what did Cain say when God confronted him of his sin? He said, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' What would a righteous man say? Cain was the first murderer, we're not supposed to repeat what he said. You are your brother's keeper, which means you need to deal with your older brother. You need to consider yourselves as elders and pastors, that those older people are your brothers and your sisters and you have to be willing to let them be your keeper. The Bible teaches clearly to show honor to whom honor is due so they do have to come with honor and respect, but you should never make it hard for them to come.

Other than preaching and teaching, what other ways should a pastor help a member?

It's the ministry of the Word in prayer and the ministry of the Word is not just preaching and teaching, it is counseling, it is taking the Word of God and applying it to particular situations in your member's lives. Another part of the ministry of the Word is to demonstrate obedience to the Word. When you go up in the pulpit and say this is what you are supposed to do, part of the ministry of the Word is that you go and do it. Those are the special responsibilities of an elder. I actually forgot a major one which is to oversee. You have a responsibility to take the Word as a lens so that you can clearly see the state of your congregation, you can see who is wounded and needs to be bound up, who needs to be chastised, who's lacking in food, who you need to take to a fresh pasture. All that is part of the ministry of the Word, but as we do the role of elder or pastor, it's very important for us not to forget that we are also members of the church. You shouldn't say you will have this time of prayer, but that you shouldn't be part of it or a time of worship and song and say you shouldn't be part of it. No, you are a member of the church in addition to being an elder or pastor.

I am a pastor and God blessed me with children. I am doing my best to teach them, some of them reject my teaching and went off the path. Since I have taught them and they refuse, will God deny me the kingdom of heaven because my children refuse to listen?

No, but let me say more. There's more to be said about that. It talks about how elders have to have their children be faithful, but that can't mean faithful to God because God says the Spirit blows where it wills. None of us can save our children. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God and we have a duty to teach and speak the Word to our children, but Romans 9 is crystal clear, "I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." Esau and Jacob were both sons of Isaac, but before they were born God said He hated Esau and He loved Jacob, before they had done anything. Abraham had eight children, seven of them are in hell. Keturah had six children and they all followed Ishmael. The only one that was righteous was Isaac. It says why God saved Abraham in Genesis, He said He saved Abraham so he will teach his children after him. He taught all eight of his children because that's why God said He saved them, but only one was saved and Abraham is in heaven. When it says an elder has to have faithful children, it means especially in his house, that his children teach him as their father. They can't be faithful to God, but you can train them to be faithful to you.

A pastor goes to a witch doctor because he doesn't believe in the power of God, is he a real pastor?

He doesn't believe in the true God. Not only is he not a pastor, he's not a Christian. Deuteronomy 13 is very clear. If you go seek other gods, you are worthy of death! God doesn't assign death penalty offenses to His children. That's why in 1 Corinthians 6:9, it says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites." Witchcraft is in the same category. We need to separate the holy and profane.

Why are some pastors and other members against prayer? Some churches and pastors don't believe in the power of prayer. What can we do when they don't believe in the power of the Holy Spirit?

The first thing we can do is demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit and I said before what the power of the Holy Spirit is, it's to give you a spirit of holiness. God says He does not hear the prayers of the wicked. Because they won't deal with sin people say there is no power in prayer and so they stop praying. I don't know for sure that's the situation here, but I know that's a very common problem. So how do you solve that problem? Deal with sin, expect to see the power of the Holy Spirit as it says in James 1:6, "But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind." Demonstrate the power of prayer and then you can expect people to say there is something different about you and then you can testify to the power of the gospel, which is what they probably need to hear anyway.

The gospel is about creating a new creature, a holy creature, that's why He poured out the Holy Spirit.

Why is it that we don't allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in some particular issues in the church, especially in regards to election? During election most times when it's someone that has clearly been led by the Spirit of God and we can see it clearly and testify his effectiveness in activities and God's fear in his life. Those people will not be elected or chosen as elders, but politics get in and get other responsibilities. Is it because we don't believe in the leadership of the Holy Spirit?

We have a responsibility to not just follow the Holy Spirit. God said when He sent His Spirit, I think in John 17, that He sent His Spirit to guide us to the truths that Christ taught. I think what happens when you get a lot of people together is people start to rely on their own wisdom, maybe even prayer and guidance from God, but they ignore the guidance they've already been given so they speak their own words. They may even be righteous words, but it's like trying to cut meat with a spoon, God has given you a sword and if you're trying to kill an animal with a spoon it's not going to work very well. If the people who are faithful wield the sword of the Word, and I mean on a consistent basis, I hope you notice, I believe every time that you have asked me a question that I have done exactly the same thing which is to think up here what verse answers the question. Since I'm standing up here I can't flip through and find it, but I'm wielding the sword and that's where our authority and credibility in our congregation. The way you get authority in the diocese and higher is not by hacking at it with a spoon, but be consistent in wielding the sword of God, let God's Word do the cutting rather than yours. If you think of Jeremiah the prophet, everybody despised him in Judah, everyone thought he was terrible, but they also said he was the one that had the truth. They knew he had truth even when they said they were going to ignore what he said. They knew he had truth because he was speaking the word of God. That's how you get authority to change your denomination, rest on the authority of God and not your own. Do it consistently, do it with faith and perseverance and things will change. It took awhile to get here, be patient because it will take a while to recover, but be diligent and rest on God's Word and not your own.

Based on these teachings mainly from the book of Titus, it says the pastor and elder aren't to be fat in every situation and with every person. If you give out, don't expect to receive back. Where my concern is, is in the book of Matthew 5:43-46. What is the problem? Can you tell us? My concern is Jesus said we should love each other, but that we should love our enemies. How can we love our enemy that is looking to kill me. How can we love our enemies?

I want to say something regarding what you said leading up to the question. It's a small word, but it should be an encouragement. You said we are to give out without expecting to receive anything back, we do this with expecting something back but not from the person we give it to. We expect to get it back from God. This is when He says to lay up your treasure in heaven on the Sermon on the Mount because God pays back at a higher rate than anyone else. When we care for the poor who are in trouble, by faith we trust that we will be paid back more generously.

I just wanted to make sure that was understood. Now to your question about how to love your enemy. The first thing that you do to love your enemy is to recognize the only reason that you are not him is because God showed mercy to you, it's not because of who you are. I know it's the Fulani killing you, but it could have been your tribe killing the Fulani because in you there is nothing different than in the Fulani unless God has given you His Spirit. So the first thing required to love our enemies is instead of looking at them with hatred, we look at them with pity because it's only by God's grace, not by your strength, wisdom or goodness, that you're not them. That's one thing that's important to recognize. The second thing to recognize is that they were sent by God. Remember when Absalom rebels against David and David has to flee from Jerusalem and Shimei says, 'Cursed be David' and David says, 'This is from the hand of God, he shall not die.' This was an enemy of David, but he said he was sent by God. The response to that needs to be to fear God, not have hatred towards your enemy. It's for you to say why He is sending them, to see who God is. No one can resist God's will, no one can resist God's will. When we see all things as being originated by God, caused by God, when instead we hate them we pity them, then we can say how we should treat them and then we can love our enemies. Loving our enemies doesn't mean you let them run rampant and kill whoever, a father who has a son who's a murderer and he knows he is going to go out and murder someone else, is it loving towards the son to stop him from murdering or is it loving to allow him to go murder? Constraining someone's sin is always an act of love, that's why God says He who spares the rod despises his son. We need to make sure we are defining love the way God defines it, which is not just declaring the gospel to them, but constraining their sin. Not by saying vengeance is yours, but vengeance is the Lord's.

Can God use someone that is not trained (pastor school) as a pastor to preach and teach in church?

I need to leave now. I've never been to pastor school, I've never been to seminary, Paul is outside with me and isn't allowed here as an elder according to that standard. I will be outside with Paul. Peter was qualified, John was qualified, Andrew was qualified. Pastor school is not what says you are qualified. 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, that's how God says you are qualified. Pastor's training can be a way to check qualifications, but the solution is to go back to what God says. When that person raises up because he has slick words, he's not qualified according to Scripture. So denominations in the United States do the same thing, but the risk is that the pastor's training or seminary becomes all about knowledge. The actual qualifications for an elder is primarily character so to have that as one element isn't that problematic. It's when that replaces the Scriptural qualifications that it becomes dangerous.

They are only trying to balance the issue of training. Anyone who does pastoral training is called to do it and if you decide to force yourself into it, then you will not be able to do everything correctly because you were not called to it.

There's actually two calls, there's the call that you're talking about, which doctrinally is referred to as the internal call. You have to desire the office of elder, not just the position for the position

sake. There is also an external call which is the church saying you are qualified and God has told us how the church is to say someone is qualified. I think your point was that in every occupation you have to have training to do the occupation and I'm not opposed to that at all, but that doesn't replace the external call. I think one of the examples that the secretary used is that someone went to seminary and then he had a ministry and you saw the ministry had no fruit so they have hurt the church for a while before it's decided. God has given a way for the church to protect itself from someone who is not called internally and that's 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Those things are good, the training, but it can't replace what God says is required.

CHATTER

I would argue that the study of God is what's required. I've seen a lot of seminary's mislead people. Seminaries are structured after a humanistic creation, the university. It can be very dangerous to put all the eggs of the church in that basket. A great man of God, Jonathon Edwards, a godly man who desired to raise up pastors in America went on to be president of Princeton University rather than a pastor of a church and even though he is one of the greats in theology and understanding the Bible, within a generation that university was teaching falsehood all over the place. The northeastern United States has lost the gospel for two hundred years because they said we will have everyone trained by seminaries and they all went out and spread the same false doctrines and Satan took over a huge part of the United States. This is my experience that I am speaking from. Even today, two hundred years later, it's still suffering the effects. When you have a seminary where all the pastors are trained, you have given Satan one place to attack. That's what happened in the United States and I want you to be very careful that it doesn't happen here. That command was given to Timothy to find faithful men who would do God's work. The training can be a useful element, but the church never has the rights to delegate the responsibility that it's been given. It's to find faithful men and God has said how to test. Those other things can be useful but don't put all your weight on them because it can cause a huge collapse. In the 18th century, that part of the United States was the most faithful place in the world and now the gospel is rarely preached there.

What happened to those who died in Miango before the coming of missionaries?

They're in hell. Now understand why they are in hell. There is one way through the Father and that's through the Son. There's only one way to the Father and that's through the Son. The problem most people have with that concept is they say that it's not fair, they never had a chance to trust in Jesus Christ. Esau never had a chance to trust in Jesus Christ either. He sought repentance with tears, but before he was born God decided He would hate him. When we start to make excuses for this we are making God small. When you think that He sent every generation before, at least for a thousand years, the gospel may have been here 1,500 years ago, He sent all those people to hell because He is holy. That's who the God is that you serve, that is the God who you should fear. When He says wide is the path that leads to destruction, the vast majority of people have walked that path to destruction. He says only few have ever found the path to eternal life. Then you say, but they didn't even hear who God is. That's not true. Romans 1 says that everything testifies to who God is. Men were marrying women a thousand years ago on the Plateau. Fathers were having sons a thousand years ago on the

Plateau. All those things testify that there is a God, they testify to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. When God created the world He designed everything to point to Him so that those who are in heaven, it says in Isaiah 66, those who are in heaven from Sabbath day to Sabbath day and see all those people that were cast into hell, including those living on Plateau that didn't hear the gospel and we will abhor them because they rejected God. The fact that God showed you grace and had the gospel preached to you is not a right that you can claim, it is the mercy shown by a perfectly holy God. Fear God.