



The Perfect Pastor

Many moons ago I used to enjoy Crime watch, a TV programme that specialized in using Identikit software to produce composite pictures of criminals based on various eyewitness accounts. It was fascinating to watch the picture put together on screen: first the hair, then the eyes, the nose, the mouth, the ears and so on. With the reach and leverage of a TV programme, the criminals were often rapidly identified and the following week the real picture was placed beside the composite, usually revealing remarkable similarity.

So, what if we put together a composite of the perfect pastor; what would he look like? Here's a composite of the best bits of the best pastors I've known.

Mind:

He is educated in the Scriptures, the historic Confessions and contemporary issues. He's not only educated, he's also wise and remains teachable: quite a rare combination.

Eyes:

His eyes are focused upon Christ. He looks to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, and never takes his eyes off Him.

Ears:

He listens to God's voice in the Word, in conscience and in providence. But his ears are also open to the cries of the sheep – the hungry, the injured and the lost.

Mouth:

He speaks the truth in love, in public and in private. He speaks clearly, consistently, and as simply as he possibly can even when talking about the most profound truths.

Nose:

He is sensitive to heresy and sniffs it out quickly when it threatens the sheep.

Conscience:

He strives to maintain a clear conscience; but if he wounds it by sinning, he takes it to Christ's blood for cleansing and healing.

Will:

He is determined, persevering and resolute, even in the face of opposition.

Hands:

In one hand he has the staff of the Holy Spirit, leaning his whole weight upon Him. In the other hand, he has the Word of God, a lamp to his feet.

Watch:

His watch has one word stamped upon it – ETERNITY.

Feet:

He walks the narrow way, turning not to the right or left.

Nerves:

He has a sensitivity to the suffering, the sad and the weak. He feels what they feel.

Backbone:

God has put steel in his backbone so that he will not bend in the prevailing wind of popular opinion or the storm of persecution.

Clothes:

He keeps his clothes unspotted from the world.

Heart:

He loves God and sinners, preaching passionately and visiting compassionately.

Soul:

He has a spiritually exercised soul, a lively inner life that battles temptation, communes with Christ, examines himself, and continues to repent and believe day by day.

Lungs:

He breathes the air of prayer. Prayer oxygenates his whole life. He cannot live without it.

Although we'll never be all this and we'll never find all this in any mere man, it is still a great ideal for pastors and those who train them to aim at.

And it's a reminder of the only Perfect Pastor, who was more than a mere man, and who surpassed all expectations in every part of His perfect person.

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