

Prepared and Attached Attachments

For most all of my life, I've been around tractors. I started "bush-hogging" and pasture mowing at about 12 years old. I started cutting and bailing hay at 13. Then I began working at a tractor and equipment auction at 14 and continued there until I was nearly 21. Among the many things that I learned from those years and that experience (which I wouldn't trade for the world!) was a simple truth: a tractor is a tremendous tool and can be tremendously versatile in what all it can accomplish.... but, it has to have attachments. A tractor by itself is nothing more than a slow-moving, rough, and poor means of transportation. It even requires the attachment of chain to pull your car or truck out of the mud! Without attachments, it can't really do anything very well or profitably.

So too it is with Elders in the Lord's Church. They are God's *tools* for accomplishing God's purposes for and through the church, **Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5**. But Elders, just like a tractor, need **attached members** to be effective in accomplishing this work. They (Elders/Shepherds/Overseers) must have members who are willing to be *hitched* (or *attached*) to the work, if you will. Elders can supply the *impetus* and *means* (*horsepower* if you will), but members must be willing to *plow* the "rocky ground" as well as the *fertile and good soil*. A tractor can "pull the plow" but it can't till the soil without the plow. Members must be willing to *fertilize* the soil. A tractor can't carry the fertilizer or spread it without the right attachment. Members must be willing to *plant the seed* deep into the hearts of men. Again, a tractor can't do that without the right attachment. **Elders can accomplish great things in the fields of the Lord, but they, like the tractor, must have the right attachments!**

Let's consider **Rom.12:1-21** with regard to being the **right attachment** for the Elders of your congregation to do the Lord's work. **We (the members) should:**

vv.1-2, Be the right kind of attachment- *worldly-attached* members won't "hook-up" to the Elders or the Church. They may be *plowing, sowing, and reaping*, but are doing so for the **wrong land-owner**, **Rom.6:16!**

vv.3-8, Understand your own strengths, abilities, and limitations. A post-hole digger is great for digging post-holes but lousy for cutting grass, etc. If you're a post-hole digger, let the Elders know that's your strength so they can call on you when they need post-holes dug. Thus *attached*, then get busy digging!

vv.9-16, Be what we should be within, and **to the church** by being the kind of *attached Christian* you ought to be. Be involved in the work. So be available, be prepared and ready (*sharpened, greased, and properly serviced* to be in *good working order*) to go to work for the Lord and your brethren every day.

vv.18-21, Be what you should be outside the church- to the *world*. Your example to your *family, neighbors, co-workers,* and those with whom you come in contact *in the world* is vitally important to *soil-preparation* (or *tilling*) prior to actual *seed-planting*, cf. **Acts 20:35; Titus 2:6-8**. Even *hard and rocky ground* can become "*good soil*" (*receptive to the seed and fertile and productive*) when properly *tilled* by a godly example.

Elders, by God's wisdom and design, have tremendous power to accomplish great things in and for the Lord and His Church. But, without the various *attached tools* the members provide, they are seriously hampered and of little actual benefit... just like a big powerful tractor with no attached implements. Please read and reread carefully and thoughtfully, "*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for equipping the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ,*" Eph.4:11-12. So, are you properly *prepared* (serviced and ready to work) and *attached* to your local congregation and its *tractors* (the Elders)? Then let's get busy because *the fields* need *plowing, sowing/planting, fertilizing, and harvesting!* (Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA; online at vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)