



KEEPING A CRITICAL EYE

*Ecclesiastes
4:13
(Amplified)
“Better is a
poor and wise
youth than an
old and foolish
king who no
longer knows
how to receive
counsel
(friendly
reproof and
warning) – ”*

Most of the leaders of the churches in Asia (Revelation 2,3) felt that they held venerated appointments and positions as leaders; they felt that the anointing upon their ministry was a permanent matter, something they could hold on to despite the condition of their personal lives. That is a dangerous place to be in.

I have met men who thought they would never lose their anointing because they had been placed in the church by the Lord! In the first century, we see that the leaders of the church were not elected by the people or chosen by a selection board or a governing body. The placement of leaders in the early churches was not like what we have in most churches today: the leaders were appointed of God like Paul and the other apostles. This was the pattern throughout the early church, right till the beginning of the second century. The leaders were spiritual giants in comparison to the leaders of today. Be that as it may, it is not difficult to see that the thought of losing their anointing would not have crossed their mind. So, even though they were great leaders, pride set in and they

became spiritually defunct. In time, they became lukewarm; they compromised with the world; their pride became a stumbling block. Pride brought them to a place of spiritual hardness, where they could not hear the Lord. They could not even scrutinize and measure their lives in the light of the reality of the Word. They felt their lives were readily acceptable, looking at their status, their positions and the honour that others gave them. In a sense, they were blinded and lost their ability to hear the Spirit, as happened to King Saul in the Old Testament.

Remember, King Saul had a good and humble beginning, but finally lost his anointing and the kingdom as well. This is what is happening in many churches. Spiritual understanding is very different from natural understanding. That is why it can happen that we hear the Word, but miss the Voice!

Apostle Paul realized how careful he needed to be, for he said in 1 *Corinthians* 9:27, *"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."* Paul realized that God had no favorites. He also warned Timothy to watch over his own life first so that he would be able to experience salvation in every aspect of his life which was not like that of Christ, and only then in turn would he be able to lead others to such a salvation as

well.

1 Timothy 4:16 "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Another translation says, *"Keep a critical eye upon yourself and what you teach, Timothy. That will save you and others who hear you."* Paul not only wrote thus to Timothy, but he spoke the same words of warning to the elders in Ephesus in Acts 20. He called them to Miletus and told them to take heed to themselves and the flock. Acts 20:28 *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."*

Saints, this is the responsibility of every leader and every member in the church: to be open to the Spirit of God and never to allow pride to come in, and also to be always open for correction. If you are open to the Spirit, you are sure to receive His help. If you are not open, the Lord may move someone's heart to tell you what needs to be corrected. May the Lord give you the grace to be open to that correction from someone else!

GOOD SAMARITAN FELLOWSHIP
H2 / 22, Mahavir Enclave,
New Delhi 110045 INDIA
joythomas@oilnwine.org

