

Hello. /We will now begin the fifth lecture on pastoral theology. /At this time we will study **the pastor and ceremonies.** /

**/8. A Pastor and Ceremonies.** /Pastors conduct many types of ceremonies. /Ceremonies are important to a pastor's ministry, and they are a part of worship services. /Some typical ceremonies led by pastors are weddings, funerals, and ordinations. /Let's first discuss wedding ceremonies.

**/(1) Wedding Ceremonies.** /God personally created marriage between a man and a woman. /Genesis 2:18 says God made a suitable helper. /Genesis 2:24 says, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."

/Therefore, marriage is not a social institution created by man, but was personally created by God. /The origin of marriage is God, and thus, marriage must not be the result of careless acts. /Marriage must be given as a holy worship to God.

/In the recent days, wedding ceremonies have become liberal in form. /In some weddings, the bride and groom enter together as they dance to cheerful music. /However, pastors must clearly recognize that such trends are wrong.

/Pastors must teach believers that wedding ceremonies must be given as holy worship services before God. /When pastors are asked to officiate weddings, they must first see whether or not the marriage is lawful.

/It is not right to agree to officiate weddings because the marrying couple's feelings might get hurt, or because of concern that the couple might leave the church. /Pastors must have clear principles, and he must turn down offers if something does not agree with his principles.

/When someone who has been divorced without a special reason asks that a pastor officiate his second marriage, the pastor must not officiate his wedding. /Matthew 19:6 says that man must not separate what God has joined together. /Two people are brought together in marriage by God.

/Therefore, divorce is not valid simply because two people decide to get divorced. /If there are divorces that the Bible does not allow, a married couple is still considered a married couple before God even if they are divorced by world law.

/Therefore, anyone who marries such divorced individuals commits the sin of adultery. /Pastors who officiate such weddings ultimately approve of adultery. /The Bible says that divorce and remarriage are allowed in the following special cases.

/First, divorce is acceptable if either the husband or wife has committed adultery. /In such cases, the spouse who did not commit adultery can remarry. /Pastors can officiate weddings for such remarriages.

/Second, when a husband and wife has been away from each other for a long period of time due to war and there is no hope that they would meet again, they can remarry. /In Jeremiah 29:4-6, God speaks to those who were taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

/God told the exiles in Babylon to settle in Babylon, and marry and have sons and daughters. /This was because there was no possibility of them returning to their homeland.

/Thus, when a husband and wife are separated as a result of special circumstances such as war, remarriage may be acceptable. /In the case of Korea, the nation was split into two, the North and the South, after war began on June 25, 1950.

/There were many men who left their wives and children behind in North Korea, who resided in South Korea. /There was also no way of finding out whether their wives and children were alive. /In such cases, it would not be a sin to remarry.

/Third, remarriage is acceptable if one's spouse has died. /Fourth, divorce and remarriage are acceptable if an unbelieving spouse files for divorce. /1 Corinthians 7:15 says, "But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so."

/Still, it would be good for the believer in the marriage to love their unbelieving spouse and be a good example of faith so that he or she might evangelize to the unbelieving spouse. /It is wrong to get a divorce because the unbelieving spouse persecutes the believer.

/1 Corinthians 7:15 refers to divorce requested by the unbelieving spouse. /According to the teachings of the Bible, it is best to endure. /Hence, divorce may be allowed under these four reasons.

/Therefore, unlawful divorces and remarriages are wrong. /When a pastor is asked to officiate such weddings, the pastor must turn down the request. /When one person is a believer and one person is an unbeliever, the pastor can turn down the request to officiate the wedding.

/2 Corinthians 6:14 says, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers." /We do not get married simply because we want to. /We get married when we find the spouse that God has chosen for us by his will.

/A pastor must always encourage and teach believers to meet spouses with faith in the Lord. /If a believer still wishes to marry an unbeliever and asks him to officiate the wedding, the pastor must carefully explain why he won't officiate the wedding.

/Anyone who wants to get married to an unbeliever must share the gospel with the unbeliever and strive to lead that person to Christ. /However, at times we must carefully

check to see if the unbeliever is pretending to have faith just so that the pastor would officiate their wedding.

/In such cases, it is right to postpone the wedding in order to figure out whether he or she actually has fruit of faith. /If the parents of either side strongly oppose of the upcoming marriage, the pastor must figure out the reasons why.

/Then as the neutral party, the pastor must share with them words that are based on the Bible. /It is crucial that a pastor has a theological principle about marriage.

/Hence, the pastor must not always agree to officiate a marriage. /When a couple that he does not know asks him to officiate, he must choose a set time for counseling. /The pastor must learn about their marriage.

/He must observe the faith of the man and woman, and then he can officiate their wedding only if their marriage will not go against the teachings of the Bible. /Even if people that the pastor knows well ask him to officiate their wedding, the pastor must meet with the couple in advance.

/The pastor must meet them in advance and take the time to re-examine their faith. /Then the pastor must tell them the clear teachings of marriage that God speaks of in the Bible. /The pastor must also receive promises from the couple that they would serve God well in marriage.

/The wedding ceremony can take place in the order of a general wedding. /However, we must remember that it is a worship service to God. /Thus, the wedding ceremony must take place in a solemn and holy atmosphere.

/The bride and groom may enter with the wedding march playing as is common in weddings. /However, when the bride and groom stand together up front, the officiator must confirm with them that the wedding is a worship service before God.

/The officiator must then inform the guests to participate in the ceremony with reverent hearts. /The wedding service will begin with the singing of a hymn. /The officiating pastor will then preach.

/He should include the Bible's teachings about the first marriage institution created by God and about the duties of husband and wife, and also that the two must love each other in the Lord and serve God.

/The pastor can use various passages, but the passages used most in wedding services are Genesis 2:18-25, Ephesians 5:22-33, and 1 Peter 3:1-7. /After the sermon is over, the husband and wife should exchange vows.

/Wedding vows are read before God and before all witnesses. /When the husband and wife have finished exchanging vows, the pastor must pray a prayer that their marriage has

been established. /Then the pastor should pronounce the bride and groom as husband and wife.

/It is acceptable for the pastor to receive honorarium for the wedding ceremony. /However, if a pastor expects honorarium, his attitude will diminish his authority as pastor. /Next, let's discuss funerals.

**(2) Funerals.** /It is sad to love a loving family member, even to Christians who believe in the afterlife. /It is common for believers to treat pastors with importance and rely on them.

/Believers need the guidance of pastors even more when a loving member of the family has passed away. /Therefore, when a member of the congregation needs to conduct a funeral, the pastor must make it his priority. /The pastor must consider it most important, and he must visit the family of the deceased and comfort them. /If possible, the pastor must visit the home or the hospital immediately when he receives a call that someone has passed away.

/The pastor must comfort the family with a worship service, and he must discuss funeral arrangements with them. /This time will be a good opportunity for the family of the deceased to grow closer to the Lord.

/The pastor must keep in mind that the funeral is not a ceremony for the members of the church, but for the family of the deceased and mourners. /Funerals are not for the dead.

/There are different types of deaths. /There is death after a long period of illness. /There is also sudden death. /There are deaths of children. /There are deaths of faithful believers, and there are deaths of those whose faith were uncertain.

/The pastor must take all these into consideration. /Then the pastor must lead the funeral service in a way that will comfort the family of the deceased. /Funerals are mainly separated into three stages.

/The three parts consist of the wake funeral service, the departure service, and the burial service. /First, let's look at the wake funeral service. /The wake service refers to a worship service that takes place after the body is washed, dressed, and placed in the coffin.

/The wake service usually takes place twenty-four hours after the deceased has passed away. /Sometimes, the pastor directly places the body into the coffin. /At other times, the undertaker or workers from the hospital places the body into the coffin.

/Then a worship service led by the pastor takes place after. /The service can begin with the pastor saying, "We will begin the wake service of the late OOO," or if the deceased had an office, the pastor could say, "We will begin the wake service of the late deacon (or whichever office the deceased had), OOO."

/Then after the pastor had led the hymn and read the Bible passages, he must comfort the family of the deceased by telling them that the deceased is enjoying eternal glory in heaven. /The pastor must also plant hope of heaven to those present.

/The pastor must let the visitors and mourners know what life is like. /The pastor must ask that the family of the deceased hope in heaven and together walk down the path of faith.

/If the deceased was an unbeliever, the pastor must not say that the deceased is in heaven. /In such cases, the pastor may say that the deceased has gone down the road that everyone goes through.

/The pastor may also explain that life is empty, and that it is a blessing to life with hope in the eternal afterlife. /The departure service is a service that is given when the coffin with the body is taken to the cemetery.

/In Korea, it is common for the departure service to be given on the third day after one has died. /However, the date can be rearranged depending on conflicts with Sunday worship services or other circumstances. /At the departure service, the pastor would continue to comfort the family of the deceased and mourners.

/Then the pastor may preach with words of encouragement with faith. /The burial service is given after the coffin is lowered into the grave, or after the cremated body is placed in the columbarium at the crematory.

/The pastor must preach that the body of the deceased will resurrect to life when Jesus returns. /Then the pastor should preach about the hope of resurrection.

/For example, the most common passages used in burial services are John 5:25-29, 1 Corinthians 15:50-58, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. /It is important that superstitious factors are not mentioned at funerals.

/Korea and other Asian countries commonly bow down before dead bodies. /If the deceased had faith as well as his or her family members and visitors, they must keep others from bowing down.

/If the funeral is conducted in a Christian way, it is good to indicate that at the funeral hall. /It is good to put a note up in advance so that visitors would not bow down before the deceased. /In Christian funerals, visitors and mourners simply pray before the photo of the deceased.

/They do not pray for the deceased, but pray for the family of the deceased and for the funeral arrangements. /Once the visitors have prayed, they greet the family members. /Alcohol should be forbidden from the funeral hall.

/The most important part of funeral services is that the message of the gospel be included in the wake funeral service, the departure service, and the burial service. /The preacher must be careful not to make the message seem threatening to the family of the deceased.

/It is also not good for the pastor to speak with fervor before those who are mourning for a loved one. /It is also not right for the pastor to preach the gospel in an aggressive tone. / It is appropriate for the pastor to give a clear explanation of the gospel.

/The pastor must preach with confidence that man must believe in Jesus, the Savior, and emphasize the importance of this.

/Even if the deceased may not have shown evident faith while on earth, it is only God who knows whether or not he has ultimately received salvation. /If the deceased was in a comatose state before his death, no one knows whether he was born again through the work of the Holy Spirit.

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/It is also important to remember that funeral services must not be too long. /The family and friends of the deceased are in great pain. /The family of the deceased will be tired from lack of sleep. /The atmosphere is oftentimes disorderly because of visitors.

/Therefore, it is best that funeral services be short and to the point. /The following are passages in the Bible that are commonly used in funeral services.

/Luke 16:19. /2 Corinthians 5:1-10. /1 Corinthians 15:35-49. /1 Corinthians 15:50-58. /1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. /Revelation 14:13. /It is also acceptable for pastors to study and use other passages in the Bible that may be appropriate for funeral services.

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/The matter of honorarium is similar to that of wedding ceremonies. /It is a part of the pastor's job to conduct funeral services. /It is something a pastor must do.

/Therefore, the pastor can accept honorarium if the family of the deceased insist that he accept it. Yet, it is better for the pastor not to accept honorarium for funeral services. /Lastly, let's discuss ordination ceremonies.

**/(3) Ordination Ceremonies.** /There are many types of ordinations. /Representatively, there is the ordination of pastors led by the Presbytery. /There are also the ordination of elders and the ordination of deaconesses led by the church Session.

/At this time, we will study the ordination of elders. /The ordination of elders is a ceremony in which individuals who have passed the exam for ordination of the General Assembly are officially ordained as elders.

/The date of the ordination of elders is by rule decided by the church Session, but it is best to inform the Presbytery so that they may choose members for the ordination, and then choose a date. /The ordination of elders is conducted in the same order as regular worship services.

/Yet, the ordination vows and prayer of ordination are added to the order after the sermon. /The ordination vows pertain to the ordained and the entire congregation. /The ordained promises to help the senior pastor and to remain faithful in his service to the church as a servant of God.

/The congregation promises to respect the authority of the ordained and to obey. /Next, there is the laying of hands on the ordained, and the representative prays for the ordained. /Then the senior pastor will proclaim that the ordained is now an elder. /We will conclude our discussion on the pastor and ceremonies.

/Here we will conclude the fifth lecture on pastoral theology. /Thank you.