DEAR PASTOR WHOEVER

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Category: Dear Pastor Whoever

Dear Pastor Whoever....

We both know there is “one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” But do you realize there is “one Mediator” between Christ and christian, none other than the Holy Spirit? As Jesus was a Sent-One (“the Father sent Me”) so the Holy Spirit is a Sent-One (“the Helper.... whom I shall send to you”). Jesus wants to direct our lives through the Holy Spirit. (“He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak.”) But, sadly, it usually doesn't work that way. The Holy Spirit has been supplanted by a salaried Pastor Whoever.

Christians call you “Pastor” because they consider you their pastor. Why else would they call you that? And you allow (invite? coerce?)them to call you “Pastor” because that's what you consider yourself to be. But you're not! How can a sheep have two shepherds, Jesus and you? Many times you and Lord Jesus, spiritually speaking, take different paths, He the superior path and you an inferior. How can a christian follow both?

You are, at best, an under-shepherd. *Not* the congregation's under-shepherd, but *Christ's* under-shepherd. Occasionally Lord Jesus shepherds his sheep through you, just as he does, occasionally,through the apostle, prophet, evangelist and teacher. Just as He does,occasionally, through elders. Just as He does through whoever. More accurately, Lord Jesus shepherds His sheep through the Holy Spirit who in turn shepherds through you (and others). That in noway makes you the christian's pastor (shepherd). You are Christ's under-shepherd, just as the teacher is Christ's *under-teacher,* a teacher under Christ. (“Do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.”). If you insist on a title, refer to yourself as“Under-pastor Whoever”.

The most detrimental thing you can do is convince (coerce, allow) others to follow you. What can be more damaging to the Christ-christian relationship than that?

Most respectfully, Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Many do not understand the significance of a salaried pastor compared to one supported by contribution. Do you? To clarify the matter, let's do some supposing. Suppose I was one of the pew-people in your congregation and.... no, no, no, let's get wilder yet!Let's suppose that *I* am the pastor and *you* are one of hundreds of pew-people. I know this calls for some powerful pretending on your part, but be a sport. Okay? If the collection envelope were itemized in such a way that you could write down the amount to be contributed to me (let's make that *Pastor* Me), it would compel you to make a prayerful decision. Yes, Jesus would be the actual decision-maker, a positive step toward making Him Lord in fact and not name only. On the other hand, if I, Pastor Me, were salaried, you do not have a say in the matter, no need to consult Lord Jesus.

Only the Holy Spirit knows the will of Jesus. Jesus may want your contribution directed elsewhere, perhaps to one within (or without)the congregation with a severe need. Or directed to an evangelist. Or to a sunday school teacher equally worthy. Or to whoever. Who knows the will of Christ except the Spirit sent by Christ? You might conclude my preaching lately isn't doctrinally sound. Or my preaching isn't Christ-centred. Why should you support me?

A lack of congregational support might cause me to go deeper in Christ. Perhaps Jesus is telling me my lifestyle should be simplified,as was His. And if I balked at such a correction, perhaps He would have me (horror of horrors!) get... a... job! (Yes, a part time job. Areal estate agent, maybe. Or a self-employed whatever.)

The day I demanded a salary instead of support through contributions is the day I became, by definition of the word, a *hireling*.(Hirelings, I understand, do not fare well at “the judgment seat”.)

Thanks for being a good sport.

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

The intent of this letter is to help you see what you might not see. Our fallen humanity being what it is, we often do not detect what is within sight. What should exude a response, be it something beautiful or something horrible, doesn't. Pedestrians hurrying to their wherever fail to notice the overhead spectacular sunset our Father provided. The homeless sitting on cold concrete outside the grocery store no longer conjures pity.

Tyranny is like that. What should be appalling is tolerated, barely noticed. Relative few cried “abuse” during the slavery years, and those who did were considered fringe. Jews worldwide suffered for no

other reason than being Jews, and few gentiles dared denounce this injustice and absurdity. So.... what am I leading up to.... ?

Within evangelicalism there is stark tyranny as insidious as racism, as cruel as abortion, as damaging as pornography, as damning as false gospels. This tyranny unfolds within the congregation's sight during each and every sunday service.

I am not only referencing that dreadful, destructive evangelical tithe that ensures the damnation of millions (billions?) of people of every colour and language, that evangelical tithe proven a sure and lucrative money-gathering scheme that finds a comparative with the“scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites” who, Jesus said, “devour widows' houses”, that evangelical tithe invented by evangelicals to salary evangelicals and evangelical housing. But I also speak of the subtle, very subtle, religious entrapment that slowly but surely hijacks the enviable passion for Jesus enjoyed by the new convert.

Because of your incessant visibility you increase and Jesus decreases with every sunday service. The un-shared pulpit makes you bigger than you are. The Holy Spirit is less and less relied on as the group adapts your team mentality. Conversation revolves more around you than Lord Jesus. New convert is fast sinking into the dull and limited christianity that has long ago seized others. This is tyranny.

Respectfully,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Since the denomination you belong to cannot be found in the Bible, your suspicion should be aroused. After all, you *do* believe the Bible is the inerrant word of God, right? That's what you on several occasions declared to your congregation. Bible raised above your head you solemnly proclaimed, “This is God's infallible word!” Yet in that “infallible word” denominations cannot be found. Yikes!Perhaps you are comforted by the hundreds of thousands of christians attached to mainline denominations throughout North America and beyond, every one, by his/her devotion, adds to the credibility of denominationalism. So one could conclude that denominations are a good thing, right? So many christians can't be wrong. It's inconceivable that these mammoth denominations, each c/w national and regional superintendents with their various ranks of underling national overseers – all, incidentally, funded by (mostly unaware) pew-people – do not have the endorsement of Jesus Christ. And yet....And yet there is that bothersome, unpleasant reality: denominations cannot be found in the Bible, and are therefore non-Biblical. Sir, you serve a non-Biblical religion. Ouch! You know Lord Jesus taught us that the wise man is the one who builds on

His words and the foolish man is the one who doesn't (Matthew, chapter 7). Do you agree the words of Lord Jesus are not only the words he personally spoke but all Bible words? ("All scripture is given by inspiration of God.") Understand that it takes no less courage for you to scrutinize evangelical tradition than it does for Father Whoever to challenge that of his religion. It takes real grit to be a follower of our Lord Jesus; it takes none to be an ambassador of religion.

Paul to Timothy: "Preach the word!"

Respectfully, Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Elitism. I want you to consider elitism. Why? Because I want you to see what you may not see. You must know if you have, or have not, been infected by this vile ailment so prominent in leadership, be it secular or religious. Why? Because in your future is the judgment seat of Christ. If so contaminated, it's best to deal with it beforehand. Amen?Elitism: "consciousness of or pride in belonging to a select or favoured group." You certainly belong to a "favoured group". You are the central figure in the congregation. You wield much power. You are considered more than Lord Jesus. Your salary sets you apart, as does your credentials and titles. It's a heady thing to be called "Pastor" thousands of times throughout the year. But none of these – the salary, the credentials, the titles – are as dangerous as the pulpit. The pulpit makes little gods out of the ordinary. Every Sunday you have an attentive audience. You are esteemed. Influential. Loved and admired. Please note, Pastor Whoever, the ugly word "pride" in the above dictionary definition. That word should scare every religious leader. Those infected with elitism don't realize it because it came upon them in such small increments as to be unnoticed. The pharisee did not become a pharisee overnight. He once thought of himself as a servant of God and the people, not a chieftain. Please note: It was the elite who had Jesus crucified. It was the elite who harassed Paul. It was the elite who tortured the reformers. Today it is the evangelical elite who introduce the convert to religion, who implement the dreadful evangelical tithe, who build pompous buildings.

My brother, have you, like most in leadership, been infected with elitism? Talk it over with Lord Jesus.

Yours in Him,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I want you to fully understand: I DON'T NEED YOU. Never did. Yes, I once thought you were necessary for spiritual growth – that's what was thoroughly intimated to me – but I was mistaken. Jesus - my *real* pastor (shepherd) and my *only* pastor - taught me that He was my sufficiency. He said, "He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit." Jesus never suggested I needed another. And He also taught me how I am able to please our precious Father: "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit." *Hmmm..... I please the Father by bearing much fruit and I bear much fruit by abiding in Christ.* Jesus never mentioned my need for you, Pastor Whoever. Why didn't you tell me that? Why did I have to find out for myself that success did not depend on my submission to you or any man? Why did you coerce me to call you "Pastor" (I thank "the living God" I never capitulated) when Jesus alone is my pastor? ("The LORD is my shepherd (pastor)." Many years ago I left your influence to regain the intimacy for Lord Jesus I knew at rebirth. I repented of man-gazing. I regret financially supporting your religion. I wish you would return my money; I would use it to finance Christ's Great Commission. I ache for the people who have accepted the notion that they need you.... that Christ has abdicated His position as pastor of their christianity and substituted you for Himself. Next Sunday, *please* tell the congregation, "You don't need me. Christ alone is your sufficiency. Not Christ plus, just Christ. Not Christ plus me. Not Christ plus church. Not Christ plus evangelicalism. Adding someone or something to Christ weakens your relationship. Which limits your fruit. Which robs you of eternal rewards. Repent of man- gazing – man-gazing, so dangerously close to man-worship – and become what you once were, a Christ-gazer."

I wish you well,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

What makes a minister of Christ a minister of Christ? As you know, within the vast worldwide realm of religion there are millions of ministers, but not all are ministers of Christ. I suppose it would be safe to say *most* are not. Most are appointed to leadership, not by our Lord Jesus, but by their religion. So how does one differentiate between a minister of religion and a minister of Christ? The answer should be of grave concern to you, Pastor Whoever, because you are considered to be, and consider yourself to be, "in the ministry". Like everything else, the answer is in the New Testament....

Timothy was a "minister of God". Tychichus was "a faithful minister in the Lord". Epaphras was also "a faithful minister of Christ". And we certainly could mention Paul and Barnabas and Silas and John and Stephen and many etceteras. Notice, if you would, none of these were certified. Notice, if you would, none of these were salaried. Notice, if you would, none of these were titled. Paul admonished

Timothy to"Preach the word!". Yes, you preach the word, but you also preach 'church'. You preach CHURCH-ianity more than CHRIST-ianity. Religion more than relationship. The Bible plus and the Bible minus.

So again, what makes a minister of Christ a minister of Christ? We know it wasn't denominational credentials because denominations were a later invention. It couldn't be evangelicalism because the birthing of this religion was way off in the future. *Hmmm.* May I suggest a minister of Christ is simply one who ministers Christ? A minister of Christ - regardless of age or gender or intelligence or magnetism – is simply one who preaches "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" to a dying world and a sickly church.

Please (please!) admonish your people to embrace the NT as their only standard, and to never (never!) adapt evangelicalism as their guide. Assure them they have the same potential to preach "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" as the salaried, titled and credentialed. Occupying your pews is a Timothy and Tychicus and Epaphras. And who knows, maybe a Paul and Peter and John.

Respectfully, Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

You have an advantage over most of us. While we all have mirrors, only you have a spiritual mirror. We can look at our reflection to get an idea of our physical health. (Red-eye bad. Glowing complexion, good. Belly hanging over belt, bad. Etc.) But only you have a mirror that reflects your *spiritual* condition. That mirror is the congregation that you, more than any other, influence. ("Like priest, like people.") Their spiritual health, or lack of it, is a reflection of your spiritual health, or lack of it. To know how you're doing, simply consider your people.

How many are accomplished preachers/teachers? How many seriously finance Christ's command to take the gospel to the nations? Do they ache for souls or are they lethargic?

Do your people read the Bible lots or little? Do they speak Jesus Christ often or sparsely? Are they prayerful? Is there an ache for intimacy with their Christ? Do they abide, primarily, in "the true vine" or in churchianity? Are they followers of Jesus or followers of christians? Are they governed by the Holy Spirit or are they lackeys of man? They will, hopefully, receive rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. And they will, certainly, "suffer loss" of rewards (as we all will). These rewards are eternal rewards. ("Where neither moth nor rust destroys.") And losses are eternal losses. Because you have been assigned (by man, not Christ) to give leadership, you will help determine the eternal outcome of each pew-person. A scary thought?

And the present condition of your congregation could be your harbinger for the upcoming judgment

seat.

I wish you well,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I worked hard over a number of decades for my income and so do you. Yet there's a difference between us. Let me explain....

I was a self-employed electrician when I discovered Christ. After hours,I put in much time ministering (as did many others). Ministry, to me,simply means doing what Jesus directs. Jesus gives an assignment, and we either obey or ignore this assignment. Simple. For this I have never charged or collected a dime. The Lord 'gave' me a Bible verse way back there: “Freely you have received, freely give.”

So I worked “freely” while you collected a paycheck. Jesus worked at no charge, though He was supported through contributions, and so did every NT person that served Him. You might think, “It's easy for him to criticize; he's never been a pastor!” But I am not criticizing.... not you or anybody else. Someone who has failed the Lord so many times and in so many ways has no right to trash a brother. But I do ferociously criticize the religion that employs you, a religion that lavishly spends money intended to finance Christ's great commission.

You might conclude your pay should be equal to those employed in the world system. But they are hirelings, almost every one of them, just like I was. Jesus has never hired a disciple to do His bidding. “Freely give” has never fizzled over the centuries. Thousands upon thousands of salaried church personnel does not alter, “Freely you have received, freely give.” Pastors are exchanging eternal rewards for a salary.

You are in a difficult space. You do it all because you are paid. And you are paid because you do it all. And you do it all because you are paid. Around and around and around. If I were you I would run, not walk, from that church system. After the Lord told a friend to shun all religion, here turned his credentials to his denomination. That's my suggestion to you,my brother-in-Christ. Your effectiveness will not lessen but increase.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

How are you doing, Pastor Whoever? And how is your congregation doing?

I am reading a book, for about the fifth time, titled "The Judgement Seat of Christ" by a pastor, Rick Howard. The judgment seat tomorrow will reveal how you and your congregation are doing *today*.(And yet, curiously, you rarely mention this upcoming milepost.) Rick writes of a vision.... a vast multitude of white-robed saints from all ages and all nations gathered together in one place. He compared this throng to both the wheat fields of his Kansas and the vast expanse of the ocean as seen from a cruise ship. Massive. Endless. A sea of white robes.

2 Corinthians 5:10, 11: "For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body,according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Rick testifies that this will be a grievous time for many (many, certainly not all). He speaks of "guttural sobbing" of remorse, sounds he would have previously associated coming from hell. (I personally know two others having similar visions.) Before each individual is a pile of "wood,hay, straw". Hidden beneath this jumble are, hopefully, imperishable"gold, silver, precious stones".

The Lord torches the heap. Will all his/her works be burned? Deep remorse or ecstatic rejoicing? Did what matter most to Jesus matter most? You do realize that how your people fare will depend largely on you, their chief influence. Did you steer them to or away from Jesus Christ? Did you feed them Bible or religion? Or a mixture?

So I ask again, Pastor Whoever, how are you doing? How is your congregation doing?

See you then and there, "the judgment seat of Christ",

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

It may irk you to be told that you and Father Whoever have much in common; e.g., you both hold church tradition above the Bible.... that is to say.... when Bible and tradition clash, you both choose tradition.

Father Whoever must have read Matthew 1:25: "But he did not have sexual relations with her UNTIL her son was born." In other words, Joseph and Mary had intercourse AFTER Jesus was born. Nonetheless, his church teaches that Mary was a perpetual (everlasting)virgin. Because he is so reliant on his religion (and because he lacks spunk) he must deny Scripture. The hypocrisy is glaring.... a priest claiming to represent Christ while denying Christ's Bible. Yet, Pastor Whoever, *you*

often commit the same violation against the very One you claim to represent. There are many evangelical traditions you uphold that are equally erroneous. One example of many....

You know you are not allowed to be called “Father” or “Rabbi” or“teacher” (leader). You MUST, therefore, realize Lord Jesus doesn't want you to be called “Pastor” (shepherd). Jesus didn't include 'Pastor' on His list simply because nobody used that appellation. But an honest and courageous Pastor Whoever would conclude that Jesus forbids all titles. (You do know for a fact that no NT disciple was conferred with a title.)

One might think that where Bible and tradition clash, you would put on your big-boy pants and firmly stand with Christ. Don't you remember all those times you sang, “On Christ the solid rock I stand”? Jesus said,“Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed.”

Multitudes follow both you and Father Whoever deep into compromise. Heed the words of the Master: “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

Please consider and reconsider,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I want to reason with you about what I call the *awful evangelical tithe*. I ask you to humour me by pretending, just for a few minutes, that you agree that the tithe collected within evangelicalism each and every sunday is contrary to NT writings and therefore contrary to Christ. Okay?Just a few minutes of make-believe? Can you do that?

If so, you would have to agree that almost every pastor of almost every local church of almost every denomination under the worldwide tent of evangelicalism is under girded financially in a manner that seriously grieves the God they claim to serve. You would be forced to acknowledge that evangelical seminaries, during their entire existence, have been falsely teaching the teachers they produce. Denominational credentials would lose their authenticity. I know this is painful, but we must continue...

If the awful evangelical tithe really is as awful as I think it is, large numbers of trusting congregations have been duped. Millions of salaries should never have been paid and so many buildings never constructed. And it gets worse. Many will spend their eternity in that place of eternal torment because christians have been coerced to invest in their religion instead of Christ's Great Commission. Multitudes of both pulpit-people-and pew-people will suffer serious remorse at the judgment seat of Christ.

You protest, *But so many can't be wrong!* Oh yes they can. Every sizable religion proves that. I advise you to prayerfully compare the evangelical tithe to the Bible and if you conclude I am right and they are wrong, then run! Dump your religion, return to "first love" and seek Christ's direction. Only then will you hear,"Well done, good and faithful servant."

I wish you courage and strength,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I wrote a novel a while ago that might interest you. *Pulpit Power* started off with random thoughts swirling freely in my upstairs about a plumber and a pastor, about a pretty good church baseball team, a suicidal ex-marine, a cranky elder and an ancient pulpit. To my surprise I felt the Lord instructing me to organize these haphazard thoughts into a novel. Like *Really?* thinketh I. *Does the Lord actually like novels?* Could be. He did speak in parables.

The story begins with Reuben Tanner, a friendly and well-respected plumber, timidly asking Pastor Mac for permission to use the pulpit to give a message to the congregation. He claims to have a word from Lord Jesus to the people. This simple request is the beginning of a major disturbance for sedate *Bread of Life Assembly*. It may sound like a sluggish storyline, but tell me...

Tell me, Pastor Whoever, how would *you* respond to someone asking to give what he believes to be a message from Jesus Christ? Your initial reaction might be to flatly deny him. But on what grounds? How can you justify speaking from the pulpit hundreds (thousands?) of times and yet deny him one occasion? What Scripture verse forbids him to speak? And suppose he *really did* have a message from Jesus? You would be denying the very "King of kings". But, but but.... if you say yes, doesn't that open a scary door? How can you say yes to one laymen but no to all others?

You might wonder what a plumber could say to the people that you haven't said a dozen times already. You offer to simply relay his message to the congregation on his behalf, but the plumber won't have none of that. What to do?.... what to do?.... what to do?

I can only tell you what Pastor Mac did. Second thought, maybe I won't. You can read it yourself, available at www.larryjones.ca

Many blessings on you and your congregation,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I humbly advise you to make room in your busy schedule for a sabbatical. Spiritual sabbaticals - times of escape from responsibilities,distractions, influences, opinions - pay hefty dividends. Not a skimpy time-out, but at least a month of communing with your Lord. *Plead* with wife and children to honour this time of solitude. Don't answer the phone, don't listen to teachings, avoid everyone. Hide in your bedroom, stretch out on the bed with pillows behind your head, cross your legs, maybe journal a bit and, Bible in hand, prayerfully consider. Consider? Consider what?

Consider the upcoming judgement seat of Christ. Make sure you are the "wise man" building "his house" on the Bible rather than the"foolish man" who isn't. This is not difficult. Simply compare every aspect of your christianity with NT writings. Is what you do compatible to the examples of Christ and His apostles? For example....

Is your role as shepherd of a congregation conducive with NT teachings? Begin with your title, "Pastor Whoever". Search hard for a christian in the NT with such an appellation. Or *any* appellation. Next,consider your salary. Can you find a salaried person in the NT? How about the disciples.... Peter, Paul, John? Yes, there are lots of examples of contributions for workers, but is there a precedent for a salary?

Your denominational license, is that NT? Is your extensive, almost solo, spiritual input synonymous to the "one another" ministry the NT speaks of? "Wise man" or "foolish man"? Your Bible has the answer.

Perhaps it's wisdom to confer with Lord Jesus now before that day of accountability. Perhaps a sabbatical – just you, Jesus and your Bible – really would be a good investment. Amen?

Most respectfully,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Truth sets free. Truth releases christians from spiritual bondage. We know that because Jesus said so. ("The truth shall make you free"). So what does *untruth* do? Obviously, falsehood puts people in bondage.

So.... is your congregation experiencing freedom or bondage? Jesus:"Every tree is known by its fruit." Seems like the answer is in the tree. Is the tree (your congregation) bearing good fruit? "Yes!", I hear you reply. "Most definitely!".... to which I say, "Amen and amen". But is that fruit *little* fruit or *much* fruit? Jesus: "By this My Father is glorified,that you bear *much* fruit."

Do you, Pastor Whoever, agree that little fruit is evidence of bondage and much fruit indicates

freedom?

Sadly, very few congregations bear *much* fruit. They have been bunched together and told, “We can do more together.” But that's not so. Wasted resources is an ugly reality of evangelicalism. A truer statement is “We can waste more together.” A group cannot be led by the most Holy Spirit. Every bunch must appoint a leader who captains the bunch. So individuals are no Spirit-led; they are man-led. They are in in bondage.

One Spirit-filled, Spirit-governed individual can accomplish 20, 30, 50times that of a man-governed christian. Paul is proof of that. So are several recent and present-day saints, A.W. Tozer but one example.

Only truth sets the captives free. To escape the bondage of evangelicalism they need to be told the truth. But that's not likely to happen. You, Pastor Whoever, are their chief spokesman, and it is you that has conscripted them into your religion. To speak the truth (NT teaching) might take more grit than what you've got. “Give my brother courage, Lord Jesus!”

Yours in Him,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Because of the influence of you and your colleagues throughout North America, most – not all, but most – born again christians serve and worship a faraway Jesus. (Their speech gives them away.) A faraway Jesus is a Jesus that is relationally distant. He lives way up there somewhere in the heavens, observing us with less than keen interest.

Faraway Jesus was once up-close, intimate Jesus. At rebirth He was so personal, so cherished, so.... *here*. But then the born again was introduced to your church pew. Sit here and listen. To me. Every sunday. Be respectfully silent, except when it's time to sing. Don't worry, we have a very competent worship leader. You can say “Amen!” once in a while, but please, nothing more.

Under your ministry Born-Again Whoever drifted. Paul: “I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted.”For most, the slide from intimate to tepid, from relationship to religion took only a handful of months. A few hardy holdouts resisted for years before capitulating to the evangelical way of life. For this, I cannot and do not blame you. You can't preach what you don't have. (Your speech gives you away.) You're not able to take others to a place foreign to you. Only the intimate can lead others into intimacy.

The only remedy is to take a trip back to Calvary, kneel at the foot of “the old rugged cross”, and let

the blood of the slain Lamb trickle over you once again. In deep repentance recapture “first love”. Exchange your faraway Jesus for a here-and-now Jesus. Now you can lead others into intimacy with our sin-bearer.

I wish you well,
Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

You and I have something in common that's very difficult to admit: *we both have a resistance to Jesus Christ.* Yes, we love the Lord and endeavour to please Him. And we are grateful for the holy sacrifice, the offering of Himself at Calvary on our behalf. And yet....

And yet there is a strong resistance to bow to His lordship and His sanctifying process. If it wasn't for this impedance we would be an entirely different christian. We would have already accumulated more “treasures in heaven” - not only more, but much more. Some of those “treasures” would be people; we would have been used by our Commander-in-Chief to draw multitudes into His Kingdom. We would be more like the NT heroes we envy, with “signs and wonders” following us as they did them.

I would have been converted to Christ years earlier if not for this*!*!*!*! resistance. The same is true, I suppose, of you and everyone. Thankfully there was a time when our longing for Jesus superseded our resistance and we (finally!) bowed to His lordship and received His awesome salvation. We like to think this resistance problem was dealt with at that holy encounter. But not so, not fully. Our ego suffered a setback, but it wasn't dead. We still resolutely decline to die to self, to surrender self-rule, to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

My resistance to full surrender to Christ has a negative effect on others but not nearly as much as yours, simply because you are more influential. Your sunday audience considers you their pastor,their shepherd. You could set them free. By confessing your resistance to Christ Jesus you might make them realize their own. Might bring them to repentance. Might make them more like the NT heroes they envy.

Thanks for listening.
Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Lord Jesus taught us, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Money is, to most of us, a very real treasure. We pine for it, sweat to earn it, use it to survive life. Whoever gets a chunk of that income, that treasure, gets a chunk of our heart.

When a christian gives as Christ's Representative (the Holy Spirit)so directs, he/she is actually giving to Jesus. As Jesus accepts their treasure, He is also capturing, more fully, their heart.... their attention,their loyalty, their affection. "Where your treasure is, *there* your heart will be also." Giving to Lord Jesus every day, nickels or dollars, is daily fortifying our relationship. And that's good. That's *very* good.

But evangelicals do not give as Christ's Representative directs. The most Holy Spirit has a potent competitor, none other than you, Pastor Whoever

Every sunday you collect a portion of the congregation's income,prodding them to donate 10% of their income. By capturing a sizable portion of their treasure – almost the entirety of their givings - you are capturing their heart.... their attention, their loyalty, their affection.

You really are in a predicament. Subjection to your denominational superiors have placed you in opposition with the very One to whom you must give an account. ("For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ.")

May our Lord Jesus give you wisdom.... and courage.... and strength.

Your brother-in-Christ,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Jesus taught us "Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock." (Matthew, chapter 7)

Our Lord promises us that if we simply obey His commands – by building on the secure rock of His sayings – our house (our lives)will never collapse, no matter how violent the storms coming our way. As one giving spiritual oversight, one would suppose you would relay Christ's warning to your congregation many times.

Simply said, if those you influence neglect Christ's admonition, their lives will be a failure. Churchianity won't save them. They would"be like the foolish man who built his house on the sand."

The storms of life will destroy their house (their lives).

This, Pastor Whoever, is my grievance: *You are actually teaching your congregation to build on sand.* Yes, you preach the Bible(Christ's sayings), but you also teach evangelical traditions. Jesus said to the pharisees, "You have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition."

Understand that the pharisees preached the Bible (the OT) AND they preached traditions of men. Like the evangelical pastor, they preached an unholy mixture. The evangelical coerced to build his/her life on an unholy mixture will not, cannot, prosper.

You may ask, "But *what* evangelical traditions are contrary to Christ's sayings?" Brace yourself. *EVERY* evangelical tradition is contrary to NT writings and therefore contrary to Christ. It's these hostile traditions that make evangelicalism evangelicalism. Get it?

Your brother-in-Christ,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

My name is Larry Jones. It is my intention to post short messages,addressed to you, on Facebook. I have much to say to those giving leadership to Christ's people within Christ's church.

I was born-again way back in 1972. I recently came across an earlier writing, a small booklet I entitled "Jesus and You". I was pleased to see that even 35-40 years ago I emphasized the centrality of Lord Jesus. I was and am convinced that, generally speaking, evangelicals have departed from their "first love", having replaced Him with other things. Those other things are what John warned about in his first letter: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Idols are things or people that have usurped the preeminence of Christ.

Almost 50 years of observation have taught me the most grim culprit injecting itself between christian and Christ is religion. Religion is– not just to many, but to most – an idol that has replaced the lordship of Jesus with itself. To be an evangelical necessitates adapting the methods and mentality of evangelicalism contrary to New Testament teachings.

Jesus wants to turn wayward, religious hearts back to Himself. The Father wants His kids back. The crippling consequences of religion must be exposed. Lord Jesus: "The truth shall make you free."

Pastor Whoever, you are the most religious person in your congregation. And the most influential. Hosea 4:9: "Like priest, like people." Your impact is enormous. What I have to say to you over the coming months on Facebook you will not hear from your superiors or colleagues. Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." For many years I have listened to you; now it's your turn to listen

to me. Lord Jesus (NLT): “All of you are equal as brothers and sisters.”

Your brother-in-Christ,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

You and Father Whoever down the street have more in common than one might think. Both of you are intermediators between a complex religious hierarchy and your congregation. Both are titled. Both are wage earners. Both are tethered to the religion that endorsed you and placed you behind concurrent pulpits. And sadly....

Sadly, your loyalty to God's Word is wanting. Neither one of you can sign the last page of your Bible as a declaration before Lord Jesus that you will obey His Bible (as you progressively understand it). It's so easy for all to see that should Father Whoever make and keep such a solemn vow he would soon be unemployed. Life-as-is would be no more. He may be forced to learn a trade. Or perhaps McDonalds is hiring. For sure, he would never be an employee of catholicism again.

And should you, Pastor Whoever, make and keep a solemn vow to obey the Bible, you too would soon be unemployed. You would be the fly coming under the wrath of an angry flyswatter. *Bam!* Evangelicalism can no more tolerate rebellion than can catholicism.

Oh the irony! Both church leaders, assumed by trusting congregations to be Christ's appointees, cannot give allegiance to Christ's Bible. Both 'shepherds' are forced to lead their people away from the lordship of Christ and into stagnant tradition. Oh the irony!

Please reconsider the walk you walk, and the talk you talk.

Respectfully,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Nobody should be shy about speaking of church finances. Church people assume the evangelical method of collecting and distributing money is pleasing to Jesus, the “head of the church”. But is it? Let's talk about what nobody talks about.... your salary.

If I were to ask someone in your congregation, “How much is the pastor's salary?”, chances are they

wouldn't have a clue. If I asked,"Shouldn't you know?" they just might reply, "I never thought of it." If I suggested, "Why don't you ask him?", they *wouldn't* say, "Yes,good idea." No, asking such a question might be considered uncouth,even challenging; everyone instinctively knows one never challenges Pastor Whoever. I suppose there has been about 25 salaried pastors(senior, associate, youth pastors, etc) in various churches I regularly attended over the years: I never knew their salary. Not one. For some reason salaries are kept a secret from the very people financing their salary. Isn't this unreasonable? Unfair? Unrighteous?

My guess is that many pew-people would be somewhere between surprised and shocked to learn of your salary. I have a "2019 Church Staff Salary Guide" (Vanderbloemen Search Group). According to this guide, the average annual salary for a senior pastor in the U.S. with a0-500 congregation is $102,293 ($134,003 CAD). Executive pastor:$69,710 ($91,320 CAD). Worship pastor: $52,440 ($68,696 CAD).Youth pastor: $48,973 ($64,154 CAD). Your congregation has the right to know, to the penny, what your services are costing them. And since they won't ask, tell them! Don't you want them to know?

Again, don't you want the congregation to know your salary? Are you concerned many would be surprised/shocked/angry? Still, the right thing to do is make sure they are informed. Secrecy must be outlawed. Announce your salary (and every other person's salary),from the pulpit. Isn't that what Lord Jesus would have you do?

Respectfully, Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

You and I have much in common. We are washed in the same precious blood.... both our names are recorded in the Book of Life.... we are fully redeemed.... both are the "righteousness of God" in Christ Jesus.... we are "heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ".... we are both on our way to heaven..... the two of us will"appear before the judgement seat of Christ."

But we are also different, quite different.

There are three important elements in my christianity, as expressed in three key NT verses. The first verse is John 15:4: "Abide in Me,and I in you." The second is John 16:13: "When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth." And the third is Mark 16:15: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." These hallowed truths, embedded in these three verses,are the bulk of my christianity. They are so relevant and so precious. I am being shaped by them. But seemingly they do not resonate, at least not nearly to the same degree, with you.

I have listened to you for four plus decades. I know you. Your words fully reveal who you are, what

you think, where your loyalty lies. It seems that which briskly pulses through my christianity is a mere blip in yours. You do not preach the centrality of Christ. And it is so obvious you do not place yourself under the governance of the Holy Spirit. And Christ's Great Commission is less than secondary.

Your “first love” is your religion, this evidenced by the walk you walk and the talk you talk. You are governed, not by the Holy Spirit,but by your superiors. More of the congregation's money is spent on your salary than the spreading of the gospel that saved you.

The judgement seat is coming. May the Holy Spirit prepare us both.

Yours in Him,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Ask yourself a very important question: Am I appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ as shepherd of His sheep, or have I been appointed by men? This question, it seems to me, should be answered before the up-coming “judgement seat of Christ”. And certainly the congregation has a right to know. So let us reason together....

As you know, many of your colleagues teach their congregations that Lord Jesus no longer heals. Signs and wonders, healing miracles, all supernatural manifestations, ceased, it is said, with the passing of the first apostles. This teaching is called cessationism. Simply said, cessationism is a doctrine that declares the discontinuance of the supernatural. I suppose millions have suffered and died unnecessarily because of this false teaching.... but that's not the point.

Jesus taught, “By their fruits you will know them.” Can we not conclude that a Christ-appointee would not teach heresy? And if one did teach heresy, is that not a sure sign that he is not appointed by Christ to shepherd His sheep? Assuming cessationism is a false teaching, and assuming half of your colleagues propagate this false teaching (I think the percentage is actually higher), would you agree that at least half of all the Pastor Whoevers *could not be* Christ-appointed? Regardless of your personal position on this doctrine, you must agree that at least half of your colleagues are teaching heresy.

“But, but, but”, you may conclude, “while 50% of us are wrong, 50%are factual.” True, but the half that are correct are themselves divided over other serious matters that have divided evangelicalism into numerous sects. To me, this suggests that most must be man-appointed, not-Christ-appointed. Since you can so clearly see this is the case in other religions, why not yours?

Evangelicals assume you have been placed by God. That is what has been heavily inferred. And so

they have accepted your leadership over that of the true Sent-one, the Holy Spirit. Sad. Very sad.

Dear Pastor Whoever....

A few questions, sir....

If there was someone amongst the pew-people, someone not credentialed by your denomination, who you *knew* has more Bible savvy and a deeper devotion to Christ than you, would you invite him to preach on occasional sundays? Suppose there were five or ten such people, would you give each opportunity to preach/teach? And a more important question, do you think our Lord Jesus would have these brothers (sisters) communicate from the pulpit?

Do you think the congregation would be better served hearing from several than to hear mostly or entirely from one? Do you believe that the entire fivefold ministry (Ephesians 4:11) should be represented in your church? Do you think "one another" ministry, so pronounced in the NT, should include pulpit ministry? Do you seek direction from the Holy Spirit before deciding who preaches any given sunday morning?

Would your superiors frown upon sharing the pulpit? And if so,why? Is it because a shared pulpit would make you (and them)less significant? Less needed? Are you concerned your salary would be jeopardized?

When about to appear before Jesus at His judgement seat, do you think you would have wished you shared the pulpit? Or not?

Blessings, my brother-in-Christ,

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Ordination. Let's talk ordination. Is it Bible or is it "tradition of men"? There's not only a split in Christ's church between the salaried and the non-salaried, but the salaried are themselves split between the ordained and the non-ordained. Some of your contemporaries are ordained, some are not, and, I suppose, all yearn to be. The ordained are the special amongst the special. Let's call them Super-Special Pastor Whoevers. But are the super-special special from Christ's perspective, the only perspective that matters?

Please excuse my severe skepticism that has developed over almost five decades of christianity. So

much of evangelicalism is religious add-on; is ordination also Bible-plus? For any Bible-believing christian the answer can easily be found. Type in biblegateway.com in the google search bar.... in the search bar of Bible Gateway type"ordain", "ordination" and "ordained". Check a good cross-section of translations, the NKJV, the ESV, and the NASB. Can these words, pertaining to men being ordained by God or men, be found in the New Testament of these three translations? No, no and no."The man whom He has ordained" (NKJV), is His Son.

Can we assume the people you pastor mistakenly assume ordination is Bible, and therefore the will of God? If ordination is merely another "tradition of men", as the NKJV, the ESV and the NASB verify, should not a leader under Christ, as you claim to be,educate them. And should you not inform the trusting congregation of all other evangelical traditions of men? Christianity, true christianity, is simply responding to the question: "What would Jesus have me do?" And that's my question to you, Pastor Whoever:"What does Jesus want you to do?" Love is obedience. Amen?

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Salaries. Let's talk salaries. More specifically, let's talk your salary. This might be painful, but perhaps it will cause less regret at "the judgement seat of Christ". Amen?

Jesus: "Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them." Jesus:"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Jesus: "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations." These words were spoken prior to Christ's-ascension. The "Lamb of God" had been sacrificed. "He was bruised for our iniquities." And now He mandated His church to take that good news to a perishing world. There should be a deep urgency.

It has been suggested if there were families seriously threatened by a wildfire every able person would take part in their rescue. Ordinary life would be on hold until every family was saved. That's how we should live out our CHRIST-ianity.... reaching the lost at any cost. But we don't. *There is no urgency.* We know what really matters most by tracking the dollar. Which brings us back to your salary.

I know your reasoning: *"The Bible clearly states, 'Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.' Therefore I am worthy of a salary."* No, not so fast. Lord Jesus didn't say those who preach the gospel should be salaried, but such preachers should be supported through *contributions*.... to cover "eating and drinking" and shelter. The basics. Paul said, "The labourer is worthy of his wages." The "labourer" is the evangelist, missionary, sunday school teacher, pastor, social media preacher,"elders who rule well".... anyone who labours. They are EQUALLY"worthy of his wages".

What comes first, Pastor Whoever, “Preach the gospel to every creature” or your salary? The people have been coerced to place the bulk of their giving under your supervision, and it is you who decides that your salary comes first. In fact, you don't need a salary. Paul and Peter and John and many etceteras prove that. But Christ's Great Commission must be financed. “How shall they preach unless they are sent.”

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I have already written to you about how devastating your salary is to Christ's Great Commission. Now I point out something equally nefarious: *Your salary devalues the relationship between Lord Jesus and His people.* Bear with me as I unravel my position. And keep in mind it's no easier to write than it is for you to read. Okay?

When you became salaried you became elevated, special, not from Christ's perspective, of course, but that of your brothers and sisters. You went from one of the guys to 'the man'. From ordinary to official. From 'brother' to 'reverend'. From influential to powerful. From follower to followed. From mere attendee to boss. And you became lord of the pulpit. In short, you replaced the lordship of the Holy Spirit with yourself. You garnered (unintentionally?)loyalty intended only for Jesus. You replaced Lord Jesus as decision-maker, comforter, counselor. Your salary did all this.

Had you lived by contributions (subsidized by outside wages?) you would have remained ordinary, one of the guys, a team player,respected but not acclaimed. Were it not for the salaried, Jesus would be the hub of the local church, and all others spokes in the church wheel. Also, others “who labor in the word and doctrine” -the sunday school teacher, the evangelist, the FB preacher, the missionary - would not be disadvantaged; they too would receive contributions, freeing them to serve Jesus more effectively.

Jesus ministers to His people through the Holy Spirit. “He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak.” The Holy Spirit, in turn, wants to minister to the christian through christians. Not through a singular christian, but several. Your salary has seriously limited the Holy Spirit; people turn to (rely on), not Him and Jesus who sent Him, but to the one they have hired. Thus your salary, while elevating you, has weakened the grip christians have on Christ and Christ has on christians. Very not good.

Your brother-in-Christ, Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

The little time you and I have before the Lord takes us to heaven should be spent wisely. Amen? We should both ask ourself(*before* that little time is fully spent, *before* our opportunity to bless our generation has passed never to return, *before* we are summoned to the judgement seat of Christ): "What should I be doing differently? Invest resources and time more productively?"

We are soon going to be there. No chance for a redo. Most certainly, we don't want a baptism of regret. We don't want a further accumulation of "would-haves, should-haves, could-haves".The time to examine ourselves is in the here-and-now when an examination can be beneficial, not there and later. Those we influence will be enriched by our honest self-inspection. Let us both ask ourselves a few thorny questions.....

Are we abiding in "the true vine" or in someone or something else?Is our relationship with Jesus passionate, ho-hum or somewhere in-between? Is Jesus "first love", second, third or fifth? Are we followers of Jesus Christ or has religion captured the devotion we once reserved for Him alone? Is the Holy Spirit truly our governor, the One directing our christianity? How intimate are we with "Our Father who is in heaven"? Are we carrying our cross as Jesus carried His?

Do we live in a playground or battlefield? Are we taking Christ's Great Commission seriously, or does it get our leftover change and energy? Is there an urgency for souls? Are we investing in third-world nations where the harvest is plentiful? What example are we setting for those we influence?

May our Lord Jesus bestow grace on both of us that we may not

be ashamed on that day of accountability. Amen?

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

The Lord told a friend to walk away from his church and all churchianity. But that wasn't easy to do. He was a pastor, you see, an associate pastor,a *salaried* associate pastor. He had been depending on his salary to maintain his life.... just like the store manager, the teacher and the athlete depend on theirs. So he disobeyed the Holy Spirit and remained where he was not supposed to be. His salary kept him captive.

The salary is a factor in keeping the evangelical pastor a pastor. Who wants to change their profession after investing years of preparation?The salaried, no matter what their profession, have one thing in common:they all want a *bigger* salary. And when bigger comes, they want bigger yet. That's just the nature of fallen man and religious redeemed man. The want for more drives the

ambitious toward advancement. The youth pastor eyes the higher-paid assistant-pastor position. And after that advancement he covets the well-paid senior pastor's job. Still not content, he fishes for a bigger church with a bigger salary.

That pastor friend was quite gifted, but he was not a pastor. Most Pastor Whoevers are not pastors. Of all those listed in my memory,most had the gifting of evangelist or teacher or prophet (see Eph.4:11). It is the salary and the pulpit that draw men to the role of pastor. The salary is an entrapment, drawing and keeping many where they don't belong. But not all...

My friend finally left organized religion after about two years. Jesus watched over him. ("I will never leave you nor forsake you.") He never went hungry and still preaches to many. And what about you, Pastor Whoever? Had enough religion? Has the Holy Spirit been speaking?Is Jesus calling you out of institutionalism and into intimacy? Over the years I have prayed, "Lord Jesus, I am where I am because I think this is where You want me to be. If it's not, please say so and I will move on." Do you love Him enough to *sincerely* pray that prayer?

Your brother-in-Christ, Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

You started your christianity just like all of us. He was your enthusiasm, your centre, your Lord, yes, your God. You told Him you would walk with Him always, you would never look back, you would be faithful. ("Though none go with me, still I will follow, no turning back, no turning back.") Life was full back then. Yes, the old crowd never liked you much after that but it was a small price to pay for fellowship with the very Son of God. Amen?

But then, Pastor Whoever, something happened. You forfeited Him for an *it*. An *it?* Yes, an *it*. An *it* is something that doesn't breathe, doesn't smile, doesn't feel. An *it* is dead. That *it* that you embraced could have been a religious ambition, a spiritual association, an ideal, a set of doctrines, an enviable status, a whatever. This *it*, long ago, replaced Him. I don't know when you gave yourself over to your *it* (perhaps when you 'entered the ministry'?), but, to me, there are three telltales that convince me: 1) your speech, 2) your allegiance to tradition ("you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition"), and 3) your congregation which mirrors you ("like people, like priest"). There was a dreadful 'moment' you traded "living water" for a murky puddle. Bear with me as I use imagery to depict my perception of 'church' leadership....

Thousands and thousands of devoted white-robed Pastor Whoevers lay prostrate before their lord. All (most?) are Blood-washed, bonafide sons listed in the Book of Life, each the very "righteousness of God". But it is not our King before whom this enormous throng lies. Oh no. Seated on a flimsy throne before them is a dark, misty, spooky thing.... *religion*. One by one, these Pastor Whoevers have

been ensnared, lured by the promise of prominence. Now they are a mighty army indeed, exercising authority over most of Christ's church.

But look beyond that! Can you see King Jesus, way over there, seated in full majesty on His glimmering throne? Waiting. Inviting. Loving. I implore you, Pastor Whoever.... simply rise up, walk away from your lifeless *it*, and move toward Him. Bow once more before Christ's throne,and in deep humility and repentance prostrate yourself before the "Lord of lords and King of Kings". Soon He will take you by the hand, lifting you to your feet. Together again.

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Your congregation. Let's talk about your congregation and the relationship between you and them. What church business should they know and what, if anything, should they not know?

There are many things, Pastor Whoever, you are not telling them that they should know. You withhold truths and the freedom that comes with truth. ("You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.")

What are you holding back? The list is long. Today I mention but one....

The people have the right to know the spiritual condition of evangelical denominations. Like the catholic who assumes catholicism has God as its architect, evangelicals likewise assume the authenticity of evangelicalism. But is your religion worthy of such trust? Let's look at it....

Isn't the glaring schism between denominations strong evidence that denominationalism is defective? Many examples could be cited, but I will speak of one....

As you know, many denominations believe and teach that Jesus no longer heals miraculously. Let's suppose that it is still Christ's desire to heal everyone who is infirmed. And let's suppose that 50% of evangelical denominations preach the opposite, that it is no longer Christ's will to heal supernaturally. That means 50% of evangelical pastors preach what must be termed heresy, one causing immeasurable pain and turmoil and death.

You can see, can you not, that these denominational pastors could not possibly be sent by Jesus Christ to shepherd His people. And the denominations that placed them behind their pulpits could not not have been birthed of God.

You owe the congregation that trusts you to speak truth about denominations and all religion. Do you agree?

Dear Pastor Whoever....

In catholicism, the priest's odd attire separates him from all others in the congregation. He is like the uniformed policeman whose attire elevates him from all other citizenry. I suppose Lord Jesus approves of the policeman's uniform but strongly opposes the priest's black 'uniform'.

Lord Jesus said (NLT), “All of you are equal as brothers and sisters.” While the priest's attire makes him more than equal, YOUR SALARY has the same affect. “But” you protest, “Jesus also said, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.' ” Yes, that is true, but....

Nonetheless our Lord never endorsed a salary. You cannot find the word 'salary' in the Bible. Unlike a salary, a contribution does not divide the congregation into the ministerial and the 'laity', the special and the not-so-special. Your salary raises you, in the people's estimation, higher than the rest. You are not their parallel. Your salary makes you exclusive.

There is a huge difference between a contribution, which is Biblical, and your salary, which is not Biblical. A contribution does not elevate you; you are still just one of the guys. Also, everybody in the church would equally qualify for contributions.... including sunday school teachers, evangelists, music people, etcetera. The people would have to be prayerful to discern to whom to contribute and how much; this would have the affect of making them less institutionalized and more Spirit-led.

“Women who followed Jesus from Galilee” *contributed* to Jesus' needs and that of his disciples. The twelve and the seventy lived *by contribution* while being about the Lord's business of preaching and healing. The Philippians (and other christians) *contributed* to Paul as he ministered.

Get it?.... *contributions, not salaries.*

Your salary is not Biblical. There is no Bible precedent. Evangelicalism makes no sense to the person assuming your religion and New Testament writings have something in common.

I wish you well.

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

Though Jesus was not confrontational (adversarial), He was often embroiled in confrontation. Religious leaders felt threatened by those questioning 'the way it is' of that era and Jesus, unlike most, didn't go along to get along. He functioned by the leading of the Holy Spirit and the “scribes and Pharisees” did not. Those religious leaders were strongly attached to “the tradition of the elders”

(Matthew 15:2). Jesus, on the other hand, was strongly attached to His Father. Conflict was inevitable. Conflict erupted repeatedly.

Pastor Whoever, you and I are in strong disagreement with each other. I oppose the evangelical traditions that you strongly endorse. Perhaps you are comforted by the fact most evangelicals are with you and not with me. I am often confronted (Facebook, Youtube, etcetera) by both pulpit-people and pew-people.

And yet I am the one with a valid cause. Christ's beloved have been taught, by you, to submit to “the tradition of the elders”. Those evangelical traditions have been communicated, by word and example, so repeatedly that they have been accepted as on par with the Bible. It's the same story that was played out two millennia ago.

I will not be silent and, sadly, neither will you. Conflict is inevitable. So be it. I will preach personal revival and personal reformation; you will preach teamwork and submission to evangelicalism. I will point christians to Christ; you will point christians to christians. I will promote the governance of the Holy Spirit; you will promote the governance of religious lords. I will expose your religion (“tradition of the elders”) as non-

Biblical and devastating; you will spend your christianity appeasing the religion that ensures your salary. I will serve my Lord; you will serve your lord.

Both of us will be summoned to “the judgement seat of Christ” to give an account for our words and example. We will both be rewarded for obedience and “suffer loss” for disobedience. Regarding this matter (and only this matter), I would rather be me than you. God bless....

Larry Jones

Dear Pastor Whoever....

I have attended evangelical 'services' for several decades (in my city of Kelowna, B.C., Canada). I possibly have been a christian longer than most Pastor Whoevers have lived. I have been acquainted with several pastors and I know the history of many I have never personally met. Though I have witnessed so much frailty in what you call the 'ministry', I know you have seen so much more. I was always on the outside looking in while you have been on the inside where there is little obscurity.

You could write of this frailty within the 'ministry' much more capably than I. But you won't. There is this loyalty thing, an unspoken rule of hush-hush that protects the persona of the 'ministry'.... which

you must know is fanciful. You have long ago set your loyalty upon your evangelical lords and peers rather than your congregation. So.... because you won't tell, I will. My purpose is not malicious, but to simply expose the fallacy of your esteemed religion, and every religion. I want to convince pew-people that pulpit-people are quite ordinary, and that the religion that places the man behind the pulpit is not a holy thing, but quite unholy. So, after perusing my memory (of Kelowna only) , here it goes....

One pastor was caught in adultery. Another was deep in pornography. Another and another and another had nervous breakdowns. Another I saw flirting with a store worker. Another told dirty jokes. Several were control freaks. Another prophesied falsely. Another occasionally lied. Another prophesied falsely. One slandered.

Another and another preached that God didn't necessarily want to heal their own sick bodies. Most collected the abominable evangelical tithe. All were paid a non-Biblical salary. Few, very few, mentioned Jesus in day-to-day conversations. Very few had an enviable intimacy with Jesus. (Their speech betrayed them.) And on and on and on....

I am not suggesting pastors are less spiritual than pew-people. I *am* saying pastors are quite ordinary, susceptible to the same miscues and flaws and bias as the rest of us. Their love for God is quite ordinary, their faithfulness unremarkable., not the super- christians most assume they are. None are worthy to be followed, lauded or salaried.

And you, my brother-in-Christ, have the responsibility to simply tell your people the truth. Your silence is your endorsement of a false narrative that suggests the credentialed/salaried/titled are more spiritual, more Christlike, than the non-credentialed, none-salaried, non-titled.

Something to think about?

Larry Jones