

This is a letter written to me from a pastor/shepherd on 11-25-07.

Bishop Dowell,

Thank you for your correspondence on 11/18/07 in answer to my first email. I was not able to answer sooner due to numerous other commitments. I again want to establish the position that I took in the article, "Pastor or Bishop: Does It Really Matter?" The answer remains to be No. In the Paltalk discussion and in my previous email, I gave you my desire to correspond privately. Unfortunately, you chose to post my email including your reply to me and imply that you will continue to do so. Since public debate is exactly the opposite of what I believe is appropriate, I believe you are using me to further your own ends, I will not discuss this with you in public or private. If I thought there was an honorable and honest opportunity for discussion for the purpose of our mutual edification, I would never choose to end the discussion. So, if there must be a public debate, as far as I'm concerned: you win. I have much work to do with my own local assembly as their "pastor." I will address Acts 20, Ephesians 4, and Titus 1, where we disagree, in a series and will send a link or copy of the material directly to you. But I promise I will not comment on "the bishop" or impugn your character and ministry.

In practical terms, there are a few matters that you should be aware of regarding your response to my article:

1. I believe the Word of God is preserved for us in English in the King James Version. I know this isn't clear enough for you, or doesn't meet your standard of approval, but quite frankly, I don't know what else to say. I simply believe the Word of God. You can represent me, my ministry, and my beliefs in any manner that you see fit. I don't owe any further explanation or defense.
2. Apparently, your teaching on Paltalk on November 11th and written article are in response to a *draft* of my article Pastor or Bishop: Does It Really Matter? I sent the draft to a brother for his feedback and it found its way into your hands. My *published* copy was made available on the web on 10/7/07. Unfortunately, you did not check the final version. There are some differences between the published copy and the draft. I understand you tried once to call me. But had you spoken with me prior to responding publicly, I would have gladly provided a copy of the final version for rebuttal.

3. In teaching and writing you made numerous references to my concern about *your* "preaching on the matter." This is an overstatement. Honestly, I'm not concerned about your preaching. My article was written to establish a position on the subject because someone attending *my local assembly* held this position. I listened to some of your teaching because this person came from a place where this teaching had taken hold. If you look at the *published* copy, which I also referenced when I replied back to you on Paltalk on November 11th, you will notice an introduction before the article. The article clearly states, "...*This article was written out of a necessity to establish my position on this subject in my own local church.*")"

Although I consider this a very minor issue, I saw it then and still see it having the potential for causing division in the Body. Then and now, I do not think it is worth dividing the Body. Had you waited to speak with me personally, I could have given you a little more perspective on why this was a concern. In case you are wondering why this was published on the web, please be aware that I write daily to my local assembly, teach at least weekly, and occasionally write a blog entry. All of these things are publicly available in written, audio or video format on the web. This is how I make our material available to our local congregation and others who wish to see it. I could have avoided publishing the article but this would have been inconsistent with how we choose to conduct our ministry.

4. I will make the Paltalk message from November 11, 2007, available in audio format, without my comment, to any interested party.

5. Finally, when Colossians 4:6 was brought up in the Paltalk room, you stated that the "salt" in the verse was rubbed into the wound and it stung - referring to your rebuttal of my article. The King James Version that I own says, "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." I recommend you "think about it."

I will be sending this reply to some brethren who had the original draft and were invited to your rebuttal. I made a public statement of intention to correspond with you. I want them to be aware of my position and that I am closing the door on our discussion.

In spite of this, I do appreciate your heart and desire to further the truth of God's Word.

A Fellowlaborer, Pastor _____