

The Scribe

"Every Scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" - Matthew 13:52



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WHY IT HAD TO BE FISHERS -PART 1 (WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS)

The following message was preached by Brother Amos, on Thursday 15th May, 2014, on the first evening of the May Convention 2014, at Bible Faith Tabernacle, Lagos, Nigeria. What a wonderful opening to a deep heartfelt and comforting message, letting us know just how much God has provided for us, by giving us shepherds to watch over us and feed us. We are a truly blessed bride, and are truly thankful to God for His provision.

To each and every one of you weary pilgrims of God, I say shalom! You are most welcome to this Convention, in the name of the Lord. We thank God for travelling mercies, and may the blessings of the Lord rest mightily upon His people.

Tonight, I think we have a little logging on window on the Internet; just a few brethren from various parts of the world will be logging on live to these meetings, for a test run. Thereafter, we will see how we go with it. Saints are logging on from Canada, India, the United Kingdom, France, the United States of America, and the Philippines. May God bless our meeting tonight. I covet your prayers that God will help me, for without Him I can do nothing. May God help my voice, and may He also help my throat. Shall we bow our heads in prayer. (Brother Amos prayed).

Before I take my message, I just want to say this to my wife: Darling, may the Lord bless you as you log on tonight, and may



God be with you, and with Jason and Mark. I miss you, for you are always here with us at Conventions; but it is well, and may the Lord be with you all. Brother Allen Henriques, it is good to have you online tonight, and may the Lord bless you my brother, and may He bless the saints in Goa. May God richly bless all our brethren logging on from around the globe. Please turn with me to the Book of Exodus Chapter 3, and we will take verses 1-4, which says: ***“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.”*** May the Lord bless

the reading of His Word. Amen. Brothers and sisters, here we see the call of Moses. Moses was a man ordained by God to be the deliverer of the nation of Israel. A promise had been given to Abraham that his seeds would serve in Egypt for four hundred years, and afterwards, the Lord would bring them out. And when the hour of deliverance came, God moved upon Moses, and as he came to look upon the plight of his people, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. He came to the rescue of the Hebrew, and he killed the Egyptian and buried his body. But a few days later, as he was walking around again, he now saw two Hebrew men fighting, and he said, ***“Ye are brethren. A Jew should not fight a Jew.”*** However, the man who was in the wrong, told Moses in Exodus Chapter 2, verse 14: ***“... Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?”*** When Moses heard that, he had to run away, fearing for his life, for he realised that what he had done was not hidden, and Pharaoh would come after him. So he took off into the wilderness, to Midian, where, unknown to him,

God was waiting for him, for God was waiting for him in the wilderness. Before now, and as it is written in the Book of Acts Chapter 7, verse 22: ***“... Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.”*** He had been trained and learned in all the scientific knowledge and traditions of Egypt. However, all the worldly knowledge he had acquired in Egypt, and all the abilities he had, was not enough to do the work of God. This should let you see that God was also in the initial rejection of Moses, although we must understand that God did not move them to reject him, for God only used his rejection, which was why the children of Israel paid a bill for rejecting him! Thirty more years were added to their years of bondage in Egypt, and this lets us see that God will use everything, for He makes all things work together for the good of His children. That is why I said, that God was in the rejection, because God knew that they would reject him, and He would use that rejection. Look at it sincerely: Through that rejection, Moses was forced to run away into the

wilderness of Midian, where God was waiting to take him through the required spiritual training he needed for the job, and there he became a shepherd! Brothers and sisters, for many years, he shepherded the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he was faithful in that service, for it was his new vocation. And when his training days were over, and his school days were done, God appeared unto him. I repeat: When God saw that he had learnt enough in the work of a shepherd, and learnt the virtues needed for the work of the Lord that had been built into him, the Lord sent His angel to him; he had now acquired the necessary experience as a shepherd, for he had been well schooled by God to be a shepherd; and then God appeared to him: Now he was ready, having been properly and adequately prepared by God, to become the shepherd of God's people, the shepherd of the children of Israel! In true essence, God needed him to be a shepherd, and God used the prevailing circumstances of his life to get him into that training. And that is most characteristic of the true ministry of God. It is

prevailing circumstances that God always harnesses to give the men He will use, the training they require for the work, and through that training, they acquire the necessary experience they need for the job. Consequently, when God saw that the training of Moses had served its purpose, that the man had been moulded sufficiently by the tests and trials he faced, and by the demands of his shepherd work, to serve His divine purpose, for Moses had now come of age, figuratively speaking, God stepped on the scene in a burning bush. The Lord called him into the ministry, and sent him back to Egypt, to shepherd the nation of Israel, with his shepherd's rod, a rod which had now become the rod of God, for God took it over, and it became God's rod of judgment, and the symbol of the divine authority Moses bore from God: Moses' standard as the Prophet of *El Elon*, the Most High God. Halleluiah! Brothers and sisters, Moses, the Deliverer and Law giver of Israel, was a shepherd. The Book of Amos Chapter 1, verse 1, also states: ***"The words of Amos, who was among the HERDMEN of Tekoa"***,

(meaning that Amos was one of the shepherds of Tekoa), ***"which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake."*** Right here we clearly see that Amos was also a shepherd, for he was one of the herdsmen of Tekoa. And whilst working as a shepherd, the Spirit of the Lord also came to him. Before he received his calling, as far as Amos was concerned, he was only engaging in a vocation, which he considered the vocation of his life; but little did he realise that he was foreordained by God for a higher purpose, a divine purpose, and that God was in the vocational pathway he chose. And when God saw that he had acquired enough experience, and had proven himself a worthy shepherd, a man God could use to shepherd the nation of Israel, the Spirit of God came upon him, and God placed him in the ministry as the Prophet of Israel, and through Amos, the Word of the Lord came to the children of Israel. When Amos started his ministry, he started by prophesying to the nations around Israel,

and his message was therefore accepted by the children of Israel, because it was not about them, for they were not on the receiving end; so they said, “Yes, that is so true, Prophet Amos. Preach on!” Then he stepped up his message a little, and he began to prophesy concerning Judah, which gives us the two southern tribes, and Israel, who are the ten northern tribes, said, “Yes, tell them what they are doing wrong down there. Preach it preacher! Lace it into them!” However, when Amos came home, when he now zeroed in on the ten northern tribes, and began to prophesy, telling Israel, as William Branham often stated that, “The same God you serve will destroy you”, it was another story entirely. Amos Chapter 7, verse 11 declares: **“For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land.”** His message was too hard for them to bear, even though it was the true Word of God; for as it is written in Amos Chapter 5, verse 10: **“THEY HATE HIM THAT REBUKETH IN THE GATE, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.”** As a result, the

Caiaphas of that day, Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, ran to Jeroboam, the king of Israel, and told him that, *“Israel cannot bear the words of Amos. You have to shut his mouth.”* The king instructed him to shut him up, and as such, Amaziah came to Amos, commanding him to pack his load and run with his prophecies to the land of Judah. We will pick up the story from Chapter 7, verse 14, which records: **“Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman”,** (I was a shepherd), **“and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the Lord took me AS I FOLLOWED THE FLOCK”;** (The Lord called me whilst I was shepherding the flock; whilst I was engaged in the vocation of a shepherd). God placed him in the ministry, because the school days of Amos were done, and his training days were also over; for he had learnt what God wanted him to learn, and he had acquired the expertise God required for the divine vocation! Exactly! God was now going to transpose the shepherd experience he had acquired over the years

in dealing with natural flock, to being the shepherd over the nation of Israel, even though they did not recognise him as their pastor. The point is this, brothers and sisters: The Lord had seen the endless toil and faithfulness of Amos in his shepherd work, and just as He used Moses, a shepherd, He also put Amos in the ministry, to shepherd His sheep, the children of Israel. Amos was a shepherd, and he gave Amaziah his credentials in that day. Saints, Elisha was also a shepherd. But you say, “O Brother Amos, that is not true. He was only a farmer.” Brothers and sisters, I will remind you tonight, when Prophet Elijah told God that he was tired, and that he wanted to go home, God told him, “Go and anoint Elisha in your place.” I now ask you: What exactly was Elisha doing when Elijah got to him? As it is recorded in 1 Kings Chapter 19, verse 19, Elisha was **“plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth”!** That man could plow with twelve yoke of oxen, which not only showed his physical strength, but it also testifies of another vocation he was also engaged in as a matter

of course, for we must also ask: Who kept the twelve oxen for him? Who fed and nurtured these oxen for him? That should let everyone see that he was also their shepherd, the shepherd of his twelve oxen! He would take them to the water to wash, take them out to the field to graze and rest, and make sure they were well taken care of, so that he does not lose any of them; and furthermore, he ensured that no man came near them to muzzle or milk them, just as the Law of Moses stipulates concerning oxen which is used in treading the field! It is written in the Book of Deuteronomy Chapter 25, verse 4: ***“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”*** Church, Elisha was a shepherd! Amos was a shepherd; Abraham was a shepherd; Isaac was a shepherd; Jacob was a shepherd; and David was also a shepherd. All these men were shepherds! And when William Branham, the prophet to this Laodicean age, looked at the Old Testament Era; when he looked back through time to the Old Testament ministry, he saw a picture and a pattern, and that is that in

the main, the men God used in the ministry to carry His light under the Old Testament, were shepherds. Divine inspiration suddenly struck him, and he came out with a message titled, ***WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS.*** Brothers and sisters, under the Old Testament, it was shepherds that God used in the main, to carry His mind to His people, and to pastor His people, the children of Israel. They were shepherds.

Coming to the ending days of the Old Covenant, when the Messiah was born, we again see a similar picture of God relating to shepherds, as recorded in the Gospel of Saint Luke Chapter 2, which we will read from verses 8-20, which states: ***“And there were in the same country SHEPHERDS abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day***

in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told

unto them.” Saints, when Jesus was born, God did not appear to the Pharisees; He did not appear to the Sadducees; God did not appear to the High Priests; and neither did He go to the Scribes, nor to Gamaliel, the great teacher of that day. He went to the same tradesmen; the same profession of people; He went to the same school out of which He raises His men; He went to the same vocation from which He gets His men: The school of shepherds! Why? Because the Messiah, the Great Shepherd, the Shepherd of all shepherds, was now born, and he was born in a manger, right there in the midst of natural lambs! Saints, the Lord appeared to these men that night, because they were shepherds, and because it is from the school of shepherds that God gets His servants, His vessels of clay. And He revealed Himself to them, announcing the birth of the Messiah, the Lamb of God, and they believed it. They did not doubt; they did not question; they did not fight it; and neither did they reject it, or behave indifferent to it, unlike the most unbelieving attitude which the Scribes and the Pharisees bore

towards the Messiah. These shepherds believed the testimony of the angel, and they went immediately to seek the little baby, just as the angel of the Lord had told them. And when they saw the little baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, they rejoiced and gave praise to God, because they had seen the promised Messiah! Although he was just a little bitty baby in that day, yet how they believed it, and were exceedingly glad! Let me say this: It was shepherds that could receive a Messiah from the manger! It was shepherds that could identify with a Messiah born in a barn! The religious lords of Israel could not accept a Messiah from the barn, for it was too humble and too lowly for them. They were so proud and so full of themselves, that they could not accept a Messiah from the barn! They could not conceive that the Son of Almighty God, the God of all Creation, who is Jehovah *Jireh*, the Great Provider, would have no place in a house or in a hotel in which His Son was to be born, except in a manger where sheep lay! Exactly! But the Messiah was the perfect Lamb of God, and as such, the only place he could

have been born was where there were sheep! Are you with me? God used circumstances in that day to get him to be born in a barn, for there was no other place open for him. And although it is sad that it should be so, seeing that he is the Son of the Most High God, but God was in it, nonetheless, for God used it to serve His purposes: His birth would become a great stumbling block to the bigoted Jews! As natural lambs were being born in that day, the birth of natural lambs were being mixed with the birth of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, the Saviour of the world. Glory to God in the Highest! Amen! As natural lambs were being born that day, typifying the Son of Almighty God, the Lamb of God was also born, side by side with natural lambs, and precisely where lambs are born. That was too lowly for Israel to accept, but shepherds accepted it gladly. Halleluiah! Brothers and sisters, as I said earlier, Brother Branham took a message titled, *Why It Had To Be Shepherds*. But tonight, I just want to take the thought of that message, *Why It Had To Be Shepherds*. It is the thought of it that I want to

take tonight, for comparative purposes, and as a springboard to my real message, and as such, I will start my message with the consideration of **WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS**, as my sub-title. Brothers and sisters, under the Old Covenant, why did God deem it fit to use shepherds? That is the question we must ask! Why was it from the profession of shepherds that the Lord got His men? Why was it in the school of shepherds that God raised up His servants? Why were God's prophets first trained as shepherds? Why did the Lord find it necessary, that before Moses could serve as His servant, like Abraham, like Isaac, and like Jacob, he first had to be a shepherd? Are you with me? Why did he have to first be a shepherd? Brothers and sisters, God took Moses into the wilderness, to beat out all his intellectualism from him! God beat out everything he ever knew, and brought him low, moulding him by the harshness of his wilderness experience and training as a shepherd, into a lowly and yielded vessel of clay. Now the Lord saw that he had come of age as a natural shepherd, a seasoned and

faithful shepherd, an experienced and well trained shepherd, and God used him on a spiritual plane. Now he could serve God's purpose perfectly as a spiritual shepherd. **WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS!** So we ask ourselves a question tonight: Why did God use shepherds? Why did it have to be shepherds? What is it about that training? What is it about that profession? What is there to that vocation that God saw of all vocations, and He decided in Himself: *"From this vocation I will get my men. From the pool of shepherds, I will get the men whom I will use to deal with the nation of Israel"*? Why was it so? Now listen attentively, for there are a number of reasons why this is so. A shepherd's life revolves around the flock, for it is his life. Everything he does is all around the flock! You are not hearing me. His daily life radiates around the flock. I am talking of true shepherds! The flock is the life of a true shepherd! Hence, whatever touches the flock touches him; whatever affects the flock affects him, for the flock is everything to him. I am not talking about hireling shepherds, but of true

shepherds, because hireling shepherds abound in the world, whilst true shepherds are rare! A true shepherd invests everything in his flock. I repeat: The flock of a shepherd is his life, which is why he lays his entire life on that flock, for his entire life rotates around his flock, for it is everything to him. Even his immediate family is ruled in subjection to his love and care for that flock, because his care of the flock supersedes any and every other relationship he may have! Saints, I am talking of a true shepherd; one that is a shepherd from way down in his soul! Such a shepherd just cannot help being a shepherd, for he cannot help who he is, for there is something motivating him from deep within, a pull he cannot resist or control! He just cannot help himself! That is a shepherd, a true shepherd! He is a shepherd from deep within; not like these businessmen or hungry men, who just dabble into the vocation of a shepherd strictly for money, caring not for the flock! But to a true shepherd, his flock is much more than money, for he places a great premium on his flock, which is why he gives them his all,

for they are his life! Brothers and sisters, there is something about shepherds! And please let us pay attention tonight. There is a special quality about shepherds, why God chose shepherds. There is something about their training, and there is also something about their makeup. As we already stated, their lives revolve around the flock, for their flock is their very life, which is why they count the welfare of the flock above their very lives. It is for this same reason that they set the flock above family, and that is a fact, for they set the flock above family! **We are talking of TRUE SHEPHERDS!** There is something about shepherds! That is why, brothers and sisters, whatever affects the flock affects the shepherd. The peace of the flock is the peace of the shepherd; the harm of the flock is the harm of the shepherd. Moreover, their training is painful, long, and hard, calling for total dedication, for it takes time for them to understand the nature of the flock; the nature of sheep, so that they can be effective and successful shepherds. God saw these attributes, these qualities which shepherds

have, and sovereignly decided: *"I require no lesser dedication and sacrifice for a higher class of sheep, who are my people."* If a shepherd in the natural can dedicate and spend his life to serve the flock, natural sheep, and his entire life is determined, not by friends, not by family, but by his responsibility to the flock, then, God requires that and much more, for the shepherding of His flock, which is the family of God's redeemed people! He does, for as it is written in Philippians Chapter 3, verse 14, IT IS A **"HIGH CALLING"**! Absolutely!

Brothers and sister, the work of a shepherd is an all-consuming work, and hence, it is full-time. Oh my! They work long and hard to raise the sheep, for they must keep and feed them. It is not a job for lazy ones; it is certainly not a work for lazy drones, men who love to sleep, and who cannot burn the midnight oil in prayer. Do not even forget that they also have to shear the sheep, when its wool becomes too much and too heavy, weighing down the sheep, and keeping fresh air from cooling their bodies, and that is quite some work! Shearing a

whole flock of sheep is not an easy task, and neither is it a one day job! Are you listening to me? The work of a shepherd is very hard, and it is long! In the day time, they take the flock to graze, (to feed). The family of the shepherd is at home, and the nation of Israel is at sleep, but the shepherd is still with his flock. Think about that! The family of a true shepherd is at home, and the wife of the shepherd keeps the home, keeps the children, but the shepherd's place is beside his flock! He leads the flock out to pasture, not in the night, because they cannot graze (or feed) in the night; it is in the day time that they graze, for that is precisely when they feed. Jesus said that we should work while it is still day, while there is still light, because the night cometh when no man can work! So in the day time, the shepherd leads them out to graze, for as in all herbivores, (animals which feed only on grass and plants), they need to feed on grass and plants. And in the night time, when every other man is sleeping, the shepherd is on guard; the shepherd is still on guard! Are you listening to me? We just read it in Luke Chapter 2, verse 8, which records:

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, KEEPING WATCH OVER THEIR FLOCK BY NIGHT.” We are speaking about old time shepherds, and not the so-called shepherds of today, who in these days of high-technology, have employed technology in animal husbandry as obtainable in developed nations, advanced nations of the world, and everything is remotely controlled by the press of a button, being totally computerised. As it is written, shepherds watched their flock by night, whilst other Jews were sleeping; and yet, the shepherds had also worked in the day time, in order to graze and nurture their flock. This lets you see that there is no rest from the calling of a shepherd! I am talking of a true shepherd! Do we have shepherds in the house tonight? The wellbeing of the flock is the utmost concern of the shepherd, because the life of the flock is the life of the shepherd! Their whole life is invested in the service of their flock! It is a great vocation, and hence, it is not one for the faint-hearted. It is certainly not for lazy drones: It is for those who can pay the

price, because it is most sacrificial, being time consuming, and hence, all consuming. Saints, whilst these shepherds were watching their flocks by night, the angel of the Lord bypassed the house of the Priests and the Levites; he bypassed the house of the Pharisees; he bypassed the house of the Sadducees; he breezed past the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest, and he also breezed past the house of that great Doctor of Divinity, Gamaliel, who was snoring loudly that night undisturbed in his bed, for the angel of the Lord also passed him by: And he came to lowly shepherds, who were standing faithfully at their post of duty, watching over their flock, even in the dead of the night! Even in the night, they were still at work! In the dead of the night, they were still watching over their flock! Glory to God! And angels came singing, and the glory of God descended, right there in the school of shepherds! **WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS.** Brothers and sisters, shepherds engage in long and hard work, in order to keep the sheep, and in order to nurture them, and it takes quite some dedication to do

that. However, there are other virtues that shepherds have, virtues which their training moulds into them, virtues we now want to lay out, virtues, which no doubt, God requires for the men in the ministry.

Saints, in the first place, the training of a shepherd demands the exercise of patience, because the sheep will try the patience of a shepherd, any shepherd, on account of the nature of the sheep. I repeat: The work of a shepherd requires absolute patience, in order for any shepherd to be able to deal effectively with the sheep. You just have to have the ability to take it, because they will try you! And unless God gives you grace as a shepherd, you must fail in this vocation: Because you will not be a successful one! You will end up scattering the sheep, either out of frustration, or for lack of patience and understanding. Therefore, I have to say that real shepherds are not made; shepherds are born shepherds. You can try to make yourself a shepherd, but unless you are a shepherd way down there, deep down in your soul, there will always be a question mark about your

shepherding. Brethren, a man is first a shepherd in his heart, before he can be a shepherd indeed. It is a divine Input in man, because God endows every man with a particular talent from the time he is born, a Natural talent which only God knows at birth. Some are technicians at birth, that is, they are born to be technicians; some are lawyers at birth; some are doctors and engineers at birth; some are teachers at birth; some are builders at birth; whilst others are farmers or shepherds at birth, etc. When a child is born, there is a deposit of grace invested in him, which only God knows, a grace He has put in him, that will eventually make him a shepherd. It is not that when he is born, he immediately knows that he is a shepherd; and it is not that he will necessarily begin to grow up as a shepherd, particularly if he is not born into the home of a natural shepherd. Taking this on a spiritual plane, that is, in reference to spiritual shepherds, the same is also true, for all of us were born in iniquity, and all came into the world speaking lies, and hence, at birth, no man knows that he will be a spiritual shepherd, except

the Lord, and except the Lord reveals it! And hence, is like this: Somewhere along the road of life, the Gospel message catches your attention, and God brings you into this revealed way, through the conviction of the Holy Ghost. At that material time, the ministry may be the farthest thing from your mind; but God knows what He has put in your heart before the foundation of the world. With the passage of time, and having been brought into this way of faith, plus with the dealing of God's Spirit in the message of truth, and as God works in your life through tests and trials, all divinely orchestrated to give you an experience, God now opens the door of ministry, an opportunity to minister is open to you one day, and a grace begins to manifest. From that time, you suddenly realise that you cannot help yourself: You just love to preach, for you just love the Word of God, and the flock of the living God! There is something in you that just love the flock! Your whole being, your whole life, is just pulled towards the flock, because deep in your soul, deep is calling unto deep. It is that deposit of grace that is

calling. However, in spite of whatever deposit of grace by which a shepherd is made, God still needs to school him. He still needs to be trained, so that that grace can be magnified, and this takes time; for it is the dealing by the Spirit of God that we receive, that brings this quality out and magnifies it, because it takes God to nurture a gift, the Lord using trials and tests, which is the school of ministry God puts His men through, and by it, they gain the necessary experience for the job, for as I said earlier, it takes time! There is, however, a deep pull in the heart of a true shepherd for the flock, so much so, that everything is about the flock. He cannot even sleep because of the flock. That is a shepherd from the heart! The difference between a shepherd from the heart, and one who simply desires to be a shepherd, is that the sacrifice and the dedication of both will be different. Absolutely! For whilst a shepherd from deep in his heart will care sincerely for the flock, and everything for him will be about the spiritual welfare or wellbeing of the flock, the other shepherd, on the other hand, the one who just wants to be a shepherd, will

mortgage the care of the flock for his own family, or for one selfish carnal reason or the other. You have to agree with me that we have a lot of men who love family more than they love the flock of God, and yet, they are supposed to be shepherds! They will not sleep if a child of theirs is ill; but let the children of God be standing on their heads: they are not moved for anything, and yet, they want to be shepherds! That is not a true shepherd, which is why they cannot pay the bill, for there is a great sacrifice that goes with it! That is why I said that you are first a shepherd in your heart, or you are not a shepherd! Period! However, please, do not take what I say into extremes, because there is a balance to everything. If I say that you are born a shepherd, this does not mean that you are a shepherd immediately at your birth. Like I said earlier, when a little baby is born, only God knows the grace deposited in that baby. He could be a genius of an engineer; he could be a first class architect; he could be a medical doctor par excellence, or an incredible surgeon; however, he first has to grow to a point, and also acquire some

education, until one day something strikes his heart, and he decides: *"I want to be an engineer; or I want to be a lawyer; or I want to be a surgeon, or a pilot, or an astronaut."* Something begins to manifest, and it is a burning desire that he himself cannot help, and nothing else seems to appeal to him. I have a friend who I grew up with, on the campus of the University of Ife. When it comes to mechanical things, he is a genius. I do not know why I am going down this route, because I should have finished this segment of my message by now; but may God have His way. When we were only in primary school, (elementary school), that guy could break down transistor radios, break them to pieces, and put them together again. Before you knew it, he was breaking down bicycles and putting them together, fixing whatever was wrong with them. When we became University students, he was already repairing motorcycles for people, as well as servicing cars for University lecturers. We attended the same primary school and University College. I think he studied Mechanical Engineering, if I

remember correctly. He now has his mechanical workshop in Lagos. Brothers and sisters, he is a whiz kid, a mechanical whiz kid! I have read some lovely things the newspapers of this country have written concerning him. He does not handle just any cars: He handles only exotic cars. He travels to Germany, USA, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, etc. Any new car that comes out, he goes there to know everything about it, and he comes back ready to take it on. He can take anything apart. To even take your car to his mechanical workshop for service, you will first have to register with his workshop at the cost of about three hundred thousand Naira; which is almost about two thousand dollars, an amount which excludes the cost of each service! It is just the registration fee to use his workshop for one year! So, he is not a mechanic for poor people, but strictly for the rich; those who can afford his service. Period! I am just showing you an example of grace, a talent, though this is on a natural level, a carnal plane. However, it gives you an example of what holds true on a spiritual level as well,

for it is the same God, and it is precisely what is applicable to a shepherd, one who is a shepherd from deep within his heart. When I was a small boy of about seven or eight years, my maternal grandmother once said to me: *“Segun, when you grow up, I want you to be a bishop.”* She was thinking in terms of the big bishops in the Anglican Church, the Church of England, for she was an Anglican. When she made that statement, even at that small age, I looked at her, and thought to myself: *“Of all the professions in this world, it is a bishop you are praying for me to become. You are not praying that I should become an engineer, or a lawyer, or a doctor; it is a bishop you are praying for me to become. I do not want to be a bishop!”* Now consider it today: By the grace of God, that is exactly what I am, even though it is not in the way she wanted it; but scripturally speaking, a bishop simply means a minister of the Gospel, a preacher, and that is precisely what I am by the grace of God. And although I said a big No in my mind to the desire she voiced out in that day, somewhere along the road of life, something

happened, and everything changed. When the Lord saved my soul, and brought me into this way of revealed faith, my life changed completely, and something God put within my heart, way deep down there, before the foundation of the world, was activated. When I went for my postgraduate course at the University College, London, for one year, studying Maritime Law, I could only do six months, before I quit my course for full-time pastoral ministry, because there was just a pull in my heart that I could not resist! I lost the taste for law studies; I lost the taste for legal practice; and I also lost the taste for every earthly vocation, however financially rewarding, except to be a preacher, for I could not help myself! I just love to be a preacher, and today, by the grace of God, I am a preacher, a shepherd. So please, do not take anything I say into extremes, when I say that shepherds are born, Not made. I am not saying that a man cannot learn the work of a shepherd and engage in it, for any man can. However, IF you are not a shepherd in your heart, you will never be able to give that work the kind of devotion and

sacrifice it deserves, for it calls for an absolute sacrificial service, and neither will you have what it takes. Moreover, there are a lot of things about that job that will put you off or discourage you, or even aggravate you and push you over the edge, on which account you will fail! That is why the pool of shepherds is the school where God gets His men, for there is something about shepherds! Saints, even the smell of the field attracts them, and how they love it! The bleating of the sheep does something to the heart of a true shepherd, for it creates a great irresistible pull. There is something to the bleating of the sheep that is music in the ears of a shepherd. If you give a man who is a born shepherd another job, it will not work! As I just stated, true shepherds are not made: They are born shepherds! It is a divine investment in man, because from that order of vocation, God gets His men. This is simply because there are fundamental attributes necessary for that job, vital attributes which are expressed in that vocation, that the Lord requires on a higher level, which is on a spiritual level.

I made a point earlier, that the sheep will try the patience of a shepherd. To start with, sheep do not know the way, and they do not know how to lead themselves. As a matter of fact, they cannot lead themselves, for God made them that way; for they are created in such a way that they require a shepherd in their lives; they are made to depend upon a shepherd! The nature of sheep is such that it is impossible for them to lead themselves, and as a result, that is, by virtue of this God given nature or constitution, the sheep require a shepherd, and is also ever dependent upon the leadership of a shepherd. That is an unchangeable attribute of sheep. Consequently, because they cannot lead themselves, it is very easy for them to go astray, and the shepherd has to beat them back in the way. And as he is beating this one back in line, that one is straying over there, and he has to go after it as well, in order to bring it back in line. This therefore tries the patience and the dedication of a shepherd! And if you are not a shepherd in your heart, you will be a shepherd only for a while, for they will simply tire you

out, and wear you out. Consequently, if you do not have patience, and you cannot also persevere; if you are not longsuffering, you will end up wounding and killing all the sheep, because they will definitely try you! Church, because the sheep cannot lead themselves, not knowing the way, it is very easy for sheep to stray out of the way; it is easy for them to wander; and it is a fact that sheep love to wander. As such, brothers and sisters, God is counting on the shepherd to lead the sheep aright, that is, to lead them in the right pathway, and also to be on constant guard, watching constantly over the flock, in order to keep them on course, for they stray very easily. Therefore, it is the place of a shepherd to always be on guard, in order to keep them in line, for the shepherd is the pathfinder and the security of the sheep. It is a very tasking vocation, and as such, by their very training, shepherds are t a u g h t p a t i e n c e , perseverance, gentleness, and diligence. They must have these qualities in order to be successful shepherds, otherwise, when this sheep goes out of the way, you will maim or kill it; and if that

other one goes out of the way, you will also maim and kill it as well, and by the time you are done, you will have no flock left at the end of the day! I am simply showing you the nature of sheep, and the demands of the work of a shepherd! Brothers and sisters, by nature, sheep are innocent and extremely vulnerable, for they have no form of defence whatsoever, particularly being strictly herbivorous animals, with no fighting teeth and claws; and as a result of this, they cannot defend themselves, and must depend solely on the shepherd for defence. Absolutely! Saints, because they are very vulnerable, and are easy prey to predators like lions, tigers, leopards, hyenas, etc., the predators always stalk the sheep, always lurking in the bush to attack them. Whilst they are grazing, everything looks okay, everything looks peaceful and secure; but there is always danger lurking behind the bush, waiting for an unguarded hour. As a result of this, or on account of this, a shepherd has to be on the constant look out, constant watch, constant guard, because danger is always very near, lurking in the shadows. This demands

that the shepherd be always on his toes, keeping watch over the flock from predators. We read in Luke Chapter 2, that shepherds watched their flocks by night. I ask you tonight: From what were they watching their flocks? It is from lions, tigers, leopards, and such predators that are always close by, looking for a sheep to devour. So the life of a sheep is in constant danger, being highly vulnerable, more so that it has no protective power. They do not have the kind of teeth with which they can bite or fight, for they are not carnivorous, (not being meat eaters), and neither do they have claws with which to fight. Consequently, they are very frail or gentle and harmless in their nature. God made them to depend solely on the shepherd for all these things. Therefore, the shepherd is also everything to the sheep: He is their guide, their life, their protector, their keeper, their feeder, their carer or caretaker etc. The shepherd is everything to the sheep! Brothers and sisters, make no mistake about it, for it is an absolute fact that the work of a shepherd requires that he is on the alert at all times; his

vocation or job demands alertness, and hence, it is very tasking. For if he is not alert, he will always lose sheep, and the predators will know that his flock is easy for them to take, and they will always take. So his spiritual senses have to be tuned up to detect danger, so that even when everything looks quiet and peaceful, there is something in a true shepherd that stirs in his soul, which makes him realise that everything is not okay, that something is not right, for it just does not feel right! It is a God-given instinct, like a sixth sense. Something just tells him: *"Things are not okay; there is danger around somewhere."* And the shepherd gets up, and surveys the flock with a keen eye, ready for battle against any sudden attack by any predator. Sometimes, it requires him moving them away from that area, into a more open and secure area, an area that does not allow for surprises. You cannot buy this quality, and neither can any shepherd be taught it, for it is a God given instinct! It is in the nature of a true shepherd to have this sixth sense, as a guard to the flock. He is the eye of the

flock, for he will see when no sheep can see; and he is the ear of the flock, for he will hear when no sheep can hear. This is absolutely so, because he is the security and the prosperity of the flock. He is the pulse, (the heartbeat) of the flock. Consequently, a shepherd is not someone that cannot see when even the sheep can see, for that is a blind shepherd! And neither is a shepherd someone that cannot hear when even the sheep can hear something, for he is supposed to be the eyes and ears of the flock! Are you hearing me! Consequently, a shepherd is not someone the sheep will be telling: *"You are going the wrong way"*, for the shepherd is the one who is to show the sheep the way, except he is a blind guide! Come on! I have to say, that when a shepherd consistently goes the wrong way, he will lead the flock to slaughter, proving himself to be a hireling! Yes! Consequently, even if a true shepherd makes a wrong turn innocently and accidentally, there is an instinct in him that tugs at his heart, causing him to take a second look at the trail, and he will immediately retrace his steps, because he knows that that is not a

safe path to take! It is called the sixth sense, and is an instinct of faith, faith sense! Brothers and sisters, now we see a crucial attribute of a true shepherd, one so vital for a shepherd, which is the sixth sense they possess, for the survival of the sheep depends on it; that instinct God puts in a natural shepherd enabling him to effectively and successfully guard natural flock. You must know tonight that God does not require any lesser attribute from a spiritual shepherd, in his overseership of the flock of the Most High God, when our enemy, the devil, is ever seeking whom to devour, just as it is written in 1 Peter Chapter 5, verse 8: **“Be SOBER, be VIGILANT; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”**

What then is required of shepherds? Alertness! Total alertness, because danger is always lurking in the shadows, LEAVING THE LIVES OF THE FLOCK TO LIE IN THE BALANCE!

Church, you will agree with me tonight, for it is a notorious fact that shepherds, many times have to fight the predator. Shepherds, when out in the

open field with their flock, many times have to fight dangerous predators in order to preserve the life of their sheep. For when a predator comes against the sheep to kill it for food, a true shepherd stands against that predator. And if the sheep has been taken, he has to go after that predator, in order to deliver the sheep it has taken. He literally lays his own life on the line in order to preserve the life of a sheep. Yes, he does, for that is what a true shepherd is! I am showing you the makings of true shepherds, and the sterling qualities which make them stand out to God, in His choice of men for the ministry in that era of time! And before you think that I am telling you mere stories, let me remind you of David, a shepherd-boy, for it is a known fact that the life of a shepherd is always on the line, as he guards the sheep. He knows that as a shepherd, even his own life is not safe, and he is not in any delusion as to the serious threat he faces in the course of his vocation on a daily basis, for it is a dangerous vocation in this respect. But he lays his life on the line, nevertheless, in order to preserve the life of his flock. What makes a man do that? Why will a

man give his life for a natural sheep? Think about it! That is why I said that a true shepherd cannot help being who he is, because shepherds are not made; true shepherds are born shepherds, and as such, he cannot help himself, because he is a shepherd deep down in his soul! So when danger calls, the shepherd goes after the danger, because he lays his own very life on the line for the flock! This he is able to do, because he is a true shepherd, and as such, he cannot help it! That is his nature, his true nature! On the other hand, and as stated by our Lord Jesus, a hireling shepherd, when he sees danger coming, he simply runs away, leaving the flock completely defenceless and vulnerable. In the Gospel of Saint John Chapter 10, Jesus Christ laid out this truth beautifully in verses 11-13, declaring: **“I am The good shepherd: THE GOOD SHEPHERD GIVETH HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP. But he that is AN HIRELING, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.**

THE HIRELING FLEETH, BECAUSE HE IS AN HIRELING, AND CARETH NOT FOR THE SHEEP. A true shepherd on the other hand, when he sees danger coming for the sheep, what first comes to his mind is the security of his flock, and he says to himself: "Oh, my flock; my flock!" He immediately and instinctively springs into action, as he runs in defence of his sheep, because he is a true shepherd, a good shepherd, from deep down in his soul! This is an attribute of a good shepherd, a true shepherd, be it natural or spiritual. Let us consider David's testimony, when he challenged Goliath. In the Book of 1 Samuel Chapter 17, verses 32-37, it is written: ***"And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:***

And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee. What a shepherd, one after God's own heart! Brothers and sisters, in the case of David we just read, on the day that the lion came out of the blues, and took a lamb, David, being a true shepherd, did not say: "Well, thank God that it is only one sheep the lion took. Church, praise the Lord for me! I led my flock to graze, and a lion come out from nowhere, but thank God it was only one sheep the lion took; only one lamb was sacrificed that day. The Lord did not allow it to attack me as well; but God spared my life. Praise the Lord, church!" That was not

David's testimony! And that is not the testimony of a true shepherd, a good shepherd! When David saw the lion take that little lamb, Scriptures ran quickly through his mind, of the security of the Lord, and the responsibility of the shepherd for his flock, knowing that that sheep depended completely on him. And like the Messiah, he left the ninety nine righteous, the ninety nine safe sheep, and went after the one little lost lamb that was in mortal danger! And as a shepherd that is true to character, David did not say, "Well, it is just one sheep. After all, I still have ninety nine left." He did not have such a pathetic and unfaithful attitude towards any sheep. But rather, he said to the enemy, the lion: "Not on my watch! Not under my ministry! Not on my life will the enemy take one flock belonging to God that is under my guard!" He left the ninety nine that were secure, the ninety nine righteous, and he laid his life on the line for one little lamb, a natural lamb he could have easily replaced, because he was a true shepherd! David had taken up the vocation of a shepherd, and he knew that the job required that he lay

down his life for the flock, if need be, and he laid down his life for it that day, for his calling required faithfulness, and he showed himself faithful! Think about it! David went after the ferocious lion, not fearing for his own life, and not caring for own his life, and fought with it, and set the lamb free. What a gallant shepherd! He said, *"I took him by the beard, and knocked him to the ground and killed him. Then I took the poor sheep and brought it back home."* And when he got back to the fold, when he got back to the ninety nine, he said to them: *"Now we are complete again. Let us move on to Canaan Land."* Halleluiah! The life of a true shepherd! Brothers and sisters, we have not been called to a life of Riley, which is a life of pleasure and enjoyment. The calling we received is one that requires total selfless service to the flock, for it is one of absolute faithfulness. Consider this: A man that will run after a lion because of one little lamb; a man that will run after a lion in order to take its food, faces the possibility of certain death. He can end up being the one eaten, for he can end up being the one killed. Come on! Many

shepherds have ended up being killed in real life, eaten by carnivorous animals whilst keeping their sheep, for it is not a joke! It is a fact of life! Therefore, the possibility of David being killed and eaten was there! The possibility was not imaginary, but real, for he could have died! However, he did not care for his life; for rather than lose one flock, he was ready to lose his life, and as such, he went after the king of the jungle, the lion! That is a shepherd! I show you a true shepherd tonight! Another day, a bear came, and it took another lamb, and went inside a deep hole to kill it. Do you know what a bear is? When that creature stands upright, his head can reach this ceiling, for they are huge, big, and strong! Their palms are so big, one blow, and you are pulverised! Brothers and sisters, if you want to go after a bear that comes after one sheep, even your relations will tell you, *"Are you insane? Because of one sheep, you want to face a bear? Are you mad? You had better count your losses, and praise God."* That was not David! He jumped into the hole; he jumped into a small enclosure where there was

no hiding place for him, a hole in which there was no place to run or turn, all because one sheep was in danger, and he needed to rescue that sheep! That takes an audacity, a God given audacity! Yes! That is a shepherd! No, a shepherd is not somebody they are begging to help! You are not hearing me! If a shepherd can lay down his very life for the sheep, it is not good food he will deny the sheep either! Come on! A shepherd is not somebody the flock is begging to feed them, or to help them from danger! Forget it! Everything about the flock, the shepherd sees; and the shepherd is touched by everything that touches the flock, for the flock is his life: It is the glory of a true shepherd. That is precisely why the Scripture implores shepherds to be diligent enough to know everything about their flocks! Yes, it does! Proverbs Chapter 27, verse 23 instructs all shepherds: ***"Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, AND LOOK WELL TO THY HERDS."*** He is expected to be on the ball! Are you hurt? He is hurt! Are you in tears? He is even in more tears! Are you listening to me? Are you in danger? He is the one in

danger! Are you in need? He is the one in need! When you are sick, he is by your bedside, for he will visit you, and many times, he carries the weak and injured sheep on his shoulder, as he would his own child! I am showing you a true shepherd! I am showing you **Why It Had To Be Shepherds**; why no other school or vocation would do under the Old Testament, but the vocation of a shepherd! Wake up all you shepherds, and get cracking, for I am saying, that serving the flock of the living God requires no less a commitment, no less a dedication; and no less a sacrifice. Exactly! Brothers and sisters, faithfulness is the cornerstone of a true shepherd. It is perfectly exemplified in the two instances of mortal danger David faced in his shepherd work that day, for he could have easily been killed and eaten, trying to save one little lamb. That is a fact! Just think about it! But David, being a faithful shepherd, said: *“Rather than the enemy taking one lamb of mine, and I have to account for the life of that lamb, let it be said that I died in active service. Rather than the predator taking one sheep from under my watch, let it be said that I*

died in faithful defence of my flock. I would rather die!” And he went after the lion and the bear! Glory to God! Therefore, consider this very sincerely: If a man would make such a faithful commitment; if a man would offer such a faithful selfless sacrifice in taking care of mere sheep, natural sheep, how much more if he was called to shepherd the spiritual sheep of Almighty God? Think about it! For the requirement is the same, and even more so for spiritual shepherds! **WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS**. So, we see that a shepherd's life is in constant danger, both in the day, as well as in the night, when he is watching over his flock; and regardless of the situation, and whatever the cost, the work of a shepherd demands faithfulness, for the life of the flock depends **t o t a l l y o n h i m**. Consequently, any man that will not be faithful to the flock cannot be a good and successful shepherd, and that is inarguably true, for the key to the service of a shepherd is faithfulness, whatever the weather; whatever the situation. By his calling, a shepherd is required to be faithful; otherwise, he will fail

woefully as a shepherd, and he will account to God for the flock under his care. Remember, saints, that when a shepherd fails, it is always at the expense of the flock, and as such, he will pay a great price for the lives of the sheep of God. And what a price he has to pay for losing his flock! Now I am speaking spiritually, for I am addressing all shepherds following the Continuing Light of Jesus Christ of the Bible. I am speaking to all the pastors in the house today. Without faithfulness, brethren, you cannot be a shepherd, a true shepherd, because shepherds have not been called to a tea party: You are called to lay your life down for the flock. You are not hearing me tonight. I said the life of a shepherd, the calling of a shepherd, is not a tea party. The calling of a shepherd is to lay down his life for the flock, for it is a **sacrificial service**. Therefore, if you cannot give your life for the flock, you are not a shepherd, but a hireling, because shepherding the children of God demands faithfulness. Without faithfulness, you will not feed the flock **“meat in due season.”** That is a fact! Without faithfulness, when you see a lion,

figuratively speaking, you are going to take off, because you have no true care, no true compassion, and no passion for the flock of God, except for your family, and for your personal ambition. Many shepherds pray for God to send His children to them. But why should God do that, when He knows you are unfaithful? How can He entrust more sheep to your care, when the little He gave you, you have only scattered them by your unfaithful stand, and by your uncaring attitude? You want more sheep so that you can scatter many more of God's children? If you are faithful in little, then you will be faithful in much; but if you are not faithful in little, it is absolutely impossible for you to be faithful in much, for thus saith the Lord Jesus Christ in the Scriptures! I am speaking generally tonight to give you a picture of something, the knowledge of why it had to be shepherds. You have to see the good attributes of shepherds; the demands of their job; the problems they face, and the ever present danger they contend with on a daily basis, because they can lose their lives keeping watch over the flock, and the faithfulness it

demands, nonetheless, for it is inherently sacrificial! As I said before, let me say again: Many shepherds have been killed following the flock! It is a fact tonight that many shepherds have lost their lives, keeping watch over their flock, and that is the truth, even in the natural! It is a reality! But it is also true in the spiritual, for many true shepherds have also given their bodies to be burnt, so that the flock of God can go free, in order to worship God in the liberty of the Word of God. Yes! Men like John Huss of Bohemia; William Tyndale of England; Saint Peter; Saint Paul, Apostle James, etc., all died on their watch as martyrs, including Isaiah the prophet. Saints, I reiterate or repeat: If in the natural, such great commitment and sacrifice is required from shepherds, how much more does God require it from the shepherds He set over His kingdom, shepherds set over spiritual flock. Think about it tonight!

Furthermore, saints of God, apart from the ever present danger which a natural shepherd faces daily in the course of his duty, and the faithfulness he is still expected to show despite this fact, it is also imperative

for him to know the nature of his sheep. I made this statement earlier on in passing, but we now want to lay it out, it being a vital requirement for the work of a shepherd. A shepherd has to understand the nature of sheep, and this comes with time, and with patient observation and care for the sheep, and with perseverance, because as we have shown, sheep will try any shepherd. If you do not really understand the sheep; if you do not understand the nature of the sheep, just how are you going to truly and successfully nurture and guide the sheep, when your success as a shepherd will depend upon your knowledge of the sheep? That is a very big question, for you will not know how to deal with the sheep, unless you know their nature, for one sheep differs in temperament from another! Church, this lets you see that a true shepherd must have a period of tutelage which he goes through, a school of experience in shepherding, a training, which helps him to learn the ways and the nature of sheep, and their characteristics, until he gains the necessary

knowledge the work requires to deal effectively and successfully with them. It is this knowledge that gives him the understanding to know precisely how to deal with the sheep, either in chastening, or in how to guide them through trying situations and tricky terrain, or in any other respect, for true **Understanding is APPLIED KNOWLEDGE.** Just how can you make a success of nurturing the flock, when you have no clue about the flock under you? The fact also is that he has to know how to chasten the sheep when and if necessary, and he must be able to do so, for the good of the sheep, and he will not know what method of discipline is required, because of his lack of the nature of the particular sheep he is dealing with! I say this simply because, many times, sheep go astray! Let us imagine that they are grazing in a particular field right here, and there is quicksand on the other side over there, and all the sheep are grazing right here, in the safe zone. But as is the case with sheep, there is this lamb that just loves to stray, and he is straying to

the other side where there is quicksand. The shepherd has to run after it to drive it back! However, if that sheep keeps straying towards danger, the shepherd must love that sheep much enough to go into his disciplinary arsenal, and bring out the whipping cane, and whip that sheep, IF that is what the situation deserves; Not so as to kill or damage it, but enough to apply pain in his discipline, so that that sheep realises that going over there is not acceptable. And once you beat it, it comes back into the fold. This takes understanding! Sometimes, though, some sheep do not hear, for they just do not hear easily, either because they are stubborn, or simply because they lack understanding, and so, are very slow to hear! Hence, another time, we may see the same sheep going astray again, for it just loves to stray, rather than abide within the fold. The shepherd now realises he needs to do something firm and fast, something more drastic; otherwise, other sheep will follow that sheep. Remember, a shepherd knows every sheep by name, and he knows their temperament, and when he

sees his flock one mile away, he can say, *“That is my flock coming”*; for as a good shepherd he knows his sheep; he understands each and every sheep. So he realises, that unless he does something to the sheep who is the trouble maker among his flock, it will influence other sheep to follow suit, thereby leading them into danger as well, for their security will be jeopardised. He might decide that the whip is not good enough as the instrument of correction in this particular instance. He may therefore take a little stone, and knock the knees of that sheep, probably bruising it a little; Not to break its leg, but to wound it, much enough to leave a mark of pain that will stay with him for some time, just so that he learns that his liberty has bounds. Period! May I say, that no matter how much he loves the sheep, brothers and sisters, that same love will make him wound the sheep in correctional discipline, in order to help it. By helping that sheep, he is also helping the rest of the flock, because he is implicitly saying to the rest of the flock: *“You cannot go that way. See what I just did to*

this sheep. If you go the same way, I will do the same thing to you." But afterwards, the same shepherd will help to anoint the bruised leg of the errant sheep, until it heals, and then it can catch up with the rest. Church, I must confess to you, that this is the hard part. The hard part of a shepherd's ministry is where judgment needs to be passed, where an individual sheep needs to be dealt with. This is where it is hard, and this is also where many shepherds fail, because no shepherd really wants to hurt any sheep. However, if you have enough love of God in your heart, and a sheep goes astray, and keeps going astray, if he crosses a line, the shepherd has to have enough courage of God in his heart to deal with that sheep. He must! If he has to be suspended for a while, let it be! And if that sheep needs to be handed over to Satan for the destruction of his body, so that his soul may be saved in the day Christ returns, so be it! It just has to be done, because there must be discipline in the fold, or the fold will be plagued with rot! It must be done, even if the particular sheep that is judged takes

offence at the judgment. Saints, this lets us realise that danger does not always come from outside. Sometimes, danger comes from within, for it sometimes comes from one sheep who just cannot help from going astray. Consequently, a shepherd must be shepherd enough, not only to give his life for the flock, but also to discipline the flock. Church, a true shepherd not only holds out a hand of love, he also hands out the rod of discipline. And if you can take the hand of love, I tell you tonight, you must also be able to accept the rod of correction. If you cannot take the rod of correction, you will pay a serious price. That is certain; for as it is written in Hebrews Chapter 12, verses 5-8, only **"bastards"** cannot be corrected; the elect seeds of God will be corrected. Only people with the evil, rebellious, and stout spirit of Laodicea, cannot be corrected! Revelation Chapter 3, verse 17, states: **"Because thou sayest, I AM RICH, and increased with good, and HAVE NEED OF NOTHING"**, this is a Scripture which shows that there is nothing anybody can tell the

religious people of this age, for they are okay, and they know everything, and need nobody to tell them anything, how much more to rebuke them. That is Laodicea: An arrogant, know-it-all, cannot tell me anything; do not rebuke me class of people, who are wonderful in their own eyes! It is just as Prophet Amos stated in Chapter 5, verse 10: **"They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly."** In Isaiah Chapter 30, verses 8-11, it is also written: **"Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."** But a true shepherd must rebuke when and where necessary, regardless of the hatred it may bring to him, because

he knows that on the other side of Jordan, he will receive a big and glorious thank you, a well done, from the Master! And who else will correct and discipline the flock if the shepherd does not do it? After all, from God we receive good, and from Him we also receive evil, for it is a mixture. And when I say that we receive evil from God, I say it precisely in the same light in which Prophet Isaiah used evil, in Chapter 45, verse 7, where God declared: ***“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create EVIL: I the Lord do all these things.”*** It is not that God is a God of evil, but the same God that will bless you for doing right, is the same God that will chastise you, giving you misery, if you get out of the way. Period! The evil here is not adultery, or homosexuality, but misery. Therefore, a true shepherd must have enough courage, Not to look at the face of the sheep, or at his social or economic standing, or consider what they will say, or even how they will feel, and neither should he be moved about who may not like it, or who may be offended; he must have enough boldness to apply

any scriptural disciplinary measure that is required to bring back sanity into the life of the flock, regardless of who it is, for sentiments have no place in this great vocation. Period! This is where a good shepherd understands something fundamental, which always motivates his actions, and that is this: **The good of the general body supersedes the interests of AN individual, indeed ANY individual.** Secondly: **What is good for the goose, is also good for the gander, for the standard must be ONE; there must not be any DOUBLE STANDARDS!** You are not hearing me tonight. It is a fundamental principle which every TRUE Shepherd must understand, that the general good of the body supersedes the interest of an individual sheep, and that the standard of discipline must also be one! Therefore, if an individual sheep will put the lives of the flock in danger, a shepherd will have to have enough of God in him to deal with that sheep, whoever he may be. Period! But as I stated earlier, discipline is very hard to give; this is so, sometimes

because of the weakness of the shepherd, or on account of favouritism, so-called sacred cows he has made of some brethren. However, in the main, discipline is very hard to give, because it is where many people are offended, and we do not want to offend people, for we love people. People easily take offence, because they never look at things from a spiritual perspective; they look at things from a carnal or sentimental perspective, saying: *“Did you see what Brother Jackson did to my brother? Did you see what Brother Jackson did to my father-in-law?”* These are some of the grouses people had against Brother Jackson in his day; because Brother Jackson dealt with their father-in-law as he saw fit, in the light of truth. So when family is touched, people never look at issues, but simply take things personally. Then they begin to open their mouths wide to say nonsensical things about Brother Jackson. I am telling you of things I have heard with my own ears! But why would a man in the ministry as the chief apostle, not have enough grace in his life to deal with a man who has erred, even if

he is the financier of his ministry? Come on! This is required of a true shepherd, every true shepherd! The truth is, if you receive the good things, shall you not also receive the bad, if you deserve it? Think about it, and you will think about it, except you are a reprobate!

Let me therefore warn you tonight as an unprofitable servant, whose Master deserves faithfulness, and let the wise take heed: Where many men will stumble in this Third and Final Move, is not in the acceptance of the praises they receive; where many will stumble, and where many will certainly fall, is in the annoyance they express for being scripturally rebuked over a wrong, and the horrible attitude they bear towards it. Hold to that! The truth is, if you are rebuked on the basis of truth, because you did what is wrong, and you fail to see the need for that correction, and your pride is hurt, and on account of your pride being hurt, you open your mouth **“yakiti-yak”**, as Raymond Jackson often stated, to speak ill of the man that is trying to help your soul, you are only hurting your soul! Yes, you are! If you present untruths,

and God gives grace to a sheep of your flock to point out your error, and your pride is hurt because of it, and you wage war against that sheep, instead of repenting in sackcloth and ashes, and instead of also thanking the sheep the Lord used to show you that you are going the wrong way, one who is much greater than the donkey which God used to correct Prophet Balaam, you will self-eliminate in the ministry, as a shepherd to God's people. This is a solemn warning, for God loves humility and unfeigned respect for His Word. However, it is most crucial to point out, that any sheep that observes anything wrong, either with the meal served, or with the unbecoming attitude of a shepherd, will do so with absolute humility and respect for his shepherd, for he is his head! Yes, he will, for God's Word also requires respect for your shepherd-head! The unquestionable truth remains that we are all fallible creatures, and even a child with a measure of understanding should be able to see where a shepherd errs, on account of the great light of Christ we carry, for the body of Christ is not a blind pack of

ignoramuses, but a highly revealed and elected class of people! Coming back to the attributes and requirements of a true shepherd, the main issue is that a shepherd must have enough boldness, enough of God in him to correct and discipline the sheep, where and when necessary, even if he has to lose face on account of it, because he will be pleasing the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bishop of our Souls. Yes! And if you are a seed of God, the Lord Himself will now take an iron rod and beat you with it; for if you will not receive a wooden rod of correction from your shepherd, you will certainly receive an iron rod from God, the Father! God can tell the devil, if my son or daughter crosses this set line, deal with him or her as you please, and the Lord will remove His protective edge. Do not ever think there is a sacred cow in the church of God! If you cross a line, there is no sacred cow in the flock! Let me sound it loud and clear tonight: There is no sacred cow in the flock of God! If you cross a line, you will be dealt with, but strictly in the light of truth; for it will be strictly according to the Scriptures! And if you are annoyed for being dealt

with, if you are a child of God, God will now lift up His own iron rod, because you will pay a price, and He may tell Satan to deal with you, and it is still in order to save your soul! I will remind you that Satan himself is already at the door, accusing the Father over your misdeeds, saying: *“See your son. Is that the attribute of righteousness? I thought you said he is serving you in righteousness? Now he is annoyed over your Word of correction. He is angry because of discipline, when he should be deeply ashamed of himself? Is that the attribute of your elect children? How is he different to us?”* Brethren, it is the duty of the adversary, the accuser of the brethren, to go to the Father, to show our iniquity to Him, so that we can be dealt with. But there is mercy on the altar, because the blood of Jesus Christ has been shed, and it is still flowing for sin, even as we speak! However, do not cross the line of what is good and acceptable to God, otherwise, you will pay a dear price. I repeat: As a saved child of God, if you cross a line, and stray into the enemy territory, God will allow the devil to afflict your body, and he will torment

your body, for devils are tormentors. Yet this affliction or torment will not touch your soul, for it will only affect your body. You will suffer great emotional and bodily pain needlessly. It is God's rod of discipline, for He must judge us now, so that we are not judged with the world. I will show you one example of this, and move on. Brother Branham told us about a case involving one sister. Before her conversion, she loved to go to the disco houses of those days, for she loved to dance. Now, having become a believer, one day, as she was walking along the road, she saw a disco hall, and felt: *“Oh, these people need salvation, I need to go and preach Jesus Christ to them.”* Why would she do that? Why would she want to go and preach to them in the disco hall? You know it is the old love in her heart for disco that was driving her, for that was her old thing! It is like some of you, it was beer and the cigarette that the Lord took from your hand when He saved you; whilst for some of you, it was the cognac, the whiskey that God took from your hand, for that was your old thing. Now, why would you see people in beer

taverns, (or beer parlours), drinking beer, and then that is where you want to go and preach? You will be reconverted if you are not careful, for that is not a wise thing to do. Anyway, the sister went into this disco hall to preach, and Satan preached to her instead. For before she knew it, she was in the arms of a man on the dance floor! Right there and then, a demon took hold of her! When she got home, brothers and sisters, her mind had been affected, and they had to send for the prophet. As Brother Branham entered the house, the sister told him: *“I went to the disco hall, and I should not have gone.”* Brother Branham said, *“That is too late. You should have thought of that before going there.”* That is true! Brethren, she was possessed by a serious demon, one that was hard to dislodge. But the grace of God came down upon the prophet, and he ordered the devil out in the name of the Lord Jesus; and when that demon came out, it was something else! Brother Branham said that the face of the demon was very fierce looking, adorned with long hair like a woman. When that hideous creature

came out, it flew out with wings like a bat, and Brother Branham had to jump aside, pleading the blood of Jesus! There was a sick man lying in bed in the room. As the demon flew under the bed, the sick man jumped out of the bed and ran out of the house! Brothers and sisters, if you cross a line as a child of God, God will deal with you, much more than any shepherd will deal with you. So, it is better for you to take the rebuke of a shepherd. Do not take offence at the pastor for correcting you in love, for if the correction is true, and the sheep rejects it, and resents it, and the sheep is mad for it, even if it is done in secret, you are undoing yourself, because the adversary is looking at you, and God is also looking at you. Our adversary is looking at you, because that is exactly what he is waiting for. I am not saying that to make you afraid; I say it only because it is the truth. I am showing you the other side of a shepherd, because this is something that is not easy for them to do sometimes. People take things carnally, and hence, refuse to understand, for they look at things from a personal, sentimental standpoint:

“Oh, well, that is my child. Because of me, our pastor should have done things differently.” Who are you? Who are you, that your pastor should play games with the disciplinary application of the Word of God? Who are you, that your pastor should establish a double standard in the body? Who are you, that you cannot see that the love of God's Word has to be supreme? Brothers and sisters, I am showing you the ministry of a shepherd, and in showing you this ministry, I am also showing you a part of their ministry work that is not easy to execute. What is not easy for a shepherd to execute? Discipline! Yet he will discipline where and when necessary, for faithfulness will make him do it. And like I said earlier, the standard of discipline will be the same for one and all. But because of his love, which is motivating him to discipline, when he is applying discipline, he himself is hurting within. So, he applies discipline with his own heart bleeding as well, because he is not doing it to hurt, but to correct, even though the correction may hurt. That is the life of a shepherd. However, I must

add for the sake of emphasis, that it is not possible to adopt a correct and effective discipline, unless the shepherd has a true knowledge of the sheep; for he must know the sheep; he must know the nature of sheep, and the required method of discipline that will be effective, for we are not the same in nature. Period! Yet, discipline must be well measured, for you can use a sledge hammer to kill a fly, and mess things up, thereby creating more harm than good, for that is not proportionate: The rod of discipline must be proportionate; otherwise, it may amount to high handedness! Therefore, there is a balance to everything, and a true shepherd will understand these things, for they must know how to temper judgment with mercy. One man cannot sin, and a number of sheep, or even the whole flock, be made to suffer for it. You cannot do that, for it is the particular sheep that is guilty that deserves judging! A shepherd must therefore be guarded or temperate in judgment, so that in his actions, he does not get out of order, for it will show that

he is reckless, and lacks self-control, which is the ability to restrain oneself! Let me try and hurry along.

Brothers and sisters, another point is that shepherds are simple people. They live very simple lives, and they have simple plain hearts, caring genuinely for one another, for true shepherds bond together, and watch out for one another. The shepherds the angel appeared unto with the announcement of the birth of the Saviour, were not in their individual little cocoons, each minding his own business, so-to-say, but were all watching their flocks together by night, when the angel suddenly appeared to them, and together they also went to find the Messiah, for their calling or vocation is one! Brothers and sisters, there is absolutely nothing complex or hidden about shepherds, for they are very simple people. That is why shepherds are not really city dwellers. Shepherds live near the flock, in the countryside. Are you with me? They live simple lives, because they are simple people, with simple hearts. That just lets you see that

they are humble people, because humility makes a man simple. Simplicity and humility go hand in hand, for it is to be of a lowly nature; not haughty or arrogant; for as the shepherd of the flock, he must be easy to be approached and related to, and easy to be entreated as well.

Finally, brothers and sisters, a shepherd, a true shepherd, knows that he must feed the sheep. This is a responsibility I want to highlight sufficiently, before I move on to the very essence of this message, which is the main topic of this message, although I will be closing shortly, to continue and conclude tomorrow. Let us therefore take a close look at the feeding of the sheep. Church, the shepherd bears the responsibility to take the sheep to graze, for they must feed, and feed well. And in order for them to feed well, he must lead them into green pastures, for there the grass is rich and lush, being well watered. However, in grazing, true shepherds also know that they have to allow the flock to graze freely, and so, they always give the sheep free rein. In other words, they allow them to have free

grazing liberty in the field, because there is liberty within the confines of God's Word. A true shepherd will lead the flock to graze in that liberty of the Spirit, because there is certainly liberty within the range of truth, and it is very important that this liberty is guarded jealously, for it creates a peaceful and healthy spiritual environment for the sheep of God to fellowship in, without fear, and hence, have a healthy growth. Therefore, God's flock are given free rein by a true shepherd, within the confines of God's Word, because it is written in 2 Corinthians Chapter 3, verse 17: ***“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, THERE IS LIBERTY.”*** This is absolutely so, because the Lord has not set any shepherd as lords over His heritage! Coming back to the issue of pasture or feeding ground, brothers and sisters, the shepherd leads them only to ***“green pasture”***, so that they can feed well, and consequently grow well, and be brought to maturity. It enables what starts out as little lambs to grow to become sheep, mature sheep, fully grown, well groomed, and well-bred sheep. Saints, it is the

good nourishment the sheep receives that bring them to that great physical state, under the protection and leadership of the shepherd. This means in essence that the shepherd must know HOW to feed the sheep, and WHAT to feed the sheep with. If the shepherd does not know what to feed the sheep, the sheep will only starve, and the growth of the sheep will be stunted, and they will become lean and gaunt, because the sheep will not grow as they should. Therefore, a true shepherd knows that it is his prime responsibility to feed and nurture the sheep, and he makes it his utmost thing to make them graze where there is good pasture. On a spiritual plane, how do we translate this to the ministry today? Brothers and sisters, speaking in plain terms, Jesus declared in Matthew Chapter 24, verse 45, that a faithful and wise shepherd, is one who feeds the flock ***“meat in DUE SEASON.”*** So, this means that he has to be a shepherd that is following Jesus Christ in the Continuity of his divine scriptural revelation, for the ***“PRESENT TRUTH”*** is what amounts to ***“meat in due season.”*** It is

absolutely so, because we are looking strictly at the FRESH ***“carcase”*** divinely apportioned for each season or junction of time, for it has to be fresh ***“manna”*** every day, and not the stale meat of last season! Come on! That is the interpretation Saint Luke gave in Chapter 12, verse 42, when he wrote: ***“And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them THEIR PORTION OF MEAT in DUE SEASON?”*** In other words, there is an assigned divine portion of meat ordained for each particular season! Yes! It therefore means that you can give meat that is out of season, because it is not what has been apportioned for that season, and as such, it is stale! It makes you an unfaithful shepherd. Absolutely! In essence, it simply means that God is counting on all faithful shepherds to serve God's elect bride seeds, nothing but the portion of meat the Lord assigns for the very season we are now in. For it is expected that as Jesus is giving truth fresh by his Spirit from the pages of the Word, that not only is the shepherd receiving it fresh

as well, but he is also dishing it out fresh to God's people, just as the Spirit of Christ is giving it out. This is the fresh manna, the fresh carcase, ***“their portion of meat”*** IN THE SEASON THAT IT IS DUE FOR. Thus saith the Lord Jesus Christ in God's Holy Bible! May I say this, just as I once said to Brother Alvin Suggs as we sat together for breakfast, at IHop restaurant in Calhoun, Georgia, before I parted ways with him; I said words to this very effect to him: ***“The stimulation of the Spirit of revelation, is in the presentation of the fresh Carcase OF THE WORD, for it is what holds the life of Christ! For on the Bride Tree, the present stage of the development of the tree is what holds the life of the seed, and hence, that is precisely where the STIMULATION IS, to stir the hearts of God's people. And nothing else will work for the eagles of God; for anything else will only lead to under feeding, malnutrition, starvation, and even death, if care is not taken.”*** Yes, it will lead to spiritual malnutrition, for the bride of Christ cannot live by stale meal, but by the fresh

carcase of the Word, which is the fresh unveiling of the Word of life, the progressive light of Jesus Christ of the Bible. Hence Jesus declared in Matthew Chapter 24, verse 28: **“For wheresoever the carcase is, THERE WILL THE EAGLES BE GATHERED TOGETHER.”** For at this evening time, nothing else can sustain an eagle, a true eagle of God, but the fresh kill of the Word, **“their portion of meat”** assigned for the season, meat due for the season, the fresh manna apportioned for each junction of time! Full stop! In Matthew Chapter 4, verse 4, Jesus Christ our Lord plainly declared: **“... It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by Every Word that PROCEEDETH out of the mouth of God.”** Therefore, brothers and sisters, it is certain that a true shepherd knows how to take the PRESENT MEAL, and break it down for the spiritual nourishment and edification of the flock, that the lamb can feed, and that the sheep can feed also. There is a wisdom in the shepherd, that enables him to know just how to make the lamb feed, and in another breath, he also makes the sheep feed as

well. So, both the lamb and the sheep, when they come out of the eating house, the meeting house, they are belching, because they have taken in a lot they now have to digest. Please allow me tonight to say one or two things. There is something Brother Jackson used to talk about, and it is something I also want to zero in on tonight, for it is a serious and necessary warning we all have to heed, as ministers of the Gospel of life, and it is this: When we are preaching the Message of Jesus Christ, whether you want to talk about the portion of truths which the end time Elijah brought to us, through the medium of Sermon books, you cannot then take a Sermon book, and begin to read it from the pulpit, and then begin to explain it, as a way of preaching the Message to the body of saints. You cannot do that! You cannot bring the Sermon books and start preaching from them, because it amounts to idolatry! When you preach from the Sermon books, you are taking away the Spirit of divine inspiration, and hence, it amounts to idolatry! What you are expected to do is to read the Sermon book IN PRIVATE,

with your Bible, and with prayer, and by the Bible, you are expected to understand the truth Brother Branham has laid out in that sermon. I say that because until you know what a man is saying by the Bible, you do not understand anything as yet; for everything has to have a Bible foundation for it to be true and acceptable! This is what shows that you have been established in the Word by the sermon you read, for that is precisely what the sermon is meant to achieve in every seed of God ordained as bride. And having understood him by the Scriptures, having had a perfect understanding of the thought of the Bible he laid down in that sermon, in preaching the same truth which you have learned, you will now lay that Sermon book aside, and take your Bible, and strictly from the pages of the Bible, you will expound the truth you have learnt from Brother Branham's sermon, in your own way, using your own words, with your own examples. Brother Branham may have brought his message from the North, and you may approach or take it from the South, but at the end of the day, you will present the

same thought about the Scriptures which he also presented in his sermon, and that is what matters, for the revelation of God is one! This means that you may even use Scriptures which he did not touch in his sermon, because it bears upon the same truth, and it lays out the same thought! Exactly! This is what shows that you have a perfect understanding of the message; for to truly understand the message is to understand it from a scriptural standpoint, for everything is about Jesus Christ of the Bible! Period! It is the Message of the Bible, for the Message of Jesus Christ is one, even though it is Continuous, being progressive. And it is progressive because it is dynamic, not static or stationary, for we serve a risen Christ, for HE IS ALIVE! However, the fact remains that the Message of Jesus Christ is one, and as such, everything must be Bible based in order to be true, and in order to be acceptable by the children of light, for we believe only the Holy Scriptures of Truth! For it is written in the Book of Romans Chapter 10, verse 17: **“So then FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, and hearing by THE**

WORD OF GOD”! In other words: Faith cometh by hearing the Word of God! Full stop!

Please understand me well, for I am not saying that you cannot quote a man, indeed any man, whose teachings or words throw light on what you are preaching. You can quote the Sermon book, or any other relevant material. However, I must point out that giving a simple quote to back up an issue, in order to show the stand of the prophet on an issue, is not the same as giving prolonged, constant, or incessant quotes. I say this simply because there is a limit to which you can quote a man, otherwise, you will go into idolatry; for the Bible, being the inspired and infallible and unchangeable Word of God, is the only Foundation of faith, and the Exclusive basis for inspired preaching! Therefore, you cannot make long and incessant quotes, for it will kill the people, for it is idolatry to leave God's exclusive basis for inspired preaching, and use the words of a man as the basis of what you preach! We have not been sent to be **Quoters** and **Parrots** of other people's sermons;

and neither is God raising up QUOTE SPECIALISTS, but **WORD SPECIALISTS!** Preaching the message does not entail coming to the pulpit to read Sermon books, and then teaching it, for I will tell you the danger in that. Bear with me tonight, for it is on account of these things that we are here. We are here to be washed and straightened out, that we may have a good and acceptable spiritual outlook and image. And as I said before, when you read the Sermon book, you must understand that message by the Scriptures, because everything must be understood in the light of the inspired written Word of God; because that is the only foundation of truth, and the only ground for inspired preaching; the only basis for a true teaching, any true teaching. So, as a faithful shepherd, when you preach the same truth you read in the Sermon book from the Bible, using your own words, preaching it in your own way, using your own examples, because many examples abound in the world, (and it does not have to be an example of things that happened in America, for there are similar examples in the world), you would have preached what

he preached, as long as your Bible thought projection is the same! That way, every sheep who hears you will have heard it established for him by the Scriptures, and this in turn will establish him in the Word of God, which is the Holy Bible, for he will be standing for it because of its Bible base. Any other way of preaching that is contrary to this, is definitely not of God. Listen now church. The same principle applies to the truths of the Bible laid out in the Contender, a medium which the chief apostle used to carry his Continuity message. It also means that you cannot be preaching from the Contender, for no man has the right to take the Contender, and read it line by line, and then start interpreting it for the body of saints. That is not even preaching, for it will kill the people, and God does not inspire anyone to do such nonsense! That is not preaching by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for there is no inspiration to that at all! The same principle applies to the message of the Scribe, for you also cannot come to the pulpit with the Scribe, and start preaching from the Scribe. You cannot do that! If you do that, you

are completely out of order, and you must take it from me that God is not speaking through you! He is not! I will now show you the implication of such uninspired preaching habits. Remember, brothers and sisters, we are speaking of *Why It Had To Be Shepherds*. Shepherds are entrusted with the responsibility of leading, keeping, feeding, and nurturing the flock, for that is what shepherding the flock entails! Their duty is to feed and nurture the flock, as well as to lead and guard them from danger. In essence, the duty of a true shepherd is threefold. Firstly, that is, above all other reasons, on a natural level, **it is to Feed the flock**. Secondly, **it is to Nurture the flock**, ministering to them on various levels, ministering to their many other needs, for their total wellbeing, like making sure that they are not exposed to the rain, so that they do not catch cold; taking care of the sheep that are sick, shearing the sheep when their wool becomes overgrown, etc. Thirdly and finally, **it is to Guide and Guard the flock**, which is to lead and keep them. However, the primary duty, or the fundamental duty of a

shepherd, is the feeding of the flock. I hope you realise that we are now speaking on a spiritual level, comparatively, for we are showing you precisely why it had to be shepherds; why it was from the fold of shepherds that God got the men He used in the ministry, for the leadership of the nation of Israel, under the Old Testament, for a good number of the prophets were shepherds. Brothers and sisters, shepherds are the feeders of the flock. As such, they must know precisely how to feed the flock, and what to feed the flock with, and the state of the flock! Hence, we are saying that if you take the Sermon book, or the Contender, or the Scribe, and you bring it to the pulpit, and you begin to read it; you read a line, or you read a paragraph, and then you translate it: Do you know what you are doing? You are killing your people! You are not feeding the flock; you are killing the flock! And many men are killing their flocks, though ignorantly, for you can kill your flock through sheer ignorance; but you are still guilty of killing them, spiritually, nonetheless! In criminal law, a man that kills unintentionally is guilty of

manslaughter. It means you killed without meaning or intending to. The truth is that you may not intend to kill, but if you kill, you are still guilty of killing somebody, nonetheless, in spite of the sincerity of your heart, because it still amounts to manslaughter. The sincerity of your heart is what reduces your guilt to manslaughter, rather than pure murder; but the fact remains that somebody died through your negligence or sincere acts, nonetheless! And tonight, in the Branham Movement around the world, men are committing manslaughter on a high scale, because of their idolatrous use of the Sermon books. The mass of so-called shepherds in this Movement are nothing but spiritual butchers! All they are doing is committing manslaughter on a large scale; although unfortunately, many of them are doing it intentionally, for it is wilful, and hence, they are committing murder, wholesale murder, because it is done wilfully! Pay attention, church, for there is a right way to use the Sermon books, or the Contenders, or the Scribes, and there is a wrong way. There is a right way to preach the message of

Brother Branham, and there is also a wrong way. This extends to Brother Jackson's Continuity message, and it also extends to the present Continuing revelation which Jesus Christ is giving to us today, from the pages of the Bible, through the ministry of John. Therefore, I warn again: No man has the liberty or the right to take the Sermon book, or the Contender, or the Scribe, and start preaching from it, because there is no message of any man you can lift above the Bible, which is the foundation of all true inspired preaching. There is no message any man is allowed to preach from outside God's Holy Bible. In the first instance, when you lay the Bible aside, and preach from any other medium, however true it may be, you are simply in idolatry: Because to lay aside the only book that is the exclusive basis for true divine inspired preaching, which is the Holy Word of God, and to begin to preach the words of a man, amounts to spiritual idolatry. You are only killing the flock by this, even though you do not know that, and however good intentioned you may be; and this most certainly

makes you a very bad shepherd, one who is killing the flock spiritually, for it has the power of killing the souls of men! That is the ultimate effect! What am I saying in essence? It is simply that when you brush the Bible aside to take any other book as the basis of what you preach or teach, you are committing idolatry; because to lift up any other medium over and above the inspired written Word of God, which is the Holy Bible, constitutes spiritual idolatry. You become an idolatrous shepherd. That is the first point. Secondly, when you do that, you are also denying the Spirit of Inspiration, for true divine inspiration of God has its exclusive anchor in the Holy Scriptures of Truth, for that is the fountain of true divine Inspiration; that is its source. Consequently, to preach from another source other than the Bible, is to deny the Spirit of inspiration. Every man God sends has been sent to preach the Word of God, and to stand in its defence! Hence it is written in the Book of Romans Chapter 10, verses 13-17: ***“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in***

whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the GOSPEL OF PEACE, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? SO THEN FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD."

May I therefore remind you then, that there is no man God sends, without giving him the Spirit of inspiration, which is the divine ability to preach the Word of God meaningfully and effectively. It is not that he will bring new truths from the Bible; it is that he will have a God given ability to know how to feed the flock of God, being a true shepherd, a true servant of God, a man sent to teach the flock, a man sent to establish the flock in the Holy Scriptures. He will definitely have the God-given ability to read any spiritual material, looking at

it in the light of the Scriptures, and see precisely the truth that such a message projects. He will catch that message, logging on to its scriptural truth, and then he will take his Bible, and by the inspiration of God, he will lay out the same truth of the Bible from the pulpit, thereby enabling God's children to see precisely what God is saying in that particular passage of Scripture, whether it relates to a mystery, a prophecy, a doctrine, or mere instructions in righteousness. And by so doing, Unity of the faith is established and guaranteed. And because he does it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, his message or sermon will come with such freshness, that it will stimulate the hearts of God's children. This has to be so, because it is truly inspired! That is what true inspiration does! The inspiration of God is not necessarily in the newness of the message; take note: the inspiration is in the stimulation it gives to God's people, reinforcing the truth in their hearts, and establishing them firmly in that which they have been given from the pages of God's Holy Scriptures. I

repeat: The inspiration is not necessarily in bringing forth new nuggets of truth, (for in trying to do this as a means of gaining instant recognition in the ministry, is where many men kill themselves and derail); the inspiration is in the stimulation the message gives to God's children who hear it; because it is as if it is fresh, stirring the hearts of God's children, as he establishes them upon the Word of God, which is the Holy Bible. The people in turn receive it, not as the words of a man, but as the Word of God: Because it is presented to them strictly from the pages of the Bible, thereby anchoring them in the Word! The shepherd preaches it from the Bible, and the flock receives the truth of the Scriptures presented, and both preacher and hearer are thereby edified, being anchored in God's Holy Writ. Saints, anything else will shut off the Spirit of true divine inspiration. I repeat: In the presentation of truth, every God sent shepherd bears an understanding of the message of Jesus, which God gives through **The successive READERS** the Lord has set over us, for as true shepherds, they carry a true

revelation of that message, and they can therefore put it together beautifully in their own way, adding other things to flesh it up, for they present it to the body in a wholesome way. This makes preaching unique, for each shepherd is relaying or conveying the same truth in his own way; it is his own style: but the message is one. Consequently, there is uniqueness in the presentation of truth, for we are not meant to be clones of one another in the ministry. It therefore means that you cannot censor one preacher by the manner in which another preacher presents his message, for each man has his own unique way, his unique style, and we must understand and appreciate this fact. However, regardless of the manner of delivery, at the end of the day, the message must be one, and it will be one, because they are all presenting the same truth that we received from the pages of the Bible, from the hands of the end time appointed readers of God, whose message is one, though continuous. I repeat: The shepherds are drinking from the same fountain, and as such, their message will

be one, though presented uniquely, for each man has his uniqueness, in bearing an understanding of the truth, which by the grace of God, they present in such a way that the assembly is established in the truth of the hour; for through them, the saints are grounded in the Scriptures. Do not forget that ***“The Present Truth”***, which is the Fresh ***“Carcass”*** of the Word of God, is the good pasture; for THE GOOD PASTURE FOR THE FLOCK OF GOD, IS THE PRESENT TRUTH, the evergreen meadow: because therein is the life of Jesus Christ revealed, and only in the present truth can the bride of Christ log onto life. Period! Therefore, brothers and sisters, what is expected and acceptable to God, is for shepherds to take the truth of the Bible which God has unveiled through His servants, who are given to bear the standard of truth, Elijah, Paul, and John, and preach it in their own way, to make it come alive. That is what inspiration does: It is making something come alive! That is what it is to be inspired! That is what makes the message not a dead presentation of truth, but a living one, because it packs the power of

stimulation, making the message come alive! On the other hand, however, if you are reading the sermon of another man as a means of preaching, you are absolutely shut off from the fountain of divine inspiration, for you are not allowing God to inspire you. That is not inspiration! Consequently, your message will lack the stimulation of the Spirit of revelation, because you have shut out God's Spirit of inspiration, by being tied down and confined to what you are reading. And even if God wants to give you relevant examples that the people can relate to, and also give you other Scriptures that can shed more light on the matter, in order to vindicate the truth you have read, Scriptures which the man did not touch, you will not be able to do so, because you have hemmed yourself in, by binding yourself to the sermon of another man. Are you with me? Church, you must all understand that no message or sermon covers every Scripture applicable to an issue, any issue, for no one in preaching or teaching, seeks to touch on every available Scripture on an issue. He just touches on material Scriptures here

and there, in order to project the truth of the Bible, so that God's children can see the truth of the Bible, and be established in it, and by so doing, his job is done. Every true inspired message, however, carries the thought of all Scripture, for it carries the revelation that runs through every available Scripture bearing on that matter. A true shepherd, therefore, will see the truth of the Scriptures laid out in a message he has read in a Sermon book, or in a Contender, or in a Scribe, and he will be able to relate it to other Scriptures that bear on it, for they vindicate that thought projection, and he will lay it all out by the inspiration of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. By doing so, the flock will see the truth that was projected in the Contender, from the vantage point of another Scripture, which vindicates the truth that has been established in the Contender. This is inspiration! Sometimes, it is a statement made in the medium of truth that illumines the heart of a shepherd, and he can take just that thought, strictly from a scriptural perspective, beautifully fleshing up that Bible based

thought, making a sermon out of it, in order to edify the body of sheep. You just cannot preach from Sermon books, or preach from Contenders, or preach from Scribes, for it is to shut out the fountain of divine inspiration, and further, such manner of preaching or teaching amounts to idolatry. Period! God does not send any man without giving him what to preach! And please understand that in the right context, because that does not mean that men can preach what they like, for you still have to think about the Unity of divine scriptural revelation which the universal body of saints must have through the ministry of true shepherds! Exactly! Church, when I said that God does not send any man without giving him what to preach, I am simply speaking about the Spirit of divine inspiration, anchoring on a perfect understanding of the Message of the Hour, for we have not been sent to manufacture truth! In other words, and in true essence, God does not send a man without the Spirit of inspiration upon his life, which will enable him to take the truth that has been given from the pages of the

Bible, and lay it out for God's people from the pages of the Bible, IN HIS OWN UNIQUE WAY, using his own words, and his own examples, relating it to modern day events; and sometimes, he can even see other Scriptures that touch on the same matter, which the original man did not use, thereby making the truth plain OR EVEN PLAINER! Brethren, this is absolutely so, because his liberty of preaching, or the fact of God giving him what to preach, must still be related to how "UNITY OF THE FAITH" is to be accomplished within the universal body of saints, God working through the Ephesian Fivefold ministry! This is precisely how the true shepherds who make up the general body of the Fivefold ministry will function, with the exception of a few apostles, who are given to see one nugget of truth here, and one nugget of truth there, just as it was exemplified in the early church apostolic ministry, where only a few apostles brought out nuggets of truth here and there! The main bearer of the light, the torch bearer, and hence, the main seed bearer, was "**The Apostle of the Gentiles**", Apostle Paul, the man upon

whose revelation the faith of the Gentiles is firmly established. Moreover, there is no other foundation which any other man can lay, other than that which Apostle Paul laid, on the full authority of 1 Corinthians Chapter 3, verses 10-11! If this is not the case, if every man is to preach his own thing, on the premise that God gives the men He sends what to preach, every man will try to make mountains out of mole hills, all in their desperate bid to bring out something from the Scriptures that is not there, in order to have recognition, and that is nothing but a recipe for anarchy, which is utter confusion! **“Unity of THE FAITH”** will never be accomplished in the universal flock of God, without the shepherds speaking with one voice, seeing EYE TO EYE, just like the Scriptures guarantee that the end time bride church ministry will!

Brothers and sisters, I have heard men say that they have their own message; that God gave them their own message. That is a blatant lie! It is an outright lie, and is one that speaks of pride and a blatant lack of understanding of the

message of the Cross, for you do not have your own message! Nobody does, for the message of Jesus Christ is one, on the full, infallible, and unquestionable authority of Isaiah Chapter 52, verse 8, which declares plainly and categorically: **“Thy w a t c h m e n ”** (SHEPHERDS) **“shall lift up THE VOICE”**, (Not their voices, but THE VOICE of Jesus Christ); **“WITH THE VOICE TOGETHER SHALL THEY SING: FOR THEY SHALL SEE EYE TO EYE, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”** Argue with that, for the voice or the message is one, although it is progressively given, and that voice is carried on in its final constitution by the ministry of the end time John, on the full authority of Revelation Chapter 10, verses 8-11, placed against the true and undeniable reality of Revelation Chapter 1, verse 1, where the first age John, carried the standard of the revelation of Jesus Christ, to all the plural servants of Jesus Christ in that age, just as it is written: **“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his SERVANTS things which must shortly come**

to pass; and he” (Jesus) **“sent and signified it by his angel UNTO HIS SERVANT JOHN”**, for and on behalf of ALL other true servants of Christ! Think about it! Hence I re-affirm: Each and every one of us in the ministry do not have our own individual messages, because the message of Jesus Christ is one! It came **ORIGINALLY** by Saint Paul, **“The Apostle”** to the Gentiles, and it is laid out in the Bible for all of us. The whole of Christendom derailed from its true revelation, and at this end time, in this last age, the true revelation of this message, which is the Message of Jesus Christ, came by the Elijah of the end time. We all had to carry this same message, the message Elijah bore, which is none other than the true revelation of the Scriptures of salvation, which the early church apostles laid down for us. With his death, the Lord raised up the chief apostle, and he took **“The message ON”**, further expounding the truth, and expanding the borders of divine scriptural revelation for the universal bride, and we all had to carry that same Continuity Message of Jesus Christ of the Bible! The same absolute truth

applies to this final junction of time, for we have the man who is given the entire scroll of redemption to consume, bearing the complete revelation of God's plan of Gentile salvation, which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord, a true understanding of which is required by God, in order to get the bride in an acceptable and perfect spiritual state of readiness for the rapture! Consequently, we must all carry the same revelational understanding of the Bible that he is bearing, for the message of God is one, and moreover, that message is now being borne in its final leg, which will eventually give us the completeness of the revelation of Jesus Christ! This is the one message that every elect bride seed around the globe will be adorned with, for they will all receive it; and it will be carried in absolute unison by every true and faithful shepherd, thereby accomplishing the perfect will of the Master for revelatory harmony, within the universal flock of God, which is God's kingdom; a people having the one same understanding of the true faith of Jesus Christ, which is the faith or message of the Holy Bible. Therefore, let every eagle of

God understand what it means, when we say that God does not send any man without giving him what to preach, for it must still be seen in the light of accomplishing **“the Unity of THE FAITH”**, Unity of divine scriptural revelation, which the universal bride of Christ must come into, in order to achieve perfection, in true readiness for the rapture, on the full authority of Ephesians Chapter 4, verse 13, for nothing can offend this absolute truth! I repeat: When we say that God does not send any man without giving him what to preach, we simply mean that God gives inspiration to the men He sends, based on the true and perfect understanding of **“the Present Truth”** they bear, to take the Message of Christ in their own way, as led by God, and to make it plain for the flock of God, by divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit! Full stop! This is so, because as we said earlier, no man in preaching a message, can cover every Scripture dealing with a matter! Inspiration working in another man makes him see the truth that is laid out for the general body, and he says, *“Oh, I can see exactly what my brother is saying, and it is the truth. As a*

matter of fact, there is a Scripture that backs that up, and I will use it to present this truth, for I see the light.” That is inspiration! May I also add, just as we laid out in the Scribe titled, *Ministerial Irresponsibility*, that all shepherds are at liberty to preach messages of exhortation and encouragement to the people of God, particularly in these trying times, as they feel inspired to do; and they are also at liberty to give instructions in righteousness for a holy walk, as the Spirit of God leads, and as the conditions in the local body dictates, for the Word of God is also given for this divine purpose. In doing this, that is, in preaching messages of exhortation and comfort, it is also very important to point out that they do not have to preach the very messages contained in the *Sermon books*, *Contenders*, and *Scribes*, in this regard, being mere messages of exhortation and comfort, even though they have similar objectives! However, if messages of comfort and exhortation are all a shepherd is preaching week in and week out, then, he becomes an unfaithful shepherd, for he is certainly

not helping his flock, for they will definitely be malnourished, and have kwashiorkor! This is so, because he is not giving his flock **“MEAT IN DUE SEASON”!** It means in essence, that whilst a shepherd is at liberty TO preach or NOT to preach messages presented in the S e r m o n b o o k s , Contenders, and Scribes, which are just for comfort and exhortation and general instruction in righteousness, being SIMPLE Gospel messages, messages which can be presented in countless ways, and from many scriptural standpoints, and to achieve various edification objectives; on the other hand, however, they are under a divine obligation TO preach and teach those messages laid out in the three mediums of truth, (that is, in the Sermon books, the Contenders, and the Scribes), which present Bible Doctrines, AND lay out Bible Prophecies, AND unveil the Mysteries of the Bible, in order to give a true understanding of the Word of God to the universal body of saints. This is so, in order to bring Unity of revelation to the universal body, for in all these particular instances, the Word of God

is not of any private interpretation, and the truth of the Word of God that has been unveiled to the body of saints, **MUST** be presented to the children of God for unity of the faith, by all true faithful shepherds. Period! None of them have any other choice in this regard, if they will be faithful shepherds, and not hirelings! Full stop! But like I warned earlier, in laying out the absolute truths we have received in this last age to the local body of saints, no man has been sent to read the Scribes as a means of preaching the Continuity light. If you do that, you are in idolatry, and unless you stop it, I will quickly tell you now that God never sent you, for that is not how to feed the flock! If God sent you, you will know exactly how to feed the flock, for God gives inspiration and grace to the men He sends! He gives His men the requisite ability they need to do a good job as faithful shepherds! If you are reading Scribes from the pulpit, and translating them to the people as a way of preaching, please be assured that you are not feeding the flock; you are only killing them! The devil is the one behind all such idolatrous ways of

presenting the Continuity message, for such vessels are being used to bring impoverishment and vexation to the soul of God's children, and also to bring reproach to the Continuity message! Moreover, the children of God also have the Scribes at home, and they might as well stay back home to read it, for they can read! Furthermore, if that is the horrible way you are preaching the Continuity message, it is certain that your flock will never catch up, let alone be ready for the return of Christ! And by the time the bride is gone, you will still be here reading the Scribes; Not only because you will never catch up, but also because you are in idolatry, and have shut out the Spirit of grace, which is the Spirit of divine inspiration. You will never catch up, and you will never be ready, for you have no clue to anything! This carnal way of preaching the end time message, is precisely what has left the Branham Movement in the incredibly rotten spiritual shape it is in today, for they are a totally sick and pitiable body of people! There is certainly a wisdom, a divine wisdom that rules true shepherds, for they know precisely how to feed the sheep, and what

to feed the sheep, and to what measure. I say that because you can also overfeed the sheep of God, and when you do, your message not only loses its steam and its stimulation, (the enthusiasm it should create in the hearts of the saints), it also leaves them weary and tired, for they go home worn out, like a people that have been through the mill! We must just realise, that there is a balance to everything, for you cannot afford to put too much in a message: It spoils the meal! Consequently, a message has to be kept simple, and the shepherd must stay with a thought, and carry that thought through, without going all over the place, putting too much in a message, crowding the message with everything he knows, whether relevant to the subject matter of his sermon or not. Of course you can make anything fit, just because you want to project it, in order to impress people with what you know; but the truth remains, however, that putting too much stuff in a message kills the effectiveness or the potency of a sermon. After all, if you are going to have a plate of rice with any accompaniment you like,

you cannot also have a bowl of cereal like Corn flakes along with it at the same time, because that is a different kind of meal on its own! And there is a right proportion to everything, and it is a matter of understanding. In the study of economics, there is something called the law of diminishing returns. You can only absorb so much, and diminishing return sets in, if you over feed the flock. The point is: There is time to go into those other things another day, so why crowd everything you know in one sermon? There is only so much information the human mind can process at any given time. Consequently, a good shepherd must be able to stay with a thought, and carry that thought through, without putting too much into it, taking the message in this direction, and in that direction, when the people can only absorb so much, but can lose a lot more, if you are not wise and careful. You want to have an effective ministry, one that positively impacts the body of saints, giving them a perfect understanding of the truth. They can enjoy a message and be thrilled by it, and yet not remember any truth, for they are not

established, but tickled! It is also for this main reason that the message should not be unduly long, for it is wearisome. It takes a conscious effort on the part of a shepherd to cut his message time, so that it does not drag on, for there is another day to take the balance. True shepherds not only know their sheep, they also know the food they require in every season, for their spiritual sustenance. They know it because they are true shepherds, shepherds from deep within, and as such, they are very faithful, and cannot help it. You can now imagine a shepherd feeding his flock with untruths, blatant lies, erroneous teachings, things that will only kill them spiritually, for they constitute *“leaven”*, which are things many shepherds feed their flocks for various selfish fleshly reasons, whether it is on account of their inordinate ambition for recognition, an overwhelming desire to be regarded as a big shot, or simply for control. Men control the people by binding them with fear, and such a horrible attitude shows that such ministries are only creating an unhealthy spiritual atmosphere for the flock of

God, and it is certain that that flock will not grow, unless the situation changes. It is a sad reality that sheep also face, because bad shepherds abound much more than good shepherds. Good shepherds are rare, very rare, but the Lord will produce them, for He is God. On the other hand, hireling shepherds are ten a penny.

Brothers and sisters, *Why It Had To Be Shepherds*: Shepherds know how to feed the flock, and they know that the feeding and the nurturing of the flock, is the primary reason that they are in the ministry, for it is the essence of their calling in the first place. When a man therefore fails in this most important regard, when he fails in feeding the flock, he has totally failed as a shepherd. When you offend in the preaching of the Word, it nullifies the essence of your ministry, because the essence of a shepherd is to feed the flock. Yes, I know that it is also true, that when the heart of people are not right, there is nothing the shepherd does that is right, and there is nothing he gives them that will edify them, because they are not

really sheep but goats! Nevertheless, the truth remains, for we are speaking about shepherds, *Why It Had To Be Shepherds*, that the essence of a shepherd, the main calling of a shepherd, a true shepherd, is primarily to feed and nurture the flock. It is an expression of the divine attribute of God, who is the true Shepherd of our souls, and whose shepherd nature is invested and expressed through Jesus Christ our Lord, “**T H E G O O D SHEPHERD**”, just as it is written in the Book of Isaiah Chapter 40, verses 10-11: “**Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. HE SHALL FEED HIS FLOCK like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.**” Nowhere in the entire Scriptures better portrays the utmost importance and the great premium that the Lord places on the feeding of the flock of God, than that which is recorded in the Gospel of Saint John Chapter 21, where Jesus pleaded

earnestly and passionately with Peter, as written in verses 15-17: “**So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, FEED MY LAMBS. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, FEED MY SHEEP. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, FEED MY SHEEP.” Because the lives of the flock of God depends totally on it, and the Lord therefore demands absolute faithfulness in this holy endeavour! He demands diligence, a giving of their all in the service of the flock of God, on whose account they are called to be shepherds! That is precisely why, in the Book of Acts Chapter 20, verse 17,**

whilst in Miletus, Apostle Paul called for all the elders in Ephesus, men occupying the Ephesian fivefold ministry, and in verse 28, he warned them saying: **“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.”** Jacob, a faithful shepherd, in Genesis Chapter 30, gave a sincere promise which he kept, of feeding AND keeping the flock of Laban, his father-in-law, as recorded in verse 31: **“... And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again FEED AND KEEP THY FLOCK.”** Genesis Chapter 37, verse 2, taken with verses 12-16, confirms that Joseph, along with his brothers, were shepherds, for they also fed the flock of Jacob, their father. Again, in Genesis Chapter 46, the role of a true shepherd is stated, and that is to feed the sheep, just as Joseph relayed to Pharaoh the occupation of his family, declaring in verse 32: **“And the men are shepherds, for THEIR TRADE HATH BEEN TO FEED CATTLE;**

and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.” However, in the inspired writings of Prophet Ezekiel, a whole chapter was reserved strictly for laying out this most crucial role of a shepherd, and in that chapter, Chapter 34, the Lord placed serious woes on the shepherds of Israel, who failed in this divine assignment, as exemplified by verses 1-2: **“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! SHOULD NOT THE SHEPHERDS FEED THE FLOCKS?”** Brothers and sisters, all these passages of Scripture confirm the truth, and also emphasize the fact that the essence of a shepherd, and the meaning of a shepherd, is a feeder of the flock. Period! Look at what Prophet Jeremiah laid out concerning the shepherds of Israel, where the Lord promised to deliver His children from the hands of shepherds who have no clue, and who are only

scattering the flock, and that He will give them faithful shepherds, who will feed them with the Word of life, and not with little sermons of mere encouragement that is taking them nowhere. It is necessary that we consider this issue very seriously, because shepherds are once again scattering the flock. Although Ezekiel Chapter 34, is also a passage that speaks of the nation of Israel, however, it also stands true for pastors of the bride of Christ, because the spiritual leadership of Israel is what caused the nation to err, and to be judged and disbanded to the ends of the earth, right up until 1948, when she was restored back as a nation, after many centuries of time! Come with me to consider the Book of Jeremiah Chapter 23, verses 1-4: **“Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord.”** (How do they scatter the sheep? It is BY preaching erroneous things which the sheep of God cannot stand, OR by preaching little sermons devoid of the essential ingredients of life, which is the present truth, AND also by the display of terrible and

unacceptable attitudes by shepherds who are expected to know better, being men that are expected to show true exampleship to the flock, of how they are to behave acceptably. And if men in the ministry, if shepherds do not know how to behave, just how can they teach the flock right conduct? And when the sheep of God cry to no avail for such bad food and terrible attitudes to stop, and it does not stop, and the sheep begin to hunger and starve and get disoriented, they will eventually be forced by the prevailing bad conditions, to either lose their enthusiasm and dedication for this way, and worldliness takes them over, or to go away from that assembly, even when there is nowhere else to go! Many are then forced to sit at home, and that is happening even today around the globe! Prophet Jeremiah continued): ***“Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; YE HAVE SCATTERED MY FLOCK, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. And I will gather the***

remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.” (Since God did it in 1948 for the nation of Israel, He will also do it today for the universal nation of the bride of Jesus Christ. And this is the good news, for the Lord promised): ***“And I will set up shepherds over them WHICH SHALL FEED THEM: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord.”*** I say a big Amen to that promise! In the Book of Prophet Isaiah Chapter 30, verses 20-21, the Lord gave the same promise, as it is written: ***“And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but THINE EYES SHALL SEE THY TEACHERS: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”*** This is the promise God gave of true shepherds, and it is precisely what is coming for the universal bride of Christ, regardless of what

prevails today. Saints, the essence of a shepherd is the feeding of the flock, and when a shepherd fails in the feeding of the flock, he has failed in everything. Are you listening to me? When a shepherd fails in feeding the flock, he has failed in everything! Because the primary reason why he is a shepherd, the fundamental reason why he is a shepherd, is the feeding of the flock! When he fails in this, he fails in all! Brothers and sisters, the duty of a shepherd is more than to exemplify carnal love. The work of a shepherd is much more than that! If he fails in feeding the flock, he fails in all: Because primarily, the fundamental reason for a shepherd is the feeding of the flock. However, that is not all. But also, as I stated earlier, if he does not know how to behave or conduct himself, he is a bad shepherd, because there is no way he can make the children of God measure up in conduct, when he does not have a clue himself! That is why I keep warning that it is not enough to be able to preach well; but if you do not know how to conduct yourself acceptably as a minister of the Gospel, there is no perfection or spiritual

maturity you can bring anyone to, because you are clueless yourself! A legal Latin maxim says: "*Nemo dat quod non habet*", which simply means that you cannot give what you do not have! That is the absolute truth! Hence, being a shepherd is much more than just being able to preach well, although that ability must also be there. That is also true! But it is an absolute fact, that if we are to have perfection, then the men God will use will know how to Dress and Behave properly, in order to show true exampleship to the people of God, because the people are inspired and motivated more by the life they see, than by the mere words coming out of the lips of a man! Brothers and sisters, this is a very crucial area where many men will fail the test! Church, by the grace of God, I have shown you tonight the right way to feed the flock, and the wrong way to feed the flock. However, let me warn you for the sake of emphasizing a material truth: If God is bringing fresh light, fresh nuggets of truth from the Scriptures, opening up mysteries of the kingdom of God that have been buried in the pages of the Bible for many centuries of time, for

God finds it necessary to shed light on it today, in order to give the bride universal a perfect understanding of this hidden truth, for her spiritual adornment, and a man refuses to teach this truth, take it from me: He is taking his flock nowhere! You and your flock are going nowhere! You are not hearing me tonight. If a shepherd fails to teach the "**Present Truth**" which God is unveiling from the pages of the Bible, be rest assured tonight, that that shepherd and his flock are going nowhere, because he is TAKING AWAY from the revealed faith; he is divesting the people of essential ingredients of life! That is the unavoidable implication! Whoever takes away by neglecting or refusing to teach revealed truth, whether prophetic truths or mysteries of Jesus Christ, is certainly taking away from the revelation of Jesus Christ! Thus saith the Lord Jesus in the Book of Revelation Chapter 22, verse 19, where he declares categorically: "**And if any man shall TAKE AWAY from the words of the book of this prophecy, GOD SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS PART OUT OF THE BOOK OF**

LIFE, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Period! That is why I said that such a shepherd is going nowhere with the people who are dumb enough to follow him, because it amounts to their being divested of the essential ingredients of life eternal! You had better believe me tonight, for I am showing you the secret of life eternal. True shepherds do not keep vital food away from the flock, and neither do they feed the flock with death, which is falsehood. Because the primary reason, the fundamental reason why God put shepherds in office, as expressed throughout the Holy Bible, is for the feeding and nurturing of the flocks of God! Consequently, if they fail in this, they fail in everything, regardless of what comes and goes, regardless of what men say about them, and regardless of what these shepherds profess about themselves. I say this simply because people know how to pamper the ego of their pastor, and pretend as if all is well, and that he is wonderful, turning a blind eye to the reality on the ground, for whatever fleshly reasons! People are generally very insincere!

There is a church somewhere on this globe, and I will not mention the country, but it is not in Nigeria, and it is not even Africa, even though the same thing is also happening in Africa; but it is an assembly who say they are following Continuity. However, even the flock know that they are not following Continuity, for the pastor is just doing what he likes, and is preaching what he likes! And whatever he does, the people still stand by him. What do you say to such people who are insincere with their souls? My! How can people play games with their eternal destiny, if they really value what Jesus Christ is offering them? Brothers and sisters, a flock like this are not helping themselves, because all they are doing is pandering to their pastor, for they do not want to offend the pastor. But there is a price we all must pay for the Word of life, because we all have a responsibility to stand for the truth of life which Jesus gives, just as there is also a reproach true preachers must bear for the preaching of the Gospel! You must know that truth will cost you something, even if it means losing face with your pastor and his

insincere congregation! Come on! Sometimes you do not even know where to go, or what to do, but you know that you cannot continue with the present state of things! I have been in that state myself on many occasions in times past! That is precisely how Bible Faith Tabernacle was born! It was born out of overwhelming conditions prevailing back then, because we could no longer endure the foolishness of men behind the pulpit, and we were forced to stay home, because we had to save our own souls at least, if we could not save others! The congregation we left did not care for the troubling situation on the ground in that day, for everything was just fine, as far as they were concerned! We were dubbed "*trouble makers*", just for questioning untruths, and for pleading with the stifling ministry of a dead shepherd for food! I did not know where to go, but I knew I had to get out of that dead spiritual environment in order to save my soul, and I did! The rest is history, for God met with me, and saints came knocking on the door of my apartment for fellowship, and Bible Faith tabernacle was born! God used the

prevailing circumstances to accomplish this, for we did not plan anything! I certainly was not looking to become a pastor, but responsibility was thrust on my shoulders, and what could I do, but do the little bit I could do in order to help the little group meeting in my house? My brother in-law, Brother Edward, would also come down once or twice a month from Minna, in the northern part of Nigeria, and he would also minister to the little group. Brother Bola would likewise come to my house after Sunday service, and recount the terrible things going on in the local assembly we had left, and I did not ask him to leave it, for it is not a bandwagon! Every man had to be led of God, for everything has to be by revelation. Shortly thereafter, he also stopped attending that assembly, and joined the little group, who were now meeting only on Sundays at that time, and he started ministering to the little group as well, along with Brother Gordon, who was with us for quite some time, before he separated from us on account of our stand against the erroneous teachings of Richard Gan. Thank God for the labour of all these brothers in that day

over Bible Faith Tabernacle, which was just a little group, for I am showing you exactly how it all started. The ministry of an unfaithful shepherd is what occasioned the birth of this local assembly, for we were forced to stay home! I therefore repeat for emphasis: The fundamental purpose of the calling of shepherds is the feeding of the flock. When a man does not know how to feed the flock... that is not a true shepherd. He may be anything else, and he may be everything else, but he is not a true shepherd. Period! A true shepherd that God sets in place, must know how to feed the flock, because the essence of his calling, is to feed the flock of God! That is what Jesus said; that is what Saint Paul said; that is what Brother Branham said; that is what Brother Jackson said, and that is also what I say! If the shepherd cannot feed his flock, the flock will starve and die. That is why a true shepherd will go to any level to feed the flock of God. For nights unend, they will burn the oil in study and prayer in order to feed the flock, for it is required that a shepherd must know how to feed and nurture the flock. And if it is required in the natural, in

the feeding of mere natural sheep, which have no hope or promise of eternal life, how much more in the spiritual, for God's sheep, who have a promise and a hope of eternal life! That is precisely why God looked at all the areas of a shepherd's vocation, men set over livestock, natural sheep; He looked at their dedication, their endless toil and sacrifice, their love and utmost concern for the flock, even at the expense of their families, and God said, *"From the vocation of shepherds, I will raise my men, for the sterling attributes they bear. And if I will have shepherds over my own flock as well, they certainly cannot have a lesser quality."* And truly, if natural shepherds must know how to Feed, Nurture, Guide, and Guard the sheep, surely it is also expected of spiritual shepherds, shepherds of the flock of the living God. Surely, they must also know exactly how to Feed, Nurture, Guide, and Defend the flock, for the expectation cannot be less, but rather, it should be much more, for it is on a higher plane, having eternal consequences! They must therefore know how to feed the flock. If they do not know how to feed the

flock, it will not work, and that is the truth! Brothers and sisters, I appreciate your patience tonight. Let me move up a little notch, just for a minute or two, as we now bring our message to a close.

The Gospel of Saint John Chapter 1, verse 17, records: ***"For THE LAW was given by Moses, but GRACE AND TRUTH came by Jesus Christ."***

The law came by Moses, for he was the law giver, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. This definitely shows that there is a difference in the two Covenants, the Law and Grace; a difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Under the law, which is the Old Covenant, which came by Moses, God used shepherds in the ministry over the nation of Israel. But Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ, which is the New Covenant; and who did God use under the New Covenant? In other words, from what fold of earthly vocation or earthly endeavour did God get the men He used for the elect bride seeds of God, in the nation of Israel, when Christ came? Come with me to the Word. In the Gospel of Saint Mark Chapter 1, verses 14-

20, the Bible reads: ***“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel. Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for THEY WERE FISHERS. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become FISHERS OF MEN. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.”*** Brothers and sisters, here under the New Covenant, when Jesus began to call men, the beginning nucleus of the apostolic fold of ministry, they were fishers. Under the law which came by Moses, they were shepherds. But under grace and truth which came by Christ, for he is the

Testator of the New Covenant, he began by choosing men for the ministry, from the rank of fishermen. So, this leads me to ask a serious question tonight: Why were they fishers? Why did he call fishermen to be the ministry head of the New Testament? That is precisely why I am taking a message tonight, titled: ***WHY IT HAD TO BE FISHERS***. Now I am going to start my real message, which we will go into tomorrow. But before I could take it, I first had to show you ***WHY IT HAD TO BE SHEPHERDS***, for comparative reasons, and also in order to help us to understand and appreciate why, under the New Covenant, it had to be fishers. Why did Jesus choose fishers? There is a reason why our Master specifically chose fishermen, just as God had a reason why, under the Old Testament, He chose shepherds. We have to ask because Jesus called fishermen, and he told them: ***“Now, you are fishers, men fishing for fish; but I want to make you fishers of men. I will teach you to fish for men.”*** So, in essence, they are still fishermen, but now of a different calibre, a much higher calibre,

spiritual fishermen. Saints, there is a reason why God zeroed in onto the vocation of shepherds, as the vocation from which He got His men under the Old Covenant, and by the grace of God, we have been able to lay out these qualities in much detail. However, and in the same vein, there is also a reason why under the New Covenant, God also looked at all the vocations on earth, and chose fishers. And the Master said to them: ***“Come ye after me, and I will make you to become FISHERS OF MEN.”*** Saints, the end objective of my message is to let you see what God is doing today for His people, for it bears on our walk with the Lord Jesus. Brothers and sisters, I want to show you Genesis, and I want to show you Revelation. In other words, I want to show you Alpha and Omega; the Beginning and the End; because whatever God starts, and however He starts, is exactly how He ends. If God started with fishers, He is going to end with fishers, because He is Alpha and Omega. ***WHY IT HAD TO BE FISHERS***. Let us bow our heads in prayer. (Brother Amos prayed).

DIRECTORY OF THE SCRIBE contd.

22. The Walking Voice, Parts 1 & 2 (October 2007).
23. The Man That Was Caught Up, Parts 1 & 2 (December 2007).
24. Genesis: The Creation Of The Universe (January 2008).
25. Genesis: The Eden Of Angels (February 2008).
26. Genesis: The Eden Of Man (March 2008).
27. Genesis: Cain And Abel (April 2008).
28. Genesis: The Mark Of Cain (June 2008).
29. Genesis: The Mixing Of Seeds (July 2008).
30. Genesis: The Travails Of Ham (August 2008).
31. Why Continuity?, Parts 1 - 5 (September 2008 - February 2009).
32. The Promise Of John - Parts 1 & 2 (March - April 2009).
33. The Spirit Of John - (June 2009).
34. John: The Angel's Feet Placing (July 2009).
35. John: The Eating Of The Scroll (August 2009).
36. John: Completing The Voice Of The Seventh Angel (September 2009).
37. John: The Foundation And The Plumblineline (October 2009).
38. John: They Confessed And Denied Not (December 2009).
39. The Unseen Headship Of Jesus Christ (January 2010).
40. The Beautiful Bride - Part 1 (February 2010)
41. John, Angels, And Prophecy; *Special Edition* (March 2010).
42. The Beautiful Bride - Parts 2 & 3 (June 2010)
43. The Beautiful Bride - Parts 4 & 5 (August 2010)
44. The Beautiful Bride - Part 6 (September 2010)
45. Demonology: The New Face Of The Contender; *Special Edition* (October 2010).
46. The Beautiful Bride - Parts 7 - 9 (December 2010 - February 2011).
47. Latter Rain (March 2011).
48. Joel's Army (April 2011).
49. An Unholy And Profane Sign (June 2011)
50. A Religion On Its Last Trail - Part 1 - 4 (July - October 2011).
51. He Preached To Spirits In Prison: Who Are They? Part 1 & 2 (Dec. 2011 - Jan. 2012)
52. After Two Days (February 2012)
53. Who Are The Foolish Virgins? (March 2012)
54. Ham Is In The Covenant (April 2012)
55. The Hour Of Gold - Part 1 - 2 (June - July 2012)
56. Rapturing Faith (August 2012)
57. The Revelation Of God Is One (September 2012)
58. The Angel Of Time: Who Is He? (October 2012)
59. The Restoration Of The Serpent? (December 2012)
60. The White Throne Judgment (January 2013)
61. The Seventh Seal (February 2013)
62. The Threefold Mystery Of The Seventh Seal (March 2013)
63. Sin Lieth At The Door (April 2013)
64. The Present Day Identity Of The Serpent (June 2013)
65. Doors In Door (July 2013)
66. Ezekiel 38 And 39 Battle - A Revisit (August 2013)
67. The Apostolic Ministry: Timothy And Titus. (September 2013)
68. The Application Of Types And Shadows (*Principles Of Types And Shadows*) - Parts 1 & 2 (Oct. - Dec. 2013)
69. The Application Of Types And Shadows (*The Wilderness Experience*) - Part 3 (January 2014)
70. The Application Of Types And Shadows (*Who Is This Melchizedek?*) - Parts 4 & 5 (Feb. - Mar. 2014)
71. The Seven Spirits Before The Throne (April 2014)
72. God In The Laodicean Age: The Year 2005 - Parts 1 & 2 (June 2014)
73. The Input Of Ham (July 2014)
74. The Lead Thunder, And The Chronology Of Revelation 10 - Parts 1-3 (July 2014)
75. Revisiting Armageddon - Parts 1 & 2 (August 2014)
76. Why It Had To Be Fishers - Part 1 (September 2014)
77. God In The Laodicean Age: The Year 2005 (*Knowing The Objective Of God*) - Parts 3 & 4 (Oct 2014)

Announcement

Our Convention dates for 2014 & 2015 are as follows:

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| 1. May Convention: 15th - 18th May, 2014. | 2. Nov. Convention: 13th - 16th Nov., 2014. |
| 3. May Convention: 14th - 17th May, 2015. | 4. Nov. Convention: 19th - 22nd Nov., 2015. |

NOTE: Our email address has changed.

All are welcome to the meetings. If you need more information, or if you have any questions or any comments, please feel free to contact us. All correspondence should be addressed to:

pastorbft@yahoo.com

For those who prefer to write, our postal address is at the bottom of this page. We look forward to hearing from you.

DIRECTORY OF THE SCRIBE

1. The Foundation Of The Five Fold Ministry, Parts 1&2 (January 2007).
2. The Foundation Of The Five Fold Ministry, Part 3: The Uniqueness Of The Ministry (January 2007).
3. The Foundation Of The Five Fold Ministry, Parts 4&5: Testing For Faithfulness (January 2007).
4. Locating God: The Visitation Of God, Parts 1&2 (February 2007).
5. Affinity With Evil (February 2007).
6. Where Are We? (February 2007).
7. The Way Forward (February 2007).
8. The Plot, Parts 1 - 4 (March 2007).
9. The Seven Thunders In Relation To The Five Fold Ministry, Parts 1&2 (March 2007).
10. The Jewish Connection, Parts 1 & 2 (April 2007).
11. The Third Pull (June 2007).
12. The Third Pull, And The Three Steps Into The Rapture (June 2007).
13. The Angel Of The Seventh Seal (June 2007).
14. They Came To Present Themselves, Parts 1&2 (July 2007).
15. The Invitation (July 2007).
16. The Promise To The Overcomer, Parts 1-3 (July 2007).
17. The Manifestation Of The Sons Of God (July 2007).
18. A Woman Rises In America (July 2007).
19. The Prophetic Ministry Of William Branham, Parts 1-4 (August 2007).
20. The Three Scribes (September 2007).
21. Ministerial Irresponsibility (September 2007).

Directory contd. in the inner cover.



*Stand by the Rock of revealed Truth.
It makes the difference!
Matt. 16:15-18*

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