

Did Jesus Give "Authority" To Pastors?

by Van Robison

The term "pastor" was never used in the vocabulary of Jesus Christ--NOT ONCE! In the King James New Testament the singular term "pastor" is not to be found--NOT ONCE! The plural term "pastors" is found in the King James New Testament--ONLY ONCE! Oddly, the King James translators used the term "pastors" (plural) at Ephesians 4:11, while in all other instances the same Greek word was translated as "shepherd." Strong's Exhaustive Concordance for "pastors" is number 4166, which is the same number used for "shepherd" elsewhere and is the same, identical number 4166.



Interestingly, Jesus referred to Himself as the Good Shepherd (John 10:11 and 10:14) and if you really wanted to use the term "Pastor", then Jesus is the "Good Pastor" and no one else is qualified to take the place of Jesus Christ. Jesus also said this: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and THERE SHALL BE ONE FOLD, and ONE SHEPHERD (John 10:16), and if you prefer to use the term "Pastor" instead of "Shepherd", then Jesus said of Himself, "THERE SHALL BE ONE PASTOR." And guess what folks, your local so called "pastor" is not the "ONE PASTOR."

Jesus Christ never once implied that anyone was the Good Shepherd, other than Himself. On the other hand what Jesus said is this--Matthew 9:37, "Then said He unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the LABORERS are few; (38) Pray you therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth LABORERS into His harvest." Even when Jesus said to Peter three times "feed my sheep", Jesus did not refer to Peter as "shepherd (or pastor)" (John 21:15-19). Jesus nowhere ever stated to pray that God would send "pastors" into the harvest, but rather laborers.

From my perspective, based upon every instance the word "shepherd" is used in the direct teachings of Jesus Christ, in the four Gospels, it is therefore odd that in the rest of the New Testament, we are led to believe that Christ established an ecclesiastical authority over the flock of God. Jesus, NOT ONCE ever referred to His personal disciples as "shepherds or pastors" as translated in the King James New Testament. Did Paul or other writers of letters, then have a right to embellish the teachings of Jesus Christ with churchy terminology that Christ never spoke of? Some will undoubtedly say "yes", because they believe that Paul was infallible and inerrant and totally inspired by the Holy Spirit to write his writings. Well, if that is true, Jesus Christ never mentioned Paul in His personal teachings, and if we are to believe all that Paul supposedly wrote, then it is not based upon anything Jesus Himself taught about Paul and his writings. It is an assumption that stems from "professional clergy" and not from the teachings of Christ. Do I then discount everything Paul taught? Not at all! I can only believe that some parts of Paul's writings are spurious and in contradiction to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The ONLY AUTHORITY that Jesus Christ gave to His personal disciples was to heal the sick

and cast out unclean spirits (Matthew 10:1). On another occasion, when the carnal disciples (they had not yet received the Holy Spirit) of Jesus Christ were arguing among themselves as to who would be the greatest (like I am the "senior pastor"), Jesus said this at Matthew 20:25, "But Jesus called them unto Him and said, You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them. (26) But IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (the term "minister" here is the same Greek word translated "servant" at Matthew 23:11).

The character of Jesus Christ is one of humility and meekness. When the Chief Shepherd washed the feet of His disciples, it was an incredible display of the heart of God. The very nature of titles, positions and offices of "authority over" others is contrary to both the teachings and the role model of Jesus Christ. I can only believe that some of Paul's writings have been tampered with by the "translators" and are not really "inspired" by God. There are functions and gifts of the Holy Spirit, but to believe that Jesus Christ appointed "spiritual generals" with so-called offices of authority over His people, is a grave contradiction to what Jesus taught in His personal teachings. Either Jesus Christ is Lord and Master (Matthew 23:8) or your local "pastor" is. Some people seem to believe that celebrity preachers who appear on television, or who have authored books that have sold millions of dollars in sales are "authority" figures over the church world.

I heard a well known celebrity and very famous "pastor" state on radio that God has given "authority" to the church leaders, and that Christians should not question their leaders. That is tantamount to being blind, deaf and dumb. That belief among the church "pastors" is not based upon what Jesus Christ taught in the four Gospels, but rather it is based upon what Paul supposedly taught. I personally prefer to believe Jesus Christ, who is the Chief Shepherd, role model and ONLY HEAD of the Body. Either Paul was off base in some of his teachings, or else the "translators" had ulterior motives in twisting Paul's teachings. I choose to not allow Paul's supposed teachings to overshadow the direct teachings of Jesus Christ, as do those who exercise the role of "pastors."

So then, did Jesus Christ give "authority" to "pastors"? If you believe Jesus Christ, then you have only ONE MASTER (Matthew 23:8) and that is Christ, no matter what is said elsewhere in the New Testament. If you believe Jesus Christ, He is the ONLY GOOD SHEPHERD (John 10:11,14) and He is the ONE SHEPHERD of the flock (John 10:16).

All those who labor for the harvest of souls are simply "brethren" (Matthew 23:8) according to the direct teaching of Jesus Christ. Therefore to imply that some have "offices, positions of power, control and authority" over others is a contradiction to Christ's teachings, and cannot possibly be the truth. So then, is the "Bible" infallible and inerrant? If you believe that, then you do so not based upon Jesus saying so, because Jesus Christ never vocalized "the Bible is infallible and inerrant." There was no New Testament Bible in existence at the time of Jesus Christ and the first Christians. Has someone tampered with the "New Testament" to make Christians believe in authoritarianism and hierarchy?
