

WHERE
DID THE
PASTOR
COME FROM?

WHERE DID THE PASTOR COME FROM???

Answer: **NOT THE BIBLE!!!!**

You can turn your Bible upside down, and shake it up and down and you really can't find a "pastor"!

Did you know this?

Does anyone ever study this?

Or do we just sit quietly and accept things the way they have been handed to us?

The word "pastor"(singular) is not contained in the text of the King James Bible. The word "pastors" is used once in the new testament.

Just these two bits of information make me want to ask a lot of questions-!

"Pastors" plural!!

Paul is writing a letter a to a small group of Christians in Ephesus. He doesn't address it to the pastor. Instead he talks about ministry gifts given by God to "every one of us"--and he uses "pastors" (plural-!). See Ephesians chapter 4.

What does it mean?

Can we be open-minded enough to ask questions about this subject?

Can we repent of our own particular "church experience" and look at the Word of God in purity and simplicity?

2 COVENANTS

There are two covenants, two testaments, in the Bible.

Christians seem to have so much trouble differentiating between the two.

See if you agree with this simple overview explanation:

In the old covenant there are laws that are commandments (you know--"thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not covet"--etc.)

The new covenant reiterates many of these commandments. (see Romans 13:9)

The purpose of this type law is to show us where we sin, or fall short of God's perfection....

Romans 3:23 "For **all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God;"

This knowledge was clearly understandable in the old covenant....

Proverbs 20:9 "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my **sin**?"

The bad news about sin.....

Romans 6:23A "For the **wages of sin is death**;....."

I deserve to die for my sin. This is the truthful conclusion that the commandment laws lead us to.

SIN = DEATH

Sin equals death.....unless.....I can be forgiven some how!

The Bible says that if innocent blood would be shed on my behalf, God would accept this offering for my sin.

This is a truth in both the old and new covenants.....

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh *is* in the **blood**: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the **blood** *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.

Hebrews 9:13-14 For if the **blood** of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the **blood** of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

So, if someone or something innocent would die in my place, God would accept this “offering” or payment for my sin.

Now, here is where the 2 covenants are different.

I hope you know the new covenant offering-!!

I hope you know who died for your sin-!!!

John 1:29 “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the **sin** of the world.”

THE LAMB OF GOD

Yes, every Christian ought to know that Jesus offering of His body and blood on The cross of Calvary is the new covenant offering for sin--an offering obtained by faith.

But why is Jesus called a "lamb"?

Because John the baptist was speaking to Israel, which was still operating in the old covenant. They knew what he meant when he called Jesus "the lamb of God....."

Do you?

Most Christians do not study old covenant sacrificial law. We may have some vague idea that Israel had to sacrifice animals in the old covenant days, but we rarely ever study how it all worked.

Why should we do this?

Well let's look at this subject, it might sound familiar to us-!

HOW TO HAVE YOUR SIN FORGIVEN--OLD COVENANT STYLE

What did Israel have to do in the old covenant (before Jesus went to the cross) to have sin forgiven?

1. They built and maintained a big building.

They assembled in this big building (often on sabbath days) and it was called the “house of God” or the ‘sanctuary’ because the presence of God contained in the ark of the covenant was hidden behind a thick veil in the temple.

2. They made offerings.

They brought these offerings (of animals and other crops) into the house of God. How much did God ask to be offered? “Tithe”. 1/10th of the increase of certain animals and crops in specific seasons.

3. They had a format that started with praise and worship.

When you entered the big building you first came to a gate called “praise” where you were required to praise God. Next came a gate called “worship”, where worship was required. So, the format of sacrificial law demanded a repetitive meeting or assembling of Israel, in the house of God, which began with praise and worship.

4. They had a “congregational” meeting.

The word “congregation” is only found in the old covenant. The word simply means “a group”, but Biblically, it most often referred to the non-ministry tribes of Israel. It was the job of 11 of the tribes of Israel to work 6 days each week and bring the offering/tithe into the house of God.

This sounds familiar--I told you it would!

Whether we will admit it or not, these old covenant laws are the Biblical basis for many of the rules and functions and definitions we have in “Sunday church”.

Oh, we can couch these things in new covenant terms. For example we could call our meeting a “Christian assembly”--but how could it be when there are so many of these old covenant rules and functions? And don't we treat these concepts as if they are law? Don't we do these things over and over and over again--as if they are a “requirement”, somehow?

So, what about the pastor?

WHERE'S THE PASTOR?

Where is the pastor in this system?

He is the Levitical priest.

Altar Ministry

Inside the temple, there was an altar.

On the altar was the “delegated, designated, anointed, appointed, ordained, authority, who had the sole right to minister in the temple, the Levitical priest.

Numbers 15:25 And the **priest** shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it *is* ignorance: and they shall bring their **offering**, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin **offering** before the LORD, for their ignorance:

Ezekiel 45:19 And the **priest** shall take of the blood of the sin **offering**, and put *it* upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court.

Hebrews 10:11 And every **priest** standeth daily ministering and **offering** oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

(notice that in the old covenant, the blood was the sin offering, but when these actions are referred to in the new covenant in Hebrews, the point is made that a better offering has been made, one which can actually “take away” sins--that is the blood of Jesus--amen!)

THE PRIESTLY TRIBE

There was one “priestly” tribe of Israel. The Levites were the only ones allowed to be ministers.

They had authority over the congregation of Israel.

They lived off part of the offering/tithe.

Does any of this sound familiar?

Whether we realize it or not, the basis for “Sunday church” and the basis for “pastoral authority” comes from the old covenant. Specifically from the sacrificial laws, the stuff that Israel had to do, before Christ, in order to have their sin cleansed.

And that’s the whole point.

Jesus accomplished all this stuff with His death, resurrection and ascension.

He is the high priest of the new covenant.....

“Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” (Hebrews 10: 8-22)

REMEMBER THIS LIST.....

THINGS ISRAEL HAD TO DO TO HAVE THEIR SIN FORGIVEN IN THE OLD COVENANT.....

1. They built and maintained a big building.
2. They made offerings/tithe.
3. They had a repetitive format that started with praise and worship.
4. They had a “congregational” meeting.
5. The priest/pastor was in authority.

If we looked carefully (and we will see some of this later) all of these definitions and functions are either done away with or redefined in the new covenant.

But let's zero in on the pastor.

The thing that “pastoral ministry” most resembles Biblically is the Levitical priesthood.

The problem, the thing we ignore, is that the new testament says we are not supposed to function by this idea.....

Hebrews 7:12 “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”

A CHANGE OF THE LAW

Hebrews 7:12 “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”

Now why would this statement be in the Bible at all?

Is there no purpose to this statement and this area of scripture that is clearly defining the new covenant?

The new covenant has a different priesthood--**the whole church**.....

1Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy **priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

1Peter 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal **priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and **priests** unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and **priests**: and we shall reign on the earth.

In the new covenant all believers are called to a priesthood, a ministry, an equitable priesthood.

Brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Not an authoritarian ministry, since Jesus saaid “ministry” is NOT authority over other believers.....

“But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your **minister**.”
(Mark 10:42-43)

WHERE'S THE PASTOR?

Well where did the pastor come from?

Look around for clues.

Look at some other churches.

Some of those older denominations.

Look honestly.

How much do they resemble your church?

How much do they resemble and utilize your definitions and functions of "pastoral ministry"?

Let's look at the oldest church, the catholic institution. Did you know that the catholic priest (here's the link to the old covenant Levitical priest!) is called a 'pastor'? The word "pastor" in the catholic church means ruler. The local bishops are called "pastors".

One of the titles of the pope is "the only official and correct pastor of Christians".

"Pastor" certainly means an awful lot to catholic folks!

In the catholic church, a "pastor" is a term used to describe a ruler in the hierarchy. And locally, the priest/pastor presides in authority over the local congregation.

He operates the local assembly/sanctuary/house of God.

The format of this meeting: praise and worship/pastoral teaching.

He collects and lives off the "offering" (note: catholics invented the "tithe" as the amount expected in the offering--they have only recently given up the practice.)

By joining the church, one accepts a format in which the priest/pastor will be the sole teacher to you and your family. This format must be done repetitively--every Sunday--forever.

(remember the list from page 8-?!)

The truth is that the "priest" of the catholic church is the "pastor" of the Protestant church.

THE PASTOR IS THE PRIEST

Let's open our eyes and be honest!

Oh, sure, your pastor doesn't wear a long robe and collar (but doesn't he still dress better than everyone else in church-?!) Doesn't he still have all the authority of the catholic priest?

But the outward appearance is not what we are talking about--its' the function. It's the rules--the definitions--that we operate by repetitively---over and over and over and over and over again--as if these concepts are law, as if we really have to be a part of these things, in order to have our sin forgiven.

Maybe the protestant pastor, in some respects, has more authority over the local congregation than the catholic priest!

Think about it for a minute. Many people feel "freer" being under the authority of an independent pastor, in a "non-denominational" church. But a pastor in this kind of church, may actually have more power and influence over the people than the catholic priest, who, at least has to answer to a hierarchy. Think about it! A lot of catholic folks would never belong to a church like that. They would be horrified at the direct influence and authority that some protestant pastors are given over the local church. The catholic mass, though outwardly very strict and ritualistic, is actually very "safe" to many people. The thought of a priest/pastor talking directly to them, and influencing their lives intimately, would make many catholics run from the exercising of authority!

Remember--Israel, in the old covenant, had to do this stuff. They had to have the temple and priesthood operating--in order to be forgiven by God. They didn't have Jesus--right!?

So we're back to the Levites again. In the old testament the Levitical priesthood had God's authority to do the ministry in the house of God/sanctuary.

Did you know that catholic folks believe that Jesus lives inside the eucharist? So, they build an elaborate, ornate, "sanctuary" for the eucharist. They put it up on an altar--only the priest can touch it. Ask a catholic--God lives up on the altar--not in the pews!. His presence is "up front"-- only approachable by the priest--just like the old covenant temple and it's veil. Part of the catholic function used to be confession (although it's not very popular these days). The common folks (the "congregation") were required to go to the sanctuary and confess their sins to the priest. So to catholics, the building and the priesthood forgive sin. (at least outwardly, Jesus blood is in the catholic concept--but well hidden in old covenant ritual-!) And, if we went back into history, in the medieval days the common folks were expected to bring in crops and animals as tithe/offering to support the priesthood and church hierarchy.

So, the catholic priest very much resembles the old covenant Levitical priest--and the protestant pastor is basically in the same position of authority in the protestant church (yes, even the 'non-denominational church)

It's not the name of the church--**it's the functions and rules of meeting that create pastoral authority-!**

HISTORY--STUDY IT!

If we really want to find out where the pastor comes from, we should study the history and origins of the Catholic church (do you study Christian history in your church??)

The 4th Century: Extreme Make-over Roman Style

There is a reliable, well-recorded history of early Christianity--it's in the Bible!

I believe we ought to study this extensively if we truly want to understand how we ought to function as the Church (more on this later).

But, after the record of the Bible ends, all kinds of crazy stuff happened to "the church"--and we are here, living at the other end of all this crazy stuff. To believe that all these years have passed, without any effects upon us today, is complete naivety. The church that has no study of Christian history is partly blind to truth.

In a small booklet like this, we could by no means cover 2,000 years of history--but there are certainly pivotal events which are well-recorded and have tremendous impact on us today.

In the 1st two centuries of Christianity, the church was persecuted by the Roman government, much the way Israel, Jesus, and the church were in the Bible. But in the 4th century, huge changes took place.

The Roman emperor Constantine made a dramatic turn-around and stopped Christian persecutions. More than that, he invited Christians to be part of his government.

Jesus had warned not to do this--but it was done...

"And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But *ye shall not be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." (Luke 22:25-26)

"But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;" (Matthew 20:25-26)

Look at these verses.

The "kings of the Gentiles"--the "princes of the Gentiles" certainly is a reference to the Roman government--the Gentile government which ruled Israel at the time.

KINGS OF THE GENTILES

It is certainly well-recorded history that the Roman government and society operated by hierarchy, by one person or group exercising authority over another group or person. But we don't need a historical verification of this idea, because Jesus clearly defines the Roman government as a human government which operates by this principle.

What does Jesus say about this type of government--this type of function--of one person exercising authority over others?

“.....not so among you”

Is it possible that people who lived in the 4th century disobeyed this teaching of Jesus? In the Bible, Jesus was warning his apostles that they were going in this wrong direction. Certainly this means anyone could go in this same wrong direction--of functioning in hierarchy and human authority. Like any law of God, it is a possible mistake our fallen human nature could conceive of and function in. We need always to know and study God's laws and Jesus' teaching to correct ourselves.

So, do you think it possible, that people who lived 1700 years ago, who lived through extraordinary persecution and difficult circumstances could have been lead to disobey this concept? If we study the historical record it seems as if this change was forced upon the people of that day--the Roman emperors had that kind of power.

Well, the fact is that it did happen.

And if we are without knowledge of these things, we are destined to repeat the mistakes of the past.

“Pastoral authority” is a mistake of the past--and we will be destined to repeat this mistake if we refuse to study where the pastor came from.

What did the “Roman makeover” of the Christian church look like? Go to a catholic church next Sunday and you will get an idea.

The catholic church has enforced and guarded the tradition of the mass for 1700 years. The function of the priest/pastor is central to this tradition. There have been very few changes--in fact there is no room for change. No one in the catholic church (probably even the pope himself!) could study the Bible and realize that there are mistakes or misdefinitions. Rather, one of the jobs of the “pastor” (and this certainly includes the protestant pastor as well) is to defend the system--to see that the format and “order” carries on. In fact the Bible is utilized, by a series of complex buzzwords, to reenforce the system and the authority of the leadership.

So, the mistakes of the 4th century have been “written in stone” for Christians to observe--live out--and be defined by--for 1700 years.

THE PRIEST BECOMES THE PASTOR

Reformation--great! (sort of!)

About 500 years ago the Bible finally began to be published in common languages--and this led to a "reformation". People started to read the Bible and realize that it said some different stuff than the catholic church had been teaching people all those years! (If you are anything but catholic, you are protestant, meaning you "protest" the authority of the catholic church--you rebel you-!)

The publishing of the Bible gave people the revelation that they were saved, not by paying money to the church, but by the blood of Jesus on the cross (this in itself is a revelation that goes against the old covenant/Levitical priesthood/temple function the church had been operating by.)

But, what happened also, was that the reformation was used as a political tool. In England Henry 8 decided that his country would no longer accept the pope and the catholic government. However, he promptly made himself the head of the church in England. (anyone care to read the Bible--sorry Henry--Jesus is the Head of the church-!)

The important thing to understand for our study, is that the system of church government--which had been a system of collecting money for the pope, became a system of collecting money for the king. The function of human government did not change at all in the church. Need proof of this? Next Sunday go visit an older protestant denominational church. Some of them look more like a catholic mass than the catholic church does!

In other words..

Reformation--yes---BUT--

Don't mess with the mass--!!!

The system of catholic church authority (priest/bishop) became a part of the kings' government. He ruled people partly through the church (collecting taxes, among other things). The churches hierarchal government ultimately brought tribute to the king's purse.

Something very important to understand about this period of history, is that our most influential Bible translation, the King James Bible, comes to us from this era. While a very accurate translation, the fact is that King James was a monarch who "had the rule" "over" his "subjects" who had to "submit" to his "authority" and "obey". He controlled the people through the "office" of the "bishop". King James very strongly believed that God had given him his position of authority over the church. So, one can understand, that if you were translating a Bible for King James, you need to work these buzzwords into the text wherever possible. A study of the Greek of some of these words and phrases shows that they are poor translations and totally disregard what Jesus taught about authority. But, we today are still "stuck" with these concepts, words and phrases that seem to enforce the system we are familiar with.

DO WE EVER STUDY "PASTOR"?

So, at the time of the reformation, the "priest" of the catholic church changed his name to "pastor" (or perhaps "vicar" or perhaps something else). The name change means nothing- if the function and definition are the same. And they were. And things haven't changed much since then. the truth is that the protestant churches are every bit as strict about the format for meeting and rules and definitions of "ministry" as their catholic counterpart.

Why?

Because Christians do not study function from the new testament.

We are so sure our weekly church function is correct, unchangeable, unquestionable. We don't realize how this ritual, and the definitions that arise from it (of which "pastor" is one!) are truly not in the new testament Bible. These rituals make us blind to the new testament church and the example that Jesus gave us.

We've pointed out just one---Jesus' teaching on authority.

When was the last time you heard a sermon on "Luke 22:25-29---??

"And he said unto them, **The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;**" (Luke 22:25-29)

Christians do not study ministry, authority or church function from the Bible, because they believe they are already experts on the subject. If you go to church every week, you "study the pastor". You see a person, a nice guy usually, someone we like, someone who helps us. We see everyone else around us being a "congregation" a group of "lay people" (a term not in the Bible--neither is "clergy"), folks who do NOT do ministry. Every week the pastor is the only one who can talk. We accept it. We believe in it. We do it over and over and over again. We support it financially and with our prayers. We raise our children in it.

Christians won't study ministry, because most believe they are already experts.

This makes us blind.

A NEW TESTAMENT PASTOR?

The way that many people verify their pastoral experience Biblically, is like this:

“Well, the word “pastor” is in the new testament--so--it must be whatever we want it to be”

Little phrases are used--“feed the flock” --“ feed my sheep”--these supposedly mean all that a pastor is (financial head, advisor, teacher, ruler, councilor, parking lot attendant-- whatever we want it to be)

Aren't we running the church on a parable?

The reality is that we simply are taking these out-of-context new testament phrases,, coupling them with our long-accepted, long-standing tradition and experience (which is Biblically based on the old testament Levitical priesthood) and ending up thinking everything is “just okay” in the church.

Well, we are ignoring what the new testament describes, for the blinding power of experience.

“Pastor” is actually a quite simple ministry, and very easy to study “pastor” in new covenant terms. The Greek word translated as “pastors” is used 18 times in the new testament. Some of these references are speaking of the real-life shepherds present at Jesus’ birth. But there is one particular area of scripture in which Jesus talks about being a “good shepherd (pastor)”.

It's in John 10, but to fully understand Jesus' teaching we should begin our study in John chapter 9....

- 1 ¶ And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth.
- 2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?
- 3 *Jesus* answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.
- 4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
- 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
- 6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,
- 7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. (John 9:1-7)

There is something unique going on here. This is not just a physical healing, but rather there is a release to ministry.

REMEMBER THE MISSION

When reading actions of Jesus we should always bear in mind His mission statement in Luke 4:18-19...

“The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”
(Luke 4:18-19)

Notice the last part.....

“.....recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

This is exactly what Jesus is doing in John chapter 9. It might help our study to know one particular Greek word. In Luke 4:18 the word “set” is the Greek “apostello”--the root word of apostle. An apostle is simply someone who is “sent” to carry the Gospel--someone “set at liberty to preach the acceptable year of the Lord”.

In John 9 the name of the pool (rather strangely translated twice) is “sent” which is again the Greek “apostello”.

So what is happening in John 9?

Jesus is simply taking a blind man (who had never been allowed in the temple--because of his “sin”) and releasing him to ministry. This lines up perfectly with the new testament doctrine of ministry being a “gift given to every one of us” (see Ephesians 4) and there are many other examples of this in the new testament.

Almost an entire chapter of the book of John is devoted to the formerly blind man’s witnessing of Jesus. The Pharisees look at him and say he is a “teacher” (if sarcastically--the fact is that he is witnessing the Gospel).

Finally, at the end of the chapter we see this question asked of Jesus:

39 ¶ And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

40 And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, **Are we blind also?**

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

His answer is contained in John 10, where, He equates this release to ministry as the actions of a “good shepherd (pastor)”.

A GOOD PASTOR, A DOOR TO MINISTRY

The key phrase He uses is.....

“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”

So.

A new covenant “pastor” is a ministry anointing whereby one releases others to serve God.

Somewhat ironic--that so many Christians believe a “pastor” is someone who holds them “under authority”-!

It is interesting, that in John 10 Jesus gives a very accurate realistic description of how sheep are fed (all His parables are realistic actions that relate spiritual truths).

Real sheep are fed by opening a gate. They feed themselves--they just need to be pointed in the right direction.

It's really quite simple to do new covenant pastoral ministry. Like all ministry it's serving others and laying down ones life, in this case to help someone else serve God.

It certainly is a very important ministry!

It certainly is much needed.

By us, by the world, but mostly it is needed by God.

But it can't be done alone.

Remember, what we have really discovered is that the church is operating on a wrong set of ministry principles and definitions.

“Pastor” is just one of the incorrect pieces of the puzzle.

What should the puzzle look like?

What should the church be?

STOP GOING TO CHURCH, START **BEING** THE CHURCH

What should the church be?

To put it very simply, the church should be people, doing their best to imitate Jesus.

People, doing their best to work together as equals. (because Jesus said He did not exercise authority over His followers--He was equal with others, not a ruler).

The church in the Bible met in small groups (because Jesus did it)

The church in the Bible focused all its time, effort and resources to further the Gospel--the mission of salvation, healing, deliverance, feeding the poor and release (Luke 4:18-19). Jesus said this was His mission, and it ought to be ours too.

The church in the Bible fed the poor, helped the homeless and widows--visited prisoners--because Jesus did it (and He said He would judge those specific things in His followers.)

“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. (Matthew 25:34-40)

Here is another scripture rarely preached on....

“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27)

Want “pure religion”? Most would say “go to church every week”.

The Bible says pure religion is to minister to others.

LET GOD LEAD

The church in the Bible let God lead them.

They prayed in the Spirit and received their leading and instructions from Christ the Head (and being in small groups were able to quickly carry out these Gospel instructions).

Why did they do this?

Because Jesus did it!

He said He did....

John 8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, *When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.*

Get the picture:

Jesus, on a defined mission, His leader, God the Father was not present, but able to give the specific instructions of the mission thru Spiritual prayer.

The church--Jesus now the Head, the Authority,--being given the gifts of the Holy Spirit as the "communication line", received Christ's instructions to further the Gospel.

The church in the Bible met daily. Not everybody every day! Not all in one place! (they didn't buy the upper room!) Many small groups meeting frequently, in different places ready to do God's will--ready to serve.

How to serve?

use your gifts--your ministry gifts.

DARE TO STUDY “MINISTRY” FROM THE BIBLE

The gifts of ministry are the anointings God has given to all of us--to be worked together--to further the Gospel--to “build His Body”.

Study these verses carefully.

Let the Word of God be correct and NOT your experience....

1 ¶ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 ¶ With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (Ephesians 4:1-12)

WHAT ARE THE GIFTS?

Simple ministry definitions.

This is a list of simple, general definitions of the 5 ministry gifts.

These simple definitions line up with the new covenant example--check it out for yourself.

(a warning: many people who call themselves "scholars" have in the past thought up very long-winded teachings, which ultimately eliminate and minimize these ministry gifts. Don't believe them! Believe that God is generous, and needs as much ministry from as many people as He can possibly get! Remember, God needs ministry from all of us, the Bible says so!)

APOSTLE.....Small groups that carry the gospel to the world. The 1st primary ministry.

PROPHETSAnyone who speaks the word of God--this includes all the gifts of the Holy Spirit--2nd most important gift since it is God's way of communicating His will to us.

EVANGELISTSan apostle working alone--a rarity in the new testament.

PASTORS(you know!) People who release others to serve God.

TEACHERSThe 3rd and least important gift. People who teach other believers within the church--simple direct teaching (not never-ending authoritarian speeches-!)

Simple gifts.

Simple functions that anyone could do.

A NEW QUESTION

We've looked at where the pastor came from, but now we ask a new question...

Where are the pastors?

The answer to this question is something no one would guess.

The pastors, the apostles, the prophets, the teachers and evangelists are sitting in the pews on Sunday.

They are the sheep.

Silent, submissive--convinced by tradition and ritual that they are not ministers, not qualified--not educated--not ready--not able--not gifted.

Convinced they can come into God's presence once a week (but you have to pay admission)

Convinced by tradition they are "lay people", a "congregation"--not ministers.

Convinced by tradition that they are "under" the pastor's authority.

Where are the pastors?

Look in the mirror.

