

0A. Stage 4. Young Adult. Shepherd Disciples. Full

4.1A(23). Chief Shepherd authorizes Shepherds to Represent him. 6.7-14

4.2B(24). Shepherd Teaches. 6.30-44

4.3.Bp.(25). Accountable Prayer. 6.45-52

4.4.C(27). Instructing Hard Hearts. 7.1-13

4.5.C(28). Convict Defiled Hearts. 7.14-23

4.6.C(31). Warn Unbelieving Heart. 8.11-21

Master Chart.

Stage 4: Shepherd Disciples. Mark 6:7-8:26

Stage four disciples: Entering **Adulthood**:

As a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, it is imperative that you grow up and bear fruit. In fact, Jesus Mashiach promises that growth and the accompanying “fruit” is the only sign that you are “abiding” in him, the “true vine” and that the Father is at work in your life to “prune” you to greater fruitfulness (John 15:1-2). And, if *fruit* is the one affirming sign of your viability as a disciple, then you should welcome fruitfulness and to see it as the *path of progress* you must take until you reach your inevitable maturity.

Now, the question is, what is this “maturity” that you must grow into as a disciple of Jesus Mashiach? In a fleshly, **man-centered Gospel**, the maturity is entirely *personal*—it is to experience as an individual the evidence of spiritual life. In a man-centered Gospel, whose purpose is simply the *salvation of man*, then the individual’s spiritual survival and satisfaction is all that can be imagined.

Case Study: the man-centered Gospel.

Critics of *late-stage Christianity* pointed out the *selfish* orientation of its religion. Sadly, their observations were correct. Late-stage Christianity, especially what we would call “evangelicalism” and especially “reform theology” was blindly human-centric in its theology and its Gospel. Although embedded within its catechisms and creeds was the *worship* of the true God, its entire system was centered on “the Gospel”—the *truth that Jesus died for me*. And, the entirety of God’s plan was thus fulfilled in “my salvation.” And, my best efforts, calling, and purpose was simply to *recognize, meditate, and repeat* mantra-like the truth that “Christ died for me.” Ironically, Gentiles were as guilty in this *self-fixation* as were Jews who viewed the entirety of God’ purpose of salvation as being “for Israel” and that “God redeemed Israel.”

Both Jew and Gentile misunderstand the “Gospel of the Kingdom” and the divine purpose behind salvation, which is to make Mashiach, the Son of God and the Son of Man, the Heir of all creation, of “heaven” and “earth” (Genesis 2:4) which the Firstborn Son was to share with those others redeemed as sons.

But, limited in their view of the Gospel, the Churches had little need to see *discipleship* and its growth beyond the first three stages of maturity—the *childhood* of disciples which produced the fruit of *new life*, of *repentance*, and of *fellowship*.

For, the next four stages of development into “adulthood” and “parenthood,” being actual spiritual growth stages, would yield a *spiritual harvest* which would establish the *throne of Jesus* and expand the “Kingdom” of God.

Instead, churches relied on *fleshly curricula* which demanded “compliance” rather than “sacrifice,” which were guided by “committees” rather than “calling,” to raise up leaders, to create church structures, with the result that not the Kingdom of Mashiach but rather denominational, church, and religious kingdoms *honoring “man” were built*.

Likely, this is the reason the Church Age eventually *burnt out*, like the last *flicker* of a menorah finally going out, giving in to the cold and surrounding darkness. The fleshly fruit it produced—fleshly leaders, selfish shepherds, and *religious households* was no defense against the encroaching darkness.

Thus, let your generation be the first generation to bear Kingdom Fruit, as disciples reach the *full maturity* called for by Mashiach!

Stages of Adult Discipleship:

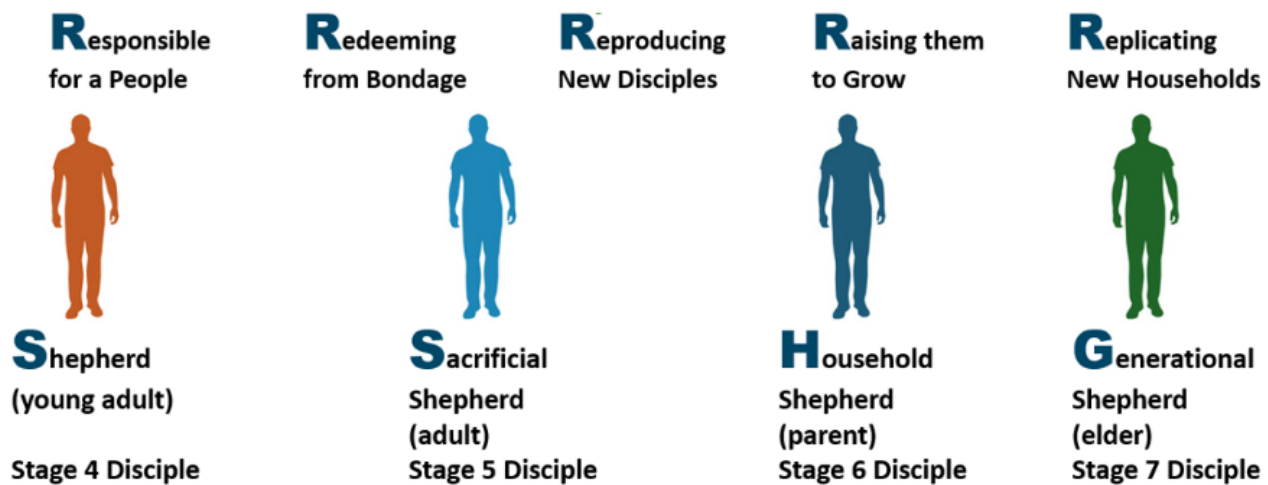
As already pointed out, the first three levels of discipleship should be considered the *formative* years of “childhood” for the disciple. In these formative years, the child is naturally Self-focused, maturing in their personal experience of *new life* in Jesus Mashiach (stage 1), in the interpersonal relationship they develop with Jesus as they follow him (stage 2), and in the social relationships they connect with in community (stage 3). All these stages lay the foundation for *discipleship maturity*. Sadly, the man-centered Gospel of the Church gives little reason to mature beyond church-membership which, in fleshly terms, is the pinnacle of growth because it produces the *commodities needed* for the institutional church’s survival: monetary donations, church attendance, and human resources. However, the spiritual kingdom of God is only established when disciples reach their full maturity.

For, only fully mature disciples become the shepherds able to raise up generation of reproducing disciples, forming them into households capable of planting the Word in the rich soil of their surrounding networks of friends and

family. Only such households, led by *sacrificial* shepherds, are resilient to *pray and bind the strong man and endure hardship* when the Kingdom Warfare breaks out into the open.

So, consider the growth path that “adult” disciples follow as they bear fruit, gather households, and parent these multiplying households across generations. Importantly, your relationship with the Lord Jesus Mashiach will also *mature* into an *adult* relationship. Though we never outgrow our dependence on him for life, our walk by faith, and our identity as his body, we know him in increasingly familiar and mutual ways, as we mature as shepherds of his flock and share experiences and accomplishments with him!

- Stage 4: Shepherding Disciples on his behalf.



When you reach the fourth stage of your development, your growth will seem to be like your *spiritual adolescence*. Having been cared for up to this point, and learning to care for yourself and your walk with the Lord Jesus, you are now ready to be *responsible for others*. Notice that when the Lord Jesus gives his disciples his power, he sends them out as partners to *shepherd* the lost sheep back into the flock. As these disciples go out, they *represent Jesus Mashiach*, bringing his power and restoration to those far from the Kingdom. As they go out to *take responsibility* to care for these needy people, they have the Lord’s power to cast out demons and to teach. As these disciples *go out* to care for these lost sheep, they learn to be shepherds as they observe Jesus, the good shepherd models for them this *responsible care* for others that shifts them from their earlier *Self-*

interest to be interested in the needs of others. The Lord consistently reveals his *shepherd's heart* for the “sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34).

- Stage 5 disciples: Sacrificial Servant Shepherds.

As a stage five disciple of Jesus Mashiach, you take the step into full maturity by becoming like him as a shepherd willing to “lay down his life” for the sheep (John 10:11). Serving Jesus sacrificially by “denying” your Self, taking up your “cross” of ministry responsibility, and “following” Jesus opens your eyes to the hidden glory of the Kingdom and its righteous life.

- Stage 6: Household Shepherd Disciples.

For shepherds who serve well, showing that they are willing to “deny” their Self-interests and Self-ambitions to serve Jesus Mashiach to care for his sheep, they then grow into “Household Shepherds.” From the developmental stage of “adulthood,” the disciple now is spiritually *anointed* and empowered to move into the stage of “parenthood.” In adulthood, *shepherding* is a competency that disciples develop through patient and faithful service. But, as shepherds learn to lay their lives down for the sheep, the Lord God will invariably give them a bountiful harvest—not simply helping younger disciples to grow, nor seeking the lost sheep to bring them back into the safety of the Lord’s flock. Now, as one steps into spiritual “parenthood,” the disciple now is called to co-labor to care for an entire household. Household disciples learn to lay the foundations needed to *plant the faith of their household* on the solid rock of Jesus Mashiach. At this stage, Household Shepherds can be called to “houses” of many configurations and sizes that range from single households, clans, or even nations, as some Household Shepherds will even be called to *shepherd the errant* House of Israel!

- Stage 7: generational shepherd disciples.

Finally, Jesus models for his disciples what it means to serve as a “generational shepherd” who equips the many generations of shepherds to gather and reproduce households across generations. Serving in this stage requires the deepest and most thorough of sacrifices, for *generational shepherds* grow accustomed to pouring out their very *souls* that their people may thrive in the new life of the Kingdom!

So, generational shepherds share in Jesus Mashiach’s afflictions, experiencing loss, humiliation, and suffering as he himself did to secure the *Kingdom Life* for his people. Imitating the ministry of their Chief Shepherd, these generational prepare their households for the *Redeeming Work of Mashiach*. Revealing to them the

nature of Mashiach as the “Lamb of God” and showing their need to experience a complete *spiritual rebirth* by the Holy Spirit. For, God’s people must realize their utter helplessness in light of the *Almighty*. To Passover from Satan’s Kingdom of enslavement, your people must understand the full burden of their sin and their impossible Self-redemption much less any service or worship to be given to God. But, as a generational shepherd, not only will you understand deeply the Lord’s work as the Redeemer of your house, but you will also emulate the Lord, sharing in the same kinds of afflictions he endured that your house might multiply through generations of disciples and shepherds whom you will raise up.

The Responsibilities of Shepherds:



Responsible
for a People



Redeeming
from Bondage



Reproducing
into New Life



Raising them
to Grow



Repopulating
New Households

So, whether you are just beginning to serve the Lord Jesus as a *shepherd* in his household, or even when you are a *generational shepherd* raising up disciples themselves to become shepherds, your work of shepherding will involve these key areas:

All shepherds are responsible for a people. Remember, it is the Lord Jesus Mashiach, as our Chief Shepherd, who puts a people on your heart. Without this sense of being *called* to a people, you become a mere “hired hand,” working but for *fleshly reward* but having no deep family commitment. For, we shepherd *parentally in this* great “House” of the Lord Jesus, and we are committed not for base profit but by an eternal kinship from God. Without this *burden of kinship*, your service will be as *shallow as earthly employment* and nothing more. So, you shepherds, furnished with this divine and Fatherly call on your lives as his family shepherds, will first lead your people to our great Redeemer to release them from the *captivating bonds* of this world and its *fleshly chains of sin*. You will help your people come to Jesus Mashiach for *new life*, to be reborn into his flock. And, you

will “feed them” with “knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah 3:15).

Remember, you can only feed them what is fed to you, and impart to them the *life* lavished upon you. For, we are not a family of mere “words” but the “people” sanctified by our great Lord himself to be his very own people, “zealous” (Titus 2:14) and abounding in this eternal life (Colossians 2:6-7).

Case Study: mercenary *shepherds*:

Through this series, we have considered quite a few signs or causes of the Church’s steady decline. But, one indication of danger *clearly stands out*, and the Lord God prophetically denounces this type of “rot” that ruins entire generations and households: shepherds who feed only themselves (Ezekiel 34:10). Recall that starting with Stage 4 shepherds, the first step of development is the need for Self-denial—to sacrifice, to abandon Self-interest along with Self-ambition, so that one puts the needs of the flock above one’s own life.

But, in late stage Christianity, a professional class of *pastors* were trained who saw ministry as simply an opportunity and a career path. Of course, a worker is *worthy of their pay*, but a worker without a genuine call of God is a mere *mercenary*, a “hired hand” who puts Self-interest first. Such “hired hands” are incompatible with Kingdom service for these reasons:

Limit to Service: Whereas a *shepherd* is called to *lay down his life* for his people, a “hired hand” has a personal limit that is never crossed, and the *mercenary* is never *inconvenienced*. His service is only at his own convenience.

Easy Road: Mercenaries and Hired Hands love the *commodification* of Body Life, because functions and processes can be easily managed without the messy need to understand personal needs. And, the *fleshly heart* loves control and its simplicity.

- The pastor of a fairly large church did not the people of his congregation to read, handle, or understand the word for themselves. Instead, he relied on published authors who would say *predictable and safe platitudes and doctrines*. But, such generalities do not feed *spiritual growth*, and the church failed to raise up mature leaders.

Career first priorities: In the North American church, very wealthy congregations sprung up, giving pastors a wide range of choices. Some future pastors I knew chose their churches not by a sense of “calling” but the best benefits package offered. Pastors would move when it was convenient or financially feasible to do so.

Serving with the Good Shepherd:

When the Lord Jesus sends you out in this fourth stage of discipleship, as a *shepherding disciple*, his relationship with you matures. Now that you are secure

in an *abiding and life-giving* relationship with the Lord, and he knows that you follow him faithfully in your personal walk and in relationship with other disciples, now he entrusts to you the responsibility of *caring for others*. He entrusts to you the very task that he is involved with, the care of his flock.

Consider how he now entrusts to you his very ministry. Now, you **represent the Lord** as you go forth with your partner to care for his flock.



Called
to People



Authority
to Serve



Responsible
for Growth



Encourage
with Word

Key Verse.

7 And he called the twelve and began to **send them** out **two by two**, and gave them **authority** over the **unclean spirits**.⁸ He **charged them** to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—⁹ but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.¹⁰ And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, **stay** there until you depart **from there**.”

Mark 6:7-10

³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a **great crowd**, and he **had compassion on them**, because they were like **sheep** without a **shepherd**. And he began to **teach** them many things. Mark 6:34

Developmental Disciple Stage:

Milestone/ Abilities:

A. Knowing/ Responding to Jesus:

B. Living in His Household:

C. Establishing His Throne and Kingdom:

Assessment Question:

Further Discovery:

4.1.A(23).Chief Shepherd Authorizes Partners to Represent/ Proclaim Him. Mark 6:7-14.

Read Mark 6:7-14..

7 And he called the twelve and began to **send them** out **two by two**, and gave them **authority** over the **unclean spirits**

¹⁰ And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, **stay** there until you depart from there. ¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a **testimony** against them.” ¹² So they went out and **proclaimed** that people should **repent**. ¹³ And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.^{14a} **King Herod heard** of it, for Jesus'^[c] **name had become known. Mark 6:7, 10-14a**

Background:

In your childhood as a disciple (stage 3), you grew stronger in the family and Kingdom of God. Learning the secrets of the Kingdom of God, you and your family learned to plant the Word of God and to watch for the spiritual growth and harvest that multiplies the Kingdom as it spreads the name, freedom, and peace of Jesus Mashiach throughout any land.

Now, in this important Stage 4 of your development as a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, you begin the transitional phase as you enter your full maturity as a disciple. In the same way that human development sees our “teenage” years as the necessary bridge from childhood into adulthood, so your spiritual formation as a functioning *Son* in the Kingdom Family of God begins now.

Childhood should be a safe and formative time for your faith, as you learn to build up and help others to grow in their faith in the safety of a *household* of faith. In the same way that teens start to venture out of the house to explore, to work, and to begin to make an impact in the world, so, too, Jesus Mashiach now sends you from the *homebase* of the Family into the needy and straying world.

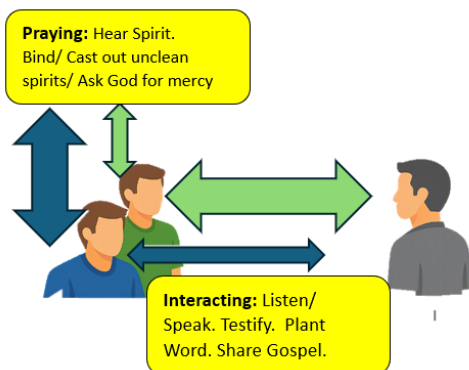
Children, having been well-taught by their parents in the home, go out as young adult-teens to represent their families. So, as you grow into a *young-adult disciple*, the Lord as the Over-Shepherd of the flock sends you out to gather his lost sheep to return them to the safety of his welcoming flock.

When childhood ends and young-adulthood begins, the time for “practicing and playing” ends as you are given *real responsibility* from the Lord to shepherd the needy back to the Lord. And, as teens learn the value of *partnering* and relying on one another in the world, so you will learn to partner to reach entire *households* for Jesus Mashiach.

You have already seen how you can help those who are “bound” and enslaved by Satan to have their “captive souls” freed by the Lord’s power. Now, as you partner together, you will learn to instruct those whose hearts are hardened by unbelief.

Remember, the Lord himself struggled with those hardened by **unbelief**. So, rather than sowing the Word from afar, you will learn as partners to engage, interact with, and discover the heart-hidden *blockages* of unbelief that you may instruct those so hardened.

Case study: Partners reaching Households. Visiting China, I met and heard the testimony of a humble brother who helped shepherd a Chinese house-church network. After the Cultural Revolution, a great revival swept through China and the house churches multiplied with Kingdom fruitfulness. The brother told this story: “Our house church sent us to a certain province, because we knew the Kingdom had not yet reached it. Three of us as a team were sent out with very little. After a few days, our money ran out, and we slept under bridges and were very hungry. Finally, we were welcomed to stay at a farm house. The farmer’s daughter was a deaf mute. So, our team would take turns fasting and praying for the Lord to heal her. After several months, the Lord healed her, and word spread through the entire area! Many people turned to the Lord and we planted a great many house churches in that region!



Focus:

1. Partnering Relationship: Mashiach sends as Team. 6:7
2. Power to Represent Mashiach: over unclean). 6:8-11
3. Provision from God: Freed to Meet and Testify Freely. 6:12-13.

Consider:

Previously, the Lord called his disciples to come together, that they might learn to build one another up in the Family of God. Now, in this next fourth stage of the disciple's growth, the Lord calls his disciples that he might *send them* in pairs (6:7) to represent him in the world, sending them out with his "authority" over the unclean spirits and "charged" them to go out by *faith* and go to households, finding homes to *receive them* to let them stay.

In this phase of development, the disciples will start to *take responsibility* to care for those to whom they are sent. The shift into spiritual young adulthood is the shift from a Self-focused on growth to a *shepherd* who takes responsibility to feed and care for the lost, the weak, and the needy.

So, as you see how the Lord cultivates his disciples to grow into Shepherds and shepherding partners, consider first why the two-by-two, partnering pairs are so important for Kingdom ministry.

1. Praying in Unity: Partners share in the Lord's authority and presence by agreeing in prayer to "bind" and "release" (Mt.18:18-20).

2. Proclaiming as a Team: When sharing the Gospel and proclaiming Jesus, household- to- household, partners can take turns either talking and interacting with or praying for spiritual breakthroughs, casting out unclean spirits.

3. Planting new Households of Faith: When partners lead households to the Lord, a new household of faith is planted, which can gather other disciples as a spiritual



house-church. In this way, Paul and Barnabas planted many households of faith as a gathering for disciples.

Case Study: Planting a household of faith.

Living in Chicago, I partnered with my friend K. to plant a home-fellowship group., which we designed to function as a homechurch. Here are what households of faith need:

Parental Shepherds: The Lord God appoints in every household of faith *parental shepherds* who will take responsibility to sacrificially care for his people K and I were the *main shepherds*.

Hosts: We found a host to offer up their home for the group. Although Aquila and Priscilla hosted and shepherded their church, we suggest a separate host who has the gift of hospitality.

Apprentice Shepherds: We looked for younger leaders that we could mentor to be sent off, eventually, to start a new group. Actually, we worked with 4 other apprentices so eventually multiplied two new groups from the original group.

Assistant Leaders: From among the group members, it is important to recognize gifts of the Spirit to be used for the common good: worship, prayer, serving, teaching, administration, all these gifts contributed to the health of the group. During our meetings, we worshipped, prayed, shared testimonies of God's work in our lives, needs and requests for prayer, shared instruction from the Word, and planned and implemented outreach campaigns. Some groups had regular "hospitality" events to invite outsiders to eat with them. In the end, our little homegroup became three households of faith.

1. Partnering Relationship: Mashiach sends as Team.6:7

When disciples reach the fourth stage of their development as spiritual *young adults*, the Lord entrusts to them very significant Kingdom authority and responsibility. Perhaps that is why he sends them out as partners, that there may be accountability and support in the spreading of the Kingdom in the world. So, the Lord sends them out "two by two" (6:7). If the "household" of faith is the most durable and naturally agile structure for Kingdom multiplication, then "partnering teams" are the strongest and minimum arrangement to plant and oversee these "households of faith," in the same way that every natural family unit is meant to have a *parental pair* to oversee the household and care for and raise the children.

So, disciples were meant to partner with one another to do the work of the Kingdom.

Note that there are two paired arrangements, depending on the maturity and the mission of the pairs. In this case here, Jesus sends out “partnering pairs” as ministry teams. Of the two disciples in a pair, one may become the “main” leader of the team, or they could simply collaborate like Paul and Barnabas as equal partners. Alternately, the pair may consist of an older “mentor” and a younger ‘apprentice” or disciple-in-training. These “mentoring pairs” could of course still partner in ministry together. For example, in an established “household of faith,” the main shepherds of the group may each meet with an “apprentice” separately. So, when K and I led our group, each of us mentored a younger disciple. When our primary group outgrew our original home, I took my apprentice and we started a new household of faith, while K and her apprentice stayed and oversaw the original household.

When Jesus Mashiach sent out the pairs into the world, he gave them “authority over the unclean spirits” (6:7).

2. Power to Represent Mashiach: over unclean). 6:8-11

Jesus also strategically sent them to minister to households which offered them hospitality. In this way, the conversion of a household would automatically secure a home for a home group.

Interestingly, Jesus Mashiach sends his partnering teams out with nothing but their faith—leaving behind bread, money, or sandals. Why? The pairs of disciples presented themselves to households as being impoverished, so that worthy households would have pity on them and invite them.

3. Provision from God: Freed to Meet and Testify Freely. 6:12-13.

Question:

Further Discovery:

4.2.B(24).Shepherd Teaches. Mark 6:30-44.

Read Mark 6:30-44.

³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a **great crowd**, and he **had compassion on them**, because they were like **sheep** without a **shepherd**. And he began to **teach** them many things. ³⁵ And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. ³⁶ Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." ³⁷ But he answered them, "**You give them something to eat**. Mark 6:34-37

Background:

³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a **great crowd**, and he **had compassion on them**, because they were like **sheep** without a **shepherd**. And he began to **teach** them many things. Mark 6:34

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have **life and have it abundantly**. ¹¹ I am the **good shepherd**. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:10-11

As you enter the fourth stage of your development as a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, you are approaching the full maturity of a member of God's House and Kingdom, taking your place as a Son and Heir destined to inherit the "heavens and the earth" (Genesis 2:4) as an heir of God and a co-heir with Jesus Mashiach (Romans 8:17). For, you have a life in you reserved only for the House of God- *Elohim*, a holy life that is eternal.

But, what is the *essence* of this new life, and what would a fully-formed heir of the Kingdom look like?

Because all earthly religions, including Judaism, emerge from family traditions, they reflect their highest cultural values. So, if you are a Jew, you would expect the fully-formed disciple to be a *scholar-sage*, wizened and bearded and immersed in hours of Torah-study, for you imagine eternal life to be an endless *shul*, forever ruminating and disputing Torah's finer points of legality. A Buddhist might expect

the extinguishing of passion or an endless rebirth. An evangelical Christian, chaste and never-ending worship or endless philosophizing about the wonders of the Gospel.

But, as the parables teach us, the Kingdom of God is all about explosive and exponentially unstoppable new life.

Jesus Mashiach reveals that he has come to bring an “abundant life” that bears spiritual fruit in a cascading cycle of generational harvest. And, to be someone who cultivates, nurtures, and leads people into this “abundant new life,” the ideal role that Jesus takes as Mashiach is that of *the good shepherd*, for the good shepherd is:

- **Possessive:** knowing *his sheep*,
- **Nurturing:** bringing abundant life;
- **Sacrificial:** laying down his own life for the sheep.

If God’s coming Kingdom is best understood as a House established for God and David to rule the earth.



And, it is established, as we have previously seen from “household” to “household,” then the fully formed disciple developing into a *parental shepherd* makes perfect sense, since the parents of households aptly function in the home as the family’s *shepherds*, responsible for sacrificially caring for their own “flock,” their *literal kids* as they grow up.

So, the underlying *family dynamic* of the Kingdom calls for the raising up and equipping of its sons and daughters as *shepherds* who will know how to protect, nurture, and care for other family members that they might thrive and also become shepherds themselves, multiplying the flock.

Paul understood the role and responsibility we have in the Kingdom Household to shepherd, knowing that the Lord Jesus himself sends us out as our “chief shepherd” who oversees the entire family as his people are gathered as his flock. Paul charges those reaching *maturity* as disciples to serve well as shepherds

² **shepherd** the **flock of God** that is among you, exercising **oversight**,^[a] not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you;^[b] not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³ not domineering over those in your charge, but being **examples** to the flock. ⁴ And when the **chief Shepherd** appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. 1 Peter 5:2-3

Knowing that shepherding and raising up shepherds is the generational work that must continue that the Kingdom of God flourishes on this earth, Peter exhorts we who shepherd to keep working until we see the “Chief Shepherd appear” and we finally are rewarded for our labor (1 Peter 5:3). Until then, we continue in this good work of being *shepherding disciples*.

So, as you read this passage in Mark, be sure to look for these characteristics of a *Biblical shepherding disciple* who, like Jesus, “lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).



- **Love:** As Jesus Mashiach displays, a shepherd is driven by his heart of “compassion” for the sheep. In the kingdom, this *love* is a *sacrificial love*, so the good shepherd is willing to “lay down his life” for his sheep. Such sacrificial love, even the love the Lord has for us, his people, only makes sense because we who serve and we who are being served are of one family.

- **Gather:** As the *Father* of his household, God arranges the family as he wishes. So, God will “call” you as a shepherd to your people, and he will “give” them to you for their care and protection. So, your first task as a shepherd is to “gather” your people into the safety of God’s kingdom as the flock under his care!
- **Empowered:** The Lord equips you and furnishes you with his authority to care for your sheep. That he will work powerfully through you as you protectively pray for your people and ask the Lord to keep the enemy far from them.
- **Feed growth:** Remember, the Kingdom is a place of spiritual life and real growth and fruitfulness. In the Kingdom, the Word of God is active, so you are nurturing, strengthening, and giving life to your people when you *feed* them with the Word of God. Do not aspire to simply teach or pass on information. Seek the Lord that you may feed their growth by teaching the Word of God (Jeremiah 3:15).
- **Lead/Be Led:** Finally, as Peter said, you are called to provide “oversight” to the sheep, to seek the Lord for his direction for the flock assigned to you. As a shepherd, the Lord will give you vision for your flock, making known to you his will and purposes. What you hear from the Lord, communicate this to the sheep that you may all walk according to his leading and will.

Shepherding Faith:

““And I will give you shepherds after **my own heart**, who will **feed you** with **knowledge** and **understanding**. Jeremiah 3:15

As you are *charged* by our Lord Jesus to shepherd his flock, remember that it is by *faith* that we draw near to our Lord and live and labor in his Kingdom family. That is, your calling to *shepherd* your people is the call to care for and cultivate *faith* in their souls.

Remember that you have seen how the Word planted in the lives of your people will either grow or be choked. When you feed your people and help free them from their bondages so that

faith grows freely, they will bear the fruit of the kingdom households will abound, and the rule of Jesus will be established as his Kingdom rescues captives from the darkness.

But, all the enemies that war against faith arise from the *flesh*, the old and sin-corrupted part of each one of us from which we were all called to repent. However, the flesh is not an *alien force* calling us from afar. No, the *flesh* is our old nature that defined who we were, the natural life nurtured by this world. So, the *flesh* is as close to us as the *memory* of who we were and what we had living apart from God, and it re-awakens with the smallest choice or the slightest turn of mind and decision to act.

And, the flesh is willing to *fall back* into spiritual deadness, soul captivity, hard-heartedness, or an errant mind. All these are drawn to this dark world, and by these our enemy *deadens faith* and re-inserts his dark hand in our lives.





So, we will see that the Lord trains you as a shepherd with the tools to help your people continue to *walk by faith* to grow spiritually and to rebuke the flesh, especially the hardness of unbelief that starts in your heart and defiles your whole body. For now, just know that your calling to grow up as a shepherd is the readiness to strengthen and nurture your people that they might always *crucify* the flesh and walk by the Spirit's sanctifying power:

For if you live according to the **flesh** you will **die**, but if **by the Spirit** you put to **death** the **deeds of the body**,

you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are **sons of God**.

Romans 8:13-14

Good shepherds help their people crucify their fleshly nature to walk by faith and the Holy Spirit's cleansing power!

Focus:

1. Accountable to Lord: told him actions and teaching. Mark 6:30.
2. d his Shepherd's Rest: Spend time with the Lord to Reconnect). 6:31-33
3. Align with Shepherd's Heart and Responsible Feeding. 6.34-44

Consider:

F

1. Accountable to Lord: told him actions and teaching. Mark 6:30.

When the Lord Jesus Mashiach sent out his twelve in pairs as *shepherds* on his behalf, calling to the "lost sheep" of Israel to come home to the Kingdom of God, he then gathered them upon their return that they might "tell him all that they had done and taught" (6:30). The disciples were accountable to the Lord Jesus, for no one in the Kingdom goes out on his or her own authority, individually, isolated and acting in their own self-interests. This "accountability" shows that even when we

as disciples mature and *serve* as Shepherds of the Kingdom, we are always serving as *subject* and servants “under authority.”

Remember, when you start to minister as a shepherd for the Kingdom, regularly “telling Jesus all that you have done and taught” (30), a regular debriefing and reporting to the Lord, you give Him the opportunity to give you a healthy response, *commendation* of having pleased him; or the lighting of the impact or further need for what you have just taught; or cautions to monitor going forward. The more accountable you are to the Lord, the more power and grace you will be given in your ministry.

For, as you gather *lost people* back home to the Kingdom, you are connecting them not to yourself or your team, but you are grafting them into Jesus Mashiach himself, as branches are *re-grafted* back into the vine or as limbs are re-attached to the body. So, it is important you, your team, and your people *stay subject to* and *under the direction and life-giving source of* Jesus Mashiach as the Head of his Body, the household of God.

Case Study: Detached from the Head.

Speaking as a shepherd called to raise up shepherds to care for the Lord’s flock, I confess that our greatest failure in the church was to lose our *accountability to the Lord Jesus Mashiach*. Eventually, we became only accountable to men, so that entire households, home groups, churches, and denominations were cut off from our rightful Head, the Lord Jesus Mashiach.

The creep was gradual, as we neglected this very basic routine of *debriefing* and *reporting* to the Lord all that we “did” and “taught.” We were not accountable to the Lord. But, in this age, *why should we be?* We let our hearts be seduced by the lie that we were only accountable to ourselves. Maybe to a higher leader or the other men in power. But, never to the Lord himself.

This *slide* from *accountable faith* to self-justifying *flesh* were rooted in deeper failures. First, our teachings did not *nurture nor protect the hearts of our hearers*, so the stones of unbelief because great boulders *impenetrable* to the reach of faith. Assumptions *about proper and popular theologies*, traditions of doctrines, and ecclesiological and societal seemliness crowded out any chance of the Word affecting these vast expanses of the heart now reserved for the flesh and its human interests. We left the heart untouched and second, we neglected to encourage our people to *crucify the flesh* to walk by the holy cleansing of the Spirit. Instead, the flesh covered itself in religion and became

untouchable. Until the churches were run by the powerful, the popular, and the ones most supported by and defending the *fleshly institutions of man*.

2. Accept his Rest: Spend time with the Lord to Reconnect). 6:31-33

As shepherds, not only did these first disciples report to the Lord all they “did” and “taught,” keeping their shepherding under the *authority* and *headship* of the Chief Shepherd. But, they were willing to accept the Lord’s invitation to *rest* in Him.

In the same way that Jesus Mashiach drew near to His Father God in devoted prayer, so he invites his disciples to draw near to him in *rest*. Jesus as “the Son of Man” is the “Lord of the Sabbath,” so he restores us when we let his peace “rule in our hearts” (Colossians 3:15).

By resting in the Lord after we have given ourselves in Kingdom Service, we honor him as the Lord who gives “rest” to our souls and carries our burdens for us (Matthew 11:28-30).

3. Align with Shepherd’s Heart and Responsible Feeding. 6.34-44

But, the Lord Jesus and his disciples never make it to their place of rest. For, as Jesus and his disciples were nearing their destination, the “great crowd” of needy sheep surrounded them.



#1: First Mark of a Shepherd: Love.

and Jesus Mashiach was quick to teach his growing disciples the first and greatest reason to serve as disciples in the Kingdom: Love. Seeing the crowds, Jesus “had **compassion** on them because they were like **sheep** without **a shepherd**” (Mark 6:34). The *shepherd’s heart* of Jesus was moved within him, and he could not but help them.



This is the reason true shepherds of the kingdom must never be *ruined by the flesh*, for the life ruled by the flesh will never be willing to *sacrifice* to advance God’s Kingdom. The Kingdom becomes against the very *nature* of the one ruled by the flesh.

#2: Feeding for Growth:

So, moved by *love*, Jesus then gives these *lost sheep* what they need the most, spiritual food. Remember, *shepherds after God’s own heart* will “feed the people with knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah 3:15)—that is, the “spiritual words” which alone give life (John 6:63).

#3: Responsibility for People Gathered.

But, the care of Jesus does not simply end with the lesson. When his disciples urged him to “send them away” (36), thinking that their responsibility for the people ended when they have discharged their duty to teach, Jesus tells them: “You give them something to eat” (37)—the Lord has entrusted these people to you to shepherd, it is as if Jesus was saying to them, so you step up and take responsibility to care for them! So, Jesus first directed the disciples to *gather* these needy ones into “groups of fifties and hundreds” (40) to be fed.

Likewise, as a disciple facing the crowds of needy sheep who are hungry for *food* they have never yet tasted, first feel the Lord move your heart for them and then accept the responsibility for them that the Lord is offering. He will give you insight on how to “gather them” to be fed.

#4: Pray Protectively.

Jesus then modeled for them how to overcome the impossibility of the shepherd's task by praying (41). Taking the little that they had, "five loaves and two fish," Jesus looked up to "heaven" to let God pour out his gracious power to meet the needs of these sheep.

As a shepherd, you will surely come before the Lord with your team, holding only "five loaves and two fish." But, you come before the Lord God knowing two certainties by faith: "You O Lord have given these people here to our care. And you, O Lord, have the power to provide for them. So glorify your name!" And all the people were satisfied! (42).

#5: Lead/ Be Led.

Finally, notice that it was the Lord Jesus himself who fed the sheep, for he first commanded the sheep to be gathered, he broke the bread, looking to heaven for grace, and he gave the bread to the disciples to then give it to the people. In every stage of the miraculous process, step by step, Jesus commanded and the disciples obeyed. In the process, they never said, "Oh, we get it. We'll take over from here!" They led the people but they were being led at the same time!

So, as a Shepherd, avoid the trap of "fleshly religion" which is eager to say, "Thanks for the input but we'll take it from here." Or, "We get the idea. Let us take over." As a fruitful shepherd, you have the Lord's authority, but only proceed until his next command. Sometimes, he will "send you out" and you will go and accomplish the task in his power. At other times, he will need to lead you step by step.

Case study: Leading until his next command.

Long vision: In my life, I have had several *long seasons of ministry* when the Lord *called me* to a people, putting them on my heart. As a graduate student at the university of Hawaii, I felt a burden for *my people* for whom I only had a vague sense. Graduate and international students, I knew, but I knew very few of these. So, walking by faith through my 20's, I eventually teamed up with other disciples, and we felt led to host *dinners* for our fellow students. Several years later, after hundreds attended the dinners and sixty people developed a faith in God and a dozen became disciples. At our last dinner before I left Hawaii for Chicago, I remember sitting and eating, surrounded by a house full of friends. As I looked around me, I thought: "I remember when you didn't know the Lord, and I remember when you were lost."

God had touched all these people, and he said to me, “Behold, these are the people that I called you to so many years ago!” I felt the same way about the Jewish people and the obstacles keeping them from Mashiach. At punctuated moments in this calling, the Lord would open a door, give me an insight, and show me what had to be done. I remember the moment in my transcripts of conversation, I had the word “evum” written down, before I knew it was “yibbum” they were talking about and the “raising up of Seed.”

Task vision: Before preaching or teaching, I would wait on the Lord to know his heart for what the people needed to hear. After the prep, I would pray and ask for his power to help me speak to the people. Once, I walked on to the stage and the Lord said, “I have something else for you to say.” Putting away my notes, the Lord gave me the message I wanted the people to hear.

Point-to-point Guidance: Once, my two favorite young disciples whom the Lord had brought together and were a week or so away from marriage called me to tell me that the marriage was off. Rushing to meet with them, I only brought three dinners to share, having no idea what anyone could do. As I drove, I threw myself at the Lord’s feet for mercy. For them, for me—none of us had anything good going on. After dinner, praying frantically to the Lord for help, one thing at a time came to me, I said or asked a question, shared a verse, listened a lot, prayed through it all. Slowly, the knot began to untangle until all was better.

4.3.BP(25).Accountable Prayer. 6:45-52

Read Mark 6:45-52.

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he **dismissed** the crowd. ⁴⁶ And after he had taken **leave** of them, he went up on **the mountain to pray**. Mark 6:45-46

Background:

As a younger disciple, you have already learned from the Lord Mashiach's example how to draw near to God in "Devotional Prayer." Now, as you mature, the danger is that you *take a page* from natural human development and think that now that you are older, more mature, stronger, you necessarily become more Self-Reliant and less Parent-Reliant.

The key difference in the spiritual realm compared with this earthly realm is that we never outgrow the Lord God's rightful place as the most important Head and Creator of our lives (the place of honor as God), nor do we replace his authority over all things, including the House of God and our very lives as the Lord (possessor of all authority). As our Lord and God, his role never is vacated by time, age, or history.

So, we look to Jesus Mashiach and how he relates to His Father, Yahweh Elohim, his Lord and God. Consider that the Son of God has known Yahweh Elohim, the Lord God, for an eternity in the "beginning," yet he still presents himself to the Father in humble dependence and worship.

So, let us learn the lesson of how to approach the Lord God and Jesus Mashiach in "Accountable Prayer," especially after major accomplishments or ministry events or seasons. Do not think that he simply cares about the task being performed. The reality is that the love you share with the Lord God, with your Chief Shepherd, is always of highest value and priority with the Lord.

Mindful of what the Lord has given you and what he has called you to as one of his shepherd disciples, so come before him and "report" all that you have "done" and "taught." Now, we don't know the private conversation between the Lord

Jesus and his Father in this post-ministry prayer. But, let's just review the mission of the shepherd and topics which may have come up.

Praying for the Sheep:

When we recall the role of the shepherd to "call" his own sheep by name and lead them out (John 10:3), for Jesus acknowledges that the people of his flock are those "whom you gave me out of the world" (John 17:6). But, at this point, Jesus as Shepherd has just been ministering to the anonymous crowd.

Perhaps at this point, the Father and the Son are reviewing the time of ministry, and Jesus is hearing from the Father if any of the five thousand men who were fed, in addition to women and children, were among those whom the Father will give to Jesus. As Jesus Mashiach waits on the Father, it is likely that he is presenting this crowd to the Father, that he may draw those he chooses to step up and come to Jesus or perhaps that Jesus might meet them again to call them out.

Likewise, when you encounter the crowds, your time of review may bring people or faces to mind. As you consider them prayerfully, expect the Holy Spirit to guide your mind and your prayer conversation about some names who come to mind. You may discern the Lord's gradual change in their lives. As a shepherd, keep track of even the progress of those in the crowd who have yet to repent and join the flock of the Lord's family.

Case study: knowing your sheep. When praying in the Spirit for those who have yet to come into the Kingdom, be aware of those God puts on your heart and your desires, for Jesus himself called to himself "those whom he desired" (Psalm 37:4). Of course, test your heart and motives. When I was in Japan as a short-term missionary, my teammates joked that I was *called* to attractive Japanese women!

During debriefing times, it was important to discern the Lord's work in the people who were not yet part of the flock, who still needed the good shepherd. I remember one friend, P., a pre-med student who eventually became a psychiatrist. At first, he lived a wildly lawless life of drinking and debauchery as an atheist. But, as the Lord God began to make himself known, P. started to know not just God but his moral Law. As a sign of progress, one night P. had

gone back to a hotel room with a stripper he had met. As she was disrobing, he was struck by conviction and fled the room, saying, “this is not right!”

So, shepherding those before they are known fully by the Lord is important as you watch for sins of progress—a growing belief in God, a sense of his Law and a conviction of sin, exposure to the Word of God, and finally, the Gospel of Jesus, who calls them to faith in himself by repenting.

So, as Jesus surely prayed for these “sheep without a shepherd,” you also should be sure to debrief and discuss the flock before and after meeting them. Pray for:



PROTECT SHEEP

Protection:

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus is reported to see these “sheep without a shepherd” as being “harassed and helpless” (Matthew 9:36), for to be in this land of “darkness” in the “shadow of death” (Isaiah 9:2) is to be under the *trampling boot* of Satan and his malice (9:4-5).

So, to pray for “protection” is to pray that the enemy is kept far from them, and that the Lord may keep the “birds” away that the Word may start to grow and take root in their lives. Also, in the presence of God, you may be aware of emerging threats to the flock. You may sense a *dark turning* or a creeping *lawlessness* threatening the flock. Pray against this!

Case study: the defiling root of bitterness.

When my ministry partner K and I were training for seminary, we served as interns in a small African-American congregation in the wealthy north suburbs of Chicago. We enjoyed the rich hospitality of that little flock, and we learned to serve as “ministers” in training. Sitting on the stage in front of the choir, we learned that worship can be *felt* and not just *heard*!

One day, a new, *highly skilled* preacher took over the pulpit. His oratorical skills were unsurpassed. But, as K and I continued to serve, as we prayed for the congregation, there were warning signs that emerged. A misuse of the passage, or private unrepentant behavior. Once, on the phone, I heard the man yelling abusively at his wife. For the sake of the flock, I knew that a “bitter root” of unchecked sin, especially in the life of the pastor, would defile many. When it turned out that he was divorcing his wife, that sin would likely undermine many marriages.

So, I met with him one Saturday and asked him about the possibility that he may have sinned in anyway, to which he replied, “We’re all sinners, why should we repent?” I was forced out of the church, but K stayed to *protect the flock* from within, until another minister replaced this man. But, praying for the flock’s protection means to watch for threats from outside or from within! And, to let the Lord judge his flock in his time.



2. Feeding:

As you may be seeing, the private times of prayer before and after ministry initiatives are necessary both in your personal life as a shepherd and with your team: pre-meeting planning or regular times of intercession, as well as de-briefing meetups right after events are all important to stay in subjection to the Chief

Shepherd of the flock, Jesus Mashiach. One of the most fruitful times of accountability, both before and after meeting with the flock, are those times when you discuss with the Lord the Feeding of his flock. Seek his heart about the condition of his flock and what they need. Perhaps recent trials mean they need a diet that is especially encouraging. Or, they are being tested and need to be fortified in certain areas. After the time with the flock, debrief before the Lord and also with your team. How was the Word received? What did the discussion reveal about the conditions of their hearts? Any signs of *hardness* or “roots of bitterness” that needed to be weeded out?



· Caring:

As the Lord calls people from the crowd into the Kingdom community of his flock, and as they are known by name by shepherds, much of their care involves bringing them and their needs to the Lord. In the prayer times of accountability, shepherds tell the Lord of their needs and ask for his care and grace.

When caring for the sheep, you will need to discern the source of many problems and to see both the *requests* that a person may be offering up and the related issues of spiritual growth and faith, which they are likely ignoring or to which they are blind.

For example, young disciples will invariably focus on their immediate, personal needs. The need for jobs, or new vehicles, or a relationship. So, you as the

Shepherds are not necessarily their personal concierge. Rather, your calling first is to watch over their souls (Hebrews 13:17), their health and growth as children of the Kingdom, and their maturation as disciples of the Lord Jesus.

So, as you still assist and carry their physical burdens before the Lord, you are also looking for opportunities for spiritual growth and encouragement.

Often, this discernment comes in the presence of the Lord, as you are discussing a particular need before the Lord.

Case Study: What you really want- caring for needs.

R was frustrated. He had been faithfully been spending time with A, reading the Word of God with her, praying, and serving with her. A. had come to the Lord first, being redeemed from a substance addiction and healed from a broken spine and legs. R was baptized a year later, saved from a similar background. So, R would faithfully shuttle A around and assist her in her various needs. So, their friendship grew.

But now, A. was unavailable in the summer, spending weeks at a time at the family cottage. As I talked with R, I asked him what he felt he needed, and of course, it revolved around A and their relationship. However, I then asked him what the Lord was doing in his life—was his life meant to stop once A was unavailable? He soon realized that God's work went far beyond his relationship. He remembered his calling to be a disciple and how God gives us the strength to serve others but never makes those we serve the source of our strength. That next week, he started focusing on the needs of some younger disciples—bringing them to the fellowship or meeting them for lunch. Eventually, A. returned from the cottage, but R had learned the lesson of faithfulness—his true need (Matt. 6:33).



LEAD SHEEP

4) Leading:

When you meet with the Lord and wait on him for the direction the flock should proceed, be mindful of two different concerns. As a shepherd who knows your sheep, the Lord may put on your heart the direction he may have for individuals. For example, if a young disciple shows a heart for others and faithfulness in meeting needs, perhaps the Lord may be calling him to step forward into leadership. You may be the one to “call him or her” into service for the Lord. Or, if

a couple may be continually struggling in their communication, the Lord may be *leading* them to take a next step to seek help for their relationship.

Also, the Lord may have plans for the entire group. There may be an open door for ministry or a service to the larger family they may be called to perform. As the leader of your flock, the Lord will often put things on your heart to bring before the group. Or, you may seek the Lord's will over a certain opportunity that one of the group members brings forward.

In this respect, it is good to report your sense of direction with your shepherding team, for it is good to *test* words from the Lord discuss how to take action.

Factory or Family?

Finally, the fact that Jesus deliberately sought out the Father's presence, sending his disciples away after their successful ministry to the 5000 reveals the "culture" and *identity of the Kingdom*.

The purpose of this ministry event was not simply pragmatic, to achieve a certain result. This task-oriented ethos is not part of the Kingdom identity. The Kingdom's purpose is not simply to accomplish a mission. If this were the case, Jesus and his disciples would have simply concluded the session and moved on to the next task.

Organizations are *results-focused* in this respect, gathering people to fulfill a specific mission and purpose. And, once a task is done, the *workers* have no more obligation to the one who assigned the task, for the job is done.

But, the Kingdom is a Family, not a factory. So, tasks are done with the *never-ending* relationship in sight. A completed task is a gift, a sacrificial work offered to honor the One who assigned it. For the purpose of a family is live as a family, to grow, to progress in maturity together, and to gather the *lost members* who belong in the safety of home.



So, Jesus draws near to the Father to know his pleasure, to hear his commendation, and to talk about their future and the future of the family.

Focus:

1. Debrief with Lord after Ministry. 6:45.
2. Depart to a place of seclusion). 6:46
3. Deal Graciously with Others: Encourage weaker. 6:47-52

Consider:

As a shepherd, practicing *accountable prayer* does not hold any magical guarantees of change. What accountability represents as the “tip of the iceberg” is the broader *mindset* of the Kingdom of God, which is a *family oneness* we see rooted in the Godhead of Father, Son, and Spirit. For, *accountability* is the evidence of a deeper interdependence and trust shared in our Family Kingdom. Accountability is the opposite of the *default instinct of the flesh*, a self-interested independence that will hollow out the unity of the Kingdom family, carving out *pockets of self-interest, division, and factions*.

As we consider how the Lord Jesus embodied this sense of healthy *accountability*, first modeling it for his disciples and then *living it out* in his gracious interactions with them.

Accountable prayer for everything you do in the Kingdom family and a transparent accountability with your partnering shepherds making up your own household of faith shields you from the encroaching of fleshly *self-*

interested independence of action, which narrows your world until there is no one to change you from a course of Self-Interest that will end up ruling your life and pitting you against the Lord’s Kingdom interests!



Case Study: Numbing Independence.

In the Bible, it is the height of folly to be so detached that *no one can speak to you*, as was the case with the *worthless* Nabal. But, I’ve found that leaders who are unaccustomed to accountability follow the same desensitizing path.

For years, our church was led by J, the senior pastor. One might think that his introverted personality kept him from sharing what was on his mind, even with his team of fellow shepherds. As a pastor on his team, I often heard of major decisions when a general announcement was made.

Instead, J. kept a tight circle of those whom he would talk with. Increasingly, the circle became less and less diverse, eventually looking identically like J himself. Of course, when one only listens to voices that could be your own, then one's voice is all that matters.

So, after embarking in a church audit that cast a new five-year vision for the church, J announced that he was resigning and moving back to his home country. No advice or feedback was asked of his fellow pastors nor elders, simply an announcement was made. It turns out, it was more convenient for J to move, having received a job offer from a Bible Belt church where his college-aged children would be studying. Was indeed J called by God? Only God knows. But, without a commitment to accountability, the line between personal self-interest and the calling of God disappears.

1. Debrief with the Lord after Ministry. 6:45.

After Jesus Mashiach finishes ministering to the five thousand men, he takes deliberate steps to present himself to his Father in *accountable prayer*: he sends his disciples ahead of himself by boat to Bethsaida and then he stays to dismiss the crowd (45). Only after he is left alone does Jesus ascend the mountain to pray.

2. Depart to a place of seclusion. 6:46

As we have considered, there are many things that we would expect Jesus to discuss with the Father. And, there are many reasons why "Accountable Prayer" is fundamental to and protective of the Kingdom. Simply, Jesus prays after the conclusion of his ministry, and we should too. Whether as an individual shepherd or with our shepherding team during our *post-ministry* de-briefing, it is good to present ourselves to the Lord in prayer. To report to him, to seek his input, and to be open to what he is planning next.

If anything, *accountable prayer* gives you a sense of what the Lord thought about what just transpired. Hopefully, you will hear the words, "well done."

3. Deal Graciously with Others: Encourage weaker. 6:47-52

Spending time resting before your Lord in his great mercy and acceptances will change you. When Jesus concludes his prayer time, he turns to find his disciples and saw them making "painful" progress (48).

Having spent time with his *great father*, Jesus is gracious with his *weak disciples*. Seeing them in their terror, he changes plans to walk past them to their destination. Instead, he stops to encourage them: “Take heart.. do not be afraid” (50) he says to them.

Thus, as a shepherd, spending time in *accountable prayer* before your Lord will surely change your perspective too. Bathed in the mercy and pleasure of the Father, you will begin to see what he sees, a people weak, terrified, and needing encouragement in their unbelief.

Question:

Further Discovery:

4.4.C(27).Instructing Hard Hearts. Mark 7:1-13

Read Mark 7:1-13.

And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “‘This people honors me with their **lips**, but their **heart is far** from me; ⁷in vain do they **worship** me, teaching as doctrines the **commandments of men**.’ ⁸You leave the **commandment** of God and hold to the **tradition** of men.” ⁹And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the **commandment** of God in order to establish your **tradition**! 7:6-9.

Background:

When Jesus Mashiach, the Chief Shepherd, sends you to gather and care for his flock as his *shepherding- disciples*, he sends you out to shepherd under his authority. You represent him, are responsible for all that is his, and you shepherd on his behalf.

One of your primary responsibilities is to *feed* his sheep with “knowledge and understanding” that they might grow spiritually in their faith (Jeremiah 3:15).

Realizing from the parable of the Sower that there are a number of obstacles which conspire to stop, derail, or paralyze their faith, you must be able to help them overcome these obstacles.

So, if their souls are captivated by Satan’s evil devices, help to free them. If their minds are misguided, we will soon consider how to “instruct” those who are misguided.

As a shepherd, one of the hardest areas to shepherd is the heart, the deepest part of human nature that is hidden but which is most vulnerable to the hardening effects of sin and unbelief. And, once compromised, the hard heart will stop and quickly reverse any spiritual progress and quench the Spirit’s work.

Over the next three units, we will learn how Jesus taught his disciples how to minister to the heart—to instruct it, to rebuke its defilement, and to correct it to restore the disciple to the righteous path of growth.

The progress of faith:

Before we learn about the place of the heart in our human nature and how the Gospel addresses problems of the heart, let’s consider how faith is meant to

develop to help the disciple mature spiritually to take his or her place in God's Kingdom Family. Let's hear Paul's view of our maturation in Jesus Mashiach:

⁶Therefore, as you **received** Christ Jesus the Lord, so **walk** in him, ⁷**rooted** and **built up** in him and **established** in the **faith**, just as you **were taught**, **abounding** in thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6-7

Clearly, Paul envisioned the growth path of the disciple of Jesus Mashiach very closely with the path laid out by the apostle Mark, which we have been studying.

In both pathways of discipleship, notice the progression from personal bonding with Jesus Mashiach (1 & 2), into the interpersonal growth in the family (3) and then sent into the world to plant the Kingdom (4) and then learn to live in the Kingdom reality (5) as was being established in Israel (6) and through the Gospel throughout the world (7).



At each stage of growth, the *growing faith* of the disciple requires him or her to *sacrifice* aspects of the old life in order to receive new life and growth, eventually being willing like Jesus to lay down one's life to give life to the family.

These increasingly difficult challenges to the flesh until its total surrender to serve one's family members in the Household and bring the lost into the Kingdom—these increasingly costly sacrifices at each stage terrify the “flesh” and offer the disciple the easy path—to open one's heart to *unbelief* to stifle the growing threat of discipleship to the flesh. So, the disciple moving into stage 3 and the inter-dependence of being “rooted” with the other family members will worry the *flesh*, so that one will latch on to falsehood to stall the encroaching growth of

the Spirit. So, instead of endeavoring to grow in a local church community, the disciple may find an online teacher or an area of theological study that will replace real relationships in the body.

So, shepherd, familiarize yourself with the seven stages of discipleship so that you can see where a disciple may be stunted or stalled.

Case Study: addressing heart obstacles.

When A. first turned to the Lord Jesus Mashiach for salvation, she saw a very early outpouring of grace. For, A. had turned to the Lord in a rehab hospital and was confined to a wheelchair due to a broken spine and legs. She asked, "Please, Lord, I would like to walk again." She was only 27. After she was healed, she struggled with a substance addiction until the Lord's discipline took everything away again. Then, for the next year, her faith grew as she abandoned her besetting sins, especially fleshly control, and as she gave up her enslaving addictions. But, as she found refuge in the family of God, she oddly started to get irrational fears of being in public. Her flesh wanted to drag her back into isolation. So, when she was assisting me with a work project, we had a chance in the privacy of the car to pray together. We asked the Lord to reveal to her if there was a deep-seated trauma or injury that the enemy was using to break her heart. Soon, a childhood memory came to mind, and she sacrificed this to the Lord to be dealt with in his way. After a few weeks, she wasn't feeling anxious about being in public.

So, as a shepherd, be on the lookout when your proteges stop maturing as they should. Come before the Lord and see what he may uncover.

Knowing the Heart:

The **Spirit of the Lord God** is upon me, because the Lord has **anointed** me to bring **good news to the poor**; he has sent me to **bind up the brokenhearted** to proclaim **liberty** to the **captives**, and the **opening** of the prison to those who are **bound**; 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to **comfort** all who **mourn**; 3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the **oil of gladness** instead of **mourning**, the garment of **praise** instead of a **faint spirit**; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified. Isaiah 61:1-3

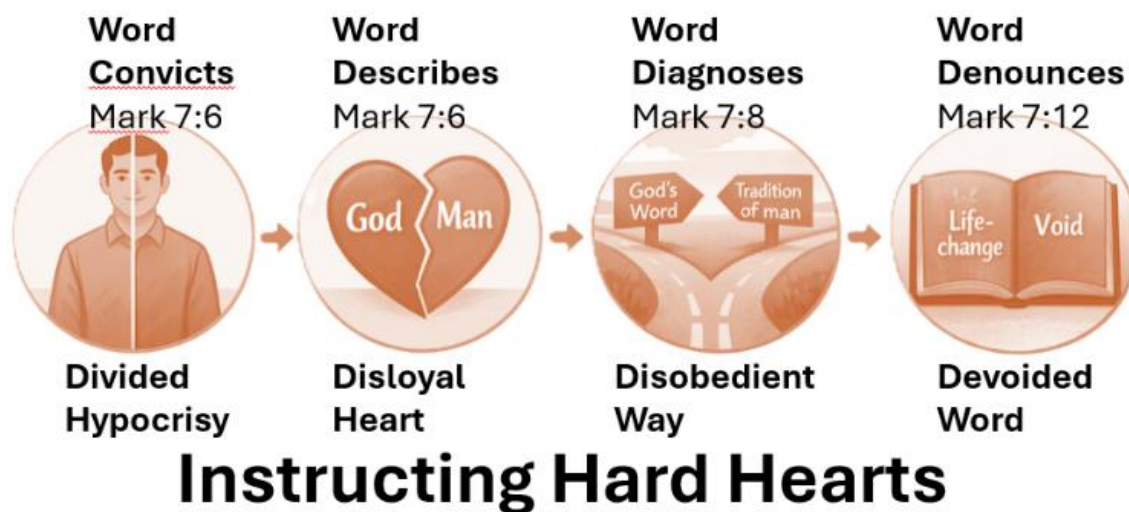
When you read the Mashiach disclose the work that he has been anointed to accomplish, do you notice that he touches on all aspects of our human nature that can be broken so that our flesh might prevent faith from growing up? The parables talk about the soul bondage like a trampled path, heart hardness like a rocky road, a misguided mind like choking weeds. Isaiah describes something similar. Notably, see how deep and inaccessible are the *broken areas of our hearts*.

Let's discover how the Lord ministered to the heart to release the growing faith of his disciples!



Shepherding the Heart to clear obstacles of unbelief:

When Jesus instructs the Pharisees on their heart-hardness, uses the Word of God in several key ways to uncover the *hypocritical hearts* of these critics.



When the Pharisees attack the disciples of Jesus for not following the customs to *wash their hands* before eating, Jesus uses the Word of God to instruct them on the real problem, the state of their own hearts.

Notice the overall strategy of Jesus to instruct these religious authorities whose hearts are broken by hypocrisy. When they approach Jesus to criticize his disciples, they assume that they are completely right. Their broken hearts delude them to think that their *Self-Righteousness* was flawless.

In this way, when someone's heart is broken by a hardened unbelief, causing them to reject any new inroad of the Word of God, then this brokenness will also delude them into thinking they are not broken but whole, complete, and flawless. So, Jesus uses the Word of God to show them their brokenness—that there are contradictions, disjunctions, or inconsistencies in their lives. And, he does this using the Word of God.

1. **Convicting Hypocrisy:** Lips and Hearts (7:6). First, Jesus uses the prophecy from Isaiah to apply directly to their behavior. Isaiah prophesies that a people will honor him with their “lips,” but their hearts will be “far” from him, attached to something else. If these Pharisees are honest with themselves, they will feel this disjunction and be convicted by the Word.

2. **Describing Hypocrisy:** Disloyalty. Once Jesus uncovers their inconsistent hearts, he goes on to describe this hypocrisy. Their worship is worthless because they are disloyal, teaching what they truly value, the “commandments of men” (6). Again, this explanation forces them to consider their reality, and agree with Jesus that they love the “commandments of men.”

3. **Diagnoses Source:** Leave way of God's Word, uphold and support way of Tradition. In his instruction, Jesus then gets to the very source of the Pharisees hypocrisy. Deep in their hearts, at the very cherished place of the heart, these men cherish human “tradition” more than even God's truth.

4. **Denounce Outcome:** Void the Word of God by your path. Brilliantly, Jesus starts with the Word of God and the Torah's command to “honor father and mother.” He then traces out how their human commands and teachings work out in real life, resulting that the Word of God is actually voided.

Jesus instructs these Pharisees using the Word of God to show them the complete error and inconsistency of their ways: the Word convicts them of their hypocrisy, explains their error, reveals the ultimate reason for this error, and denounces the final outcome of their fleshly approach and teaching. Rather than

blameless and Self-Righteous, they are shown to be inconsistent, disloyal, and engaged in the condemned action of “voiding the Word of God.” (11).

Focus:

1. Convicts the Pharisees of Hypocritical Hearts: disjointing words and hearts. 7:1-6.
2. Explains this hypocrisy and diagnoses its deep cause. 7-8.
3. Denounces the outcome of their teachings by comparing their words to the straight path of the Word of God. (9-13).

Consider:

As a shepherd, you will likely encounter people in your flock whose hearts are being hardened by unbelief. What was once whole and focused on the receiving the Word of God fully now starts to rationalize, deny, minimize, or block it. Perhaps the hardening has already occurred, and you are starting to see signs of unbelief keeping the Word from bearing fruit. You may see fleshly bruit. Or Hypocrisy. Or judgment, legalism, or fleshly religion. As a shepherd, prepare to instruct these dear ones with the Word of God. Let's discover how Jesus did it.

1. Convicts the Pharisees of Hypocritical Hearts: disjunctive words and hearts. 7:1-6.

Likely from the very start, Jesus knew that this delegation of Pharisees and scribes who surrounded him, having traveled all the way from Jerusalem (1), were suspect. For, out of the “heart” the mouth speaks, and the first recorded words of this group was pure judgment: Why did the disciples not follow the traditions of the elders but eat with unwashed hands? (5). Something was going on at the heart level so that it was not faith which spoke but unbelief, as these men clung to a Self-Righteousness rather than the faith of Abraham, who “believed God and was credited as righteous” (Genesis 15:6).

So, to respond to these accusers, Jesus finds Isaiah's prophecy of Isaiah 29:13 to describe the state of their hearts—a hypocrisy, claiming with their lips to be Godly but denying God by their actions. Their “lips” honored God but their “hearts” were far from wanting to honor him.

Now, when we apply the Word of God to show people the state of their hearts, what will ensure that they will hear and be convicted of their sin? Remember that life-change or repentance does not often happen instantly. As the Lord says, “it is the kindness of God that leads us to repentance.” So, Jesus is merely laying out the basis of instruction here. He will then *lead them* through steps that will *lead* them to reconsider. We don’t see any indication that these men addressed here repented at the words of Jesus. However, we *do* know that of the number of the first disciples, many came from the *Pharisees and scribes*.

Here is the reality of how the *flesh operates*. When people are so thoroughly blinded by the flesh, and when this blindness is simply reinforced by all the other blinded friends and voices in their lives, they are thoroughly convinced and hardened.

But, when Jesus or you hold up the Scriptures like a mirror, there is always a splinter of *conscience* that the Lord has built in to us—a capacity for *self-reflection* and *self-judgment*. When Jesus brings up the *touchpoints* or *keywords* of the Scriptures—here, “lips honor” but “heart is far,” these are the seeds that penetrate and await growth. For, they will think about what their lips are saying, but hopefully, they will also consider the state of their *hearts*.

 When sharing the Word, identify the *touchpoints*—key words that will stick in the minds of your hearers and be the basis of self-reflection.

2. Explains this hypocrisy and diagnoses its deep cause. 7-8.

When the Word points out the hypocrisy of these men, that there is a disconnect between what their lips say and what their hearts value, this charge will stick until it is either dismissed or refuted. Before this can happen, Jesus continues, *explaining further* what this disconnect looks like. He continues quoting Isaiah 29:11, claiming that their “worship” is emptied because what they truly honor and teach are the mere “**commandments** of men” (7). Now, we identify the force that is *distancing* their hearts from God. Their fleshly relationships, which produce their own commandments and *religious authority*, is in direct competition with God.

Here, it seems as if Jesus is paraphrasing the original text of Isaiah 29:13, using the general word “worship” for the more specific language of “fear of God” and even “drawing near.”

Again, using the *touchpoint* “worship” makes it easier for his listeners to Self-assess their own lives.

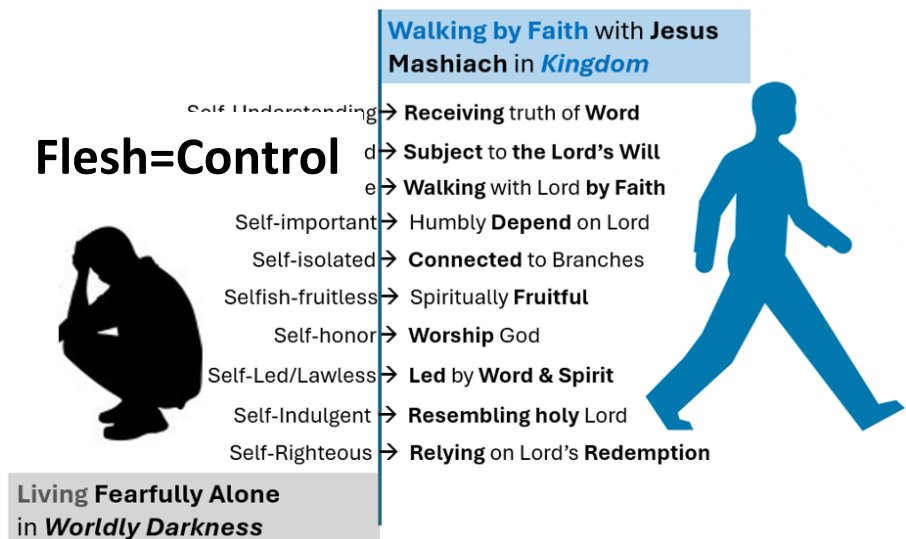
Now, after having applied and explained what Scripture says about the condition of their heart, the *Physician* offers his diagnosis. This is the root problem, the “hardness” that has taken root in their hearts that has caused this *shift* from God to Man.

These Pharisees, for whatever reason, have “left the **commandment** of God” in order to “hold to the **tradition** of men.” (8). For men who ostensibly uphold the Torah, the commandments of God, to hear that they have “left the commandment of God” is a hammer blow to the very foundation of their lives. But, Jesus names the root cause of their hardness as subtle as “tradition” uncovers this *area of hardness and unbelief* so that it can be dislodged and the heart cleansed.

Holding to the “tradition of men” generates an alternate *authority* that is more immediate and reinforcing than the heavenly Word, and Israel’s history has shown from the start that the fleshly *community’s consensus* has always competed with God’s authority for its religious identity—seeking to rename Elohim as “our gods” (Exodus 32:1).

As a shepherd using the Word of God to diagnose the hardening of the heart by unbelief, know that there are a myriad of forms that the disease of unbelief takes, but it is more useful to recognize the *flesh* and its consistent tendency to *replace God’s place of Lordship* to install human control. Of course, the *flesh* seeks to unseat the Lordship of God-Elohim and to take that power to itself. So, when given the choice of simply submitting to the Commandments and Rule of the Lord God, the *flesh* seeks an alternate. The flesh will take the commandment and start to

alter, add, delineate so that it is now a *tool to enforce human traditions*. The *flesh can never co-exist with faith*, for faith requires surrender, and the flesh exists to rule not surrender. Even Job abandoned his *fear of God* (surrendered



Faith= Surrender

service) to insist on the possibility of be *righteous* apart from God, a Self-Righteousness, a “rightness” based on human consensus, human understanding, and tradition. That is what Eve sought originally when she hoped the fruit would “make one wise” (apart from God). So, recognize that tradition is simply a tool of the flesh. This *fleshly decision* to hoist “Tradition” alongside the “Commandments of God” will centuries later be codified in an entirely *fleshly Jewish creation*, produced by its accumulated tradition as the “Oral Torah.”

3. Denounces the outcome of their teachings by comparing their words to the straight path of the Word of God. (9-13).

Finally, Jesus uses Scriptures to illustrate how the outcome of this *fleshly preference* of “tradition” over the “commandments” of God leads to a sinful outcome which they cannot deny. “Establishing tradition” and “rejecting the commandment” means that they are guilty of “voiding the Word of God” by “tradition” (13).

For some of these men, hearing that they have “voided the Word of God” might awaken them from their stupor. Notice how the instruction of Jesus took a *fleshly behavior* rooted in the heart and systematically uncovered it by his teaching:



Question:

Further Discovery:

4.5.C(28).Rebuke Defiled Hearts. Mark 7:14-23

Read Mark 7:14-22.

²⁰And he said, “What comes out of a person is what **defiles** him. ²¹For from within, **out of the heart** of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²coveting, wicked-ness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they **defile** a **person**.” 7:20-23

Background:

After revealing to the Pharisees that their lives were *hypocritical* because they honored God with their lips, but the spiritual reality of their hearts was a mismatch. Their hearts were more loyal to human tradition. As a result, they voided the Word of God to *establish* their own human traditions.

When Jesus continues to point out the shortcomings of these Pharisees, he starts by further analyzing their fixation with external practices. He makes a **distinction** between the seen world of physical and material reality, which has no ability to impact the realm of the spirit. And, the spiritual reality, which is the realm of the heart, so it can be defiled.

So, he says: “Nothing outside a person going into him can defile him. Jesus says this to show that true defilement and uncleanness occurs in the spiritual realm of the heart, which has the power to corrupt one’s whole life.



The main Jesus speaks against this practice of the Pharisees to focus on dirty hands defiling people, developing an entire religious system of “defilement” and “holiness,” is that it is an expression of what we might call “fleshly religion”—the efforts by mere men to create commands which determine what is “holy “ and what is “defiled” purely based on human authority. As Jesus had just instructed, such focus on *human authority* voids the command of God so opposes God’s rule and authority. Because it sets up a human-derived Self-Righteousness that voids God’s Word and promises.

Imagine this: because the Pharisees, by their teachings, had so convinced Israel that “cleanness” and “uncleanness” was purely a matter of ceremonial purity, as they had defined it, they completely bypassed a need for Mashiach nor his promised Redemption.

Focusing on ceremonial purity shifted the focus away from the *unseen* matters of faith and Spirit, which allowed the Pharisees to *whitewash* their own sinful practices: hypocrisy, judgment, and even resisting God’s Kingdom by rejecting His anointed Mashiach.

Today, little has changed for the Jewish people. While still embracing the *fleshly religion of Judaism*, which, like Islam, honors the Torah, but voids it by its traditions, creating a *ceremony-based religion and system of sin* which requires no redemption from God, having devised a *fleshly-human-based* system to attain Self-Righteousness.

Now, let’s apply the methods of Jesus to the current Jewish view of Mashiach: If *righteousness* could be attained by Jewish self-righteousness, is there evidence that the Lord God accepts this “self-righteousness”?

- Did God send the Jewish nation into exile to the nations (not just to Babylon) because they were truly Self-(attained) Righteous?
- Has God shown his pleasure to the Jewish people in their exile, giving them the peace and rest which accompanies his favor, because they have already entered their perfection as a nation?
- In this current crisis, which will worsen as promised by Ezekiel 38 and Zechariah 12, until all the nations surround an unprotected and defenseless Israel, will the Mashiach of Jewish dreams truly save Israel—a mere human who reflects the heart of Judaism—a scholar sage, victoriously appearing with Talmud and Torah in hand, waving his Talit over his head to strike fear into the hearts of his enemies?

If Rabbinic Judaism is truly the Torah and Tanakh based truth from God, furnished with the authority of God and not a fleshly religion, why have (by the time of your reading this) the hosts of followers of Jesus as Mashiach been taken from this earth?

There is a great testing coming, and if Israel stubbornly clings to the fruit of what Jesus prophesied was a “voiding” of the Word of God by preferring the traditions of man over the commands of God, abandoning the Worship and Fear of the Lord God for fleshly religion, then Israel all along has allied itself not with God but with the *Father* of the *Flesh*, who has from the beginning sold the “fleshly alternative” to the *submission of faith*.

When a group of Jews happened to “believe” in the words of Jesus, Jesus still said to them,

“³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:31-32

If you are a Jew, coming to Jesus Mashiach means you must be *freed of the flesh*. For, if you insist on clinging to *fleshly control*—to live your life with the self-awarded power to determine what is “defiling sin” apart from the Bible, you are still under the control of the flesh.

As these “believers” in Jesus eventually turned on him, refusing to give up their “control” over their thinking and their behavior, Jesus eventually said:

⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. ⁴⁴ You are of your **father the devil**, and your will is to do your father's **desires**. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44

Fleshly Focus or the Spirit:

When Jesus talks about the *defilement* that comes from the “heart,” he is referring to the nature that is natural and resident to all of us that is *irredeemably defiled*. This fleshly nature originates from Satan’s original deception and work at the tree, so all who choose to live *in the flesh* are truly the “children” of Satan, as Jesus says above.

Remember what Satan said to Eve:

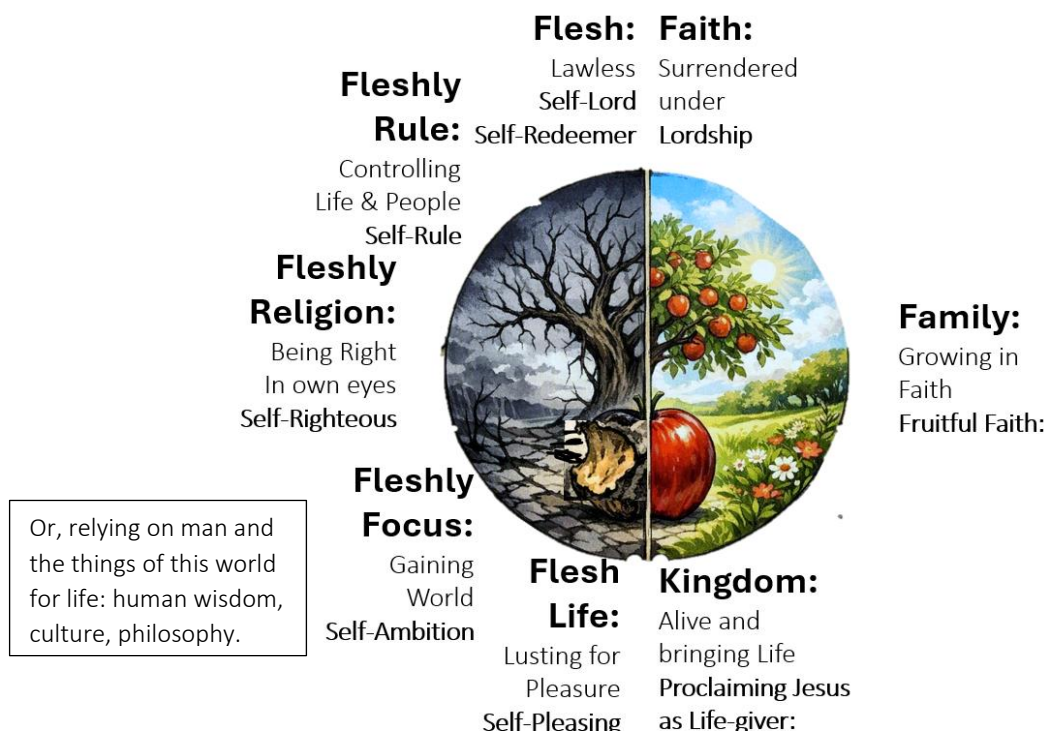
⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “**You will not surely die.** ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be **like God, knowing good and evil.**” Genesis 3:4-5

Satan appeals to Eve to live in the Flesh:

- **Authority:** “you will not die” your words, not God’s will have true authority and power.
- **Centrality:** “you will be like God” You will replace God as the Head and Central Importance of your life.
- **Righteous:** “knowing good and evil” You will determine what is “good and evil”—you can be Right and Alive apart from God.

This was the original test at the Tree of Knowing Good and Evil: would we remain obedient, surrender to the Lordship of God by faith? Or, will we listen to the serpent and create a world and a life of our own human, *fleshly* making?

So, to live in the flesh is to live under our own human authority and rule, not God’s. That is why Job’s fall from faith and the Fear of God to Fleshly Self-righteousness showed that no matter how righteous we are, our *flesh is irreversibly corrupted and must be redeemed—replaced with a new life!*



So, rebuke your people when they begin to lapse into the *flesh*, *especially* when they start to rely on the “flesh” so that faith becomes “religious effort that does not need the Spirit.”

We see Jesus rebuking—pointing out the error of the fleshly behaviors that threatened the integrity and life of these people:

- **Fleshly religion:** is designed by fleshly people and has no power to address deep-seated sin nor give life.
- **Fleshly heart:** is the *already evil* nature that we have inherited that abandons God and seeks life apart.
- **Fleshly desires:** when acted upon and followed, these *separate from God in sin* and defile the whole person.

Case Study: Cancerous *fleshly religion*.

Forgive me if at times this section became a cautionary rant against the *flesh*. But, I have seen the *insidious flesh* turn instances of healthy kingdom life into *horrible religion*. Read the book of Revelation, especially chapter 3 and the chapters preceding 20 on the judgement of Babylon to know how much the Lord also hates fleshly religion. In the “name of God,” fleshly religion put the Lord Jesus to death, will martyr a host of end-times saints, corrupted Israel for generations, and extinguished the Church’s flame of witness.

In your age of the Kingdom, beware the warning signs that the Church just overlooked as “human nature” because it was convenient to endorse fleshly religion, it brought people in, and it made money—until all our people became cold, selfish, worldly, and our seminaries disappeared until all there was left was well-funded cultural traditions.

At its heart, the *flesh* wants to look good and to control. When I was coordinating with the 20+ homegroup leaders what topics they’d be covering in the next season of ministry, the church’s senior pastor expressed the need to standardize what was taught and that it would be better to use books by published authors.

Such a suggestion was more fleshly and religious than Kingdom based.

- God appoints Spirit-empowered leaders for each of the groups, shepherds responsible for “feeding their sheep.” (Jer.3:15).
- The Lord Jesus as Head will lead each shepherding team to feed his people according to their needs.

- *Published writers a) have no relationship to us; b) have written popular content able to sell books.* What “anointing” do they have for the people at our church?
- The Kingdom requires to have *faith* in God and a measure of trust that the body, though not immune to missteps, will correct itself and build itself up by the Spirit. To “control content” in order to systematize Kingdom life will kill it.

That process of systematization, of converting what was by *faith*—alive, abounding, and natural, into *fleshly*—controlled, predictable, not beholden to an outside (Jesus) power interfering, is what eventually killed the Church. That is why I hate fleshly religion.

Focus:

1. Fleshly Focus: external rules to appear Self-Righteous. 7:14-16
2. Fleshly Heart is Source of uncleanness. 7:17-22
3. Fleshly Fruit from Heart defile person: lawlessness). 7:23



Consider:

You will likely be operating in a very different faith landscape by the time you read this. As the Church Age ends, so ends the age of *hidden spiritual realities*. Starting with the *great evacuation*, there will be a steady onslaught of Biblical prophecies materializing before your and everyone’s eyes. No more can you say, “Jesus is neither Lord nor will he come back for his church” for he will already have done that. And, the insulting portrait that Jews have conceived of Mashiach as being a *mere Shneersen* will, thankfully, be discarded in the dustbin of history. But, for what is coming, you don’t need a Shneersen. You need the Son of God coming with the clouds of heaven.

So, in this age, you will still need *faith*, but the ability of the flesh to *slink and cower* under fleshly religion, at least the ones currently available, will seem less likely. Instead, all the fleshly religions of the world will consolidate against the Lord Mashiach. Still, I think there will still be a need to caution your people against the flesh. As the Tree reminds us, the only safe place is the protective canopy of the Kingdom, spread over those who belong to Mashiach by Faith.

1. **Fleshly Focus:** external rules to appear Self-Righteous. 7:14-16

When Jesus calls out to the crowd to be heard, he addresses what was the prevailing appeal of *fleshly religion* at the time. A focus on the things “outside a person” (14) which can be handled in this world.

Again, the flesh focuses the *worshipper* on outward realities, what can be “seen,” because those guided by the flesh want total control, numbers, and data so they can rule over their realms. While Jesus admits that there is the reality of “defiling sin,” the spiritual reality of this defilement is *simply beyond* the reach of human understanding, human rules, and human acts of righteousness.

So, all we have to know about Sin is what the Lord God states in the Word of God. And, any attempt to replace the freedom and simple faith in Jesus Mashiach with any human, fleshly rule, is sin, as Paul argues in Galatians and Colossians.

2. **Fleshly Heart is Source of uncleanness.** 7:17-22

When Jesus says that the “evil thoughts” and other sins come “from within, out of the heart” (21), he is describing the *current state* of all humans born from Adam and Eve. For, the Lord God himself promised, “You will surely die” if you choose a fleshly life and not a life of faith (Genesis 2:17). So, we are all “dead in our trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) because without the *spirit*, which died in the Garden at the foot of the Tree, we are simply “naked flesh” uncovered of the Spirit (Genesis 3:7). Jesus is simply stating the reality of our spiritual condition. We are not simply “a little worse off” because of the sin of our first parents. Not just “mischievous” or “misguided.” We are spiritually and literally dead to God and powerless in our flesh. So, Jesus, in saying that “evil thoughts” and a host of other sinful things come from us, he is saying that we are already defiled and corrupted. The question is, how can we be atoned for and rescued from this defilement? Fleshly religion finds a rotted and dead corpse that is our *naked and dead flesh*, and it seeks worldly solutions to reverse its condition. It folds the corpse’s hands in prayer. Mouths words to recite in prayer. Forbids the corpse to eat certain foods. But, only Jesus Mashiach as Redeemer can take the corpse’s death and defilement

and give it life! So, all people need the resurrected life of the Kingdom, not fleshly religion.

3. Fleshly works from Heart defile person: lawlessness). 7:23

So, the fleshly heart is defiled because it is dead and cut off from the life of God. When Jesus lists the defiling evil that proceeds out of the heart, he says that when the heart's defilement is lived out in the body, that is the sin that "defiles a person" (23).

So, as a shepherd, it is no good for you to try to help people outside the kingdom "lead better lives." You are simply trying to teach a corpse how to become alive! Rather, introduce them to Jesus Mashiach, the only source of life.

Conversely, when you shepherd people who are already alive in Jesus Mashiach, know that they still with hearts that pull your people toward "defiling flesh." So, look out for signs that they are giving in to the defiling lure of their *fleshly hearts*.

- Jesus lists the desires of the fleshly heart here;
- Paul lists the *works* that are produced when our people act out the fleshly desires: (Galatians 5:19-21), warning that those who live in the flesh "will not inherit the Kingdom of God" for they are living under the rule of a foreign power. For, to live under the power of the flesh is to serve Satan, the source of fleshly defilement.
- Thus, the disciples of Jesus must "put to death the deeds of the body" which the flesh lures them to do (Romans 8:14).

Question:

Further Discovery:

4.6.C(31).Correcting Hearts Blinded by Unbelief. Mark 8:11-21.

Mark 8:11-21.

¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to **test him**. ¹² And **he sighed deeply in his spirit** and said, “Why does this generation **seek a sign**? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.”

¹⁷ And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do **you not yet perceive or understand**? Are your **hearts hardened**? ¹⁸ Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? 8:11-12, 17-18.

Background:

The task of Shepherding is *leading and guiding*, but consider the difficulty of Kingdom Shepherding, which requires the Shepherd to guide and lead in the unseen realm of the Kingdom, where the sheep are meant to perceive by faith in a world overblown and immediate, which appeals to their fleshly natures to ignore God and simply live in the flesh.

At the very end of this outing, Jesus arrives in Bethsaida with his disciples and heals a “blind man” (23). This blind man’s journey to regain his sight mirrors the path of the disciples who, though having been reborn into the Kingdom, need to be corrected by Jesus to see correctly. For, as we shall see in this lesson, hearts hardened by unbelief will see incorrectly and come to errant conclusions.

So, let’s learn from the shepherd one of the hardest tasks set before the Shepherd—how to correct *hardened hearts* to improve the vision and teachability of your people!

Walking by Faith or by Sight:

⁶ For to **set the mind on the flesh** is death, but to **set the mind on the Spirit** is life and peace. ⁷ For the mind that is set on the **flesh** is **hostile to God**, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Romans 8:6-8

Paul says that to “set the mind on the flesh” is “death.” In other words, as disciples walk through life, they are called to walk “by the Spirit”—that is, walking with the Lord Jesus and in submission to his Word.

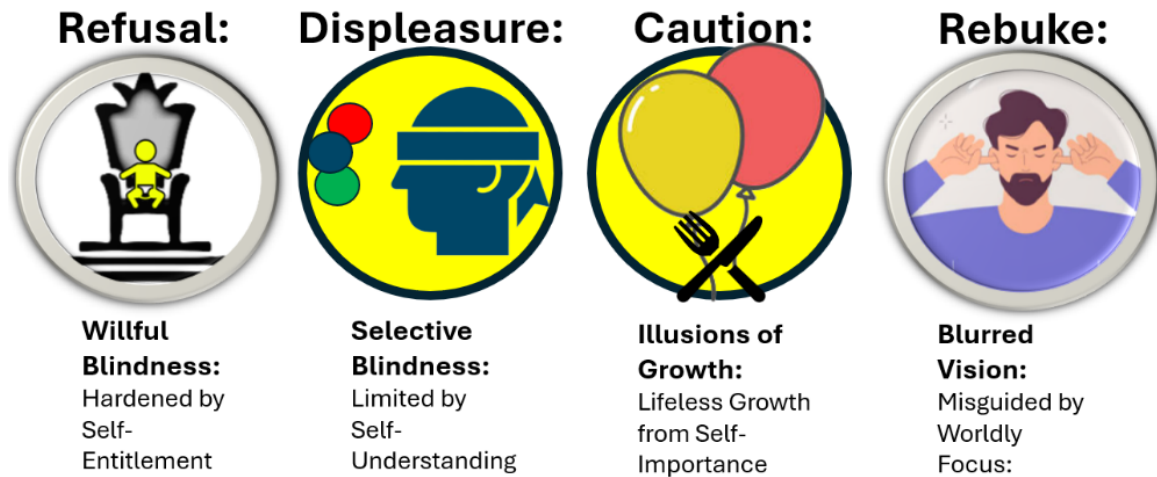
However, to walk with a mind “set on the flesh” is to walk as if God did not exist, that your goals, your purposes, your needs, your plans, are all led by the “flesh” and its desires. To live in this way is to live as if you are “dead” to God and “blind” to His Kingdom and what he may be doing in the world.

So, we will see Jesus correct the underlying heart conditions which lead to this *blindness* to God’s Kingdom and a deadening sense of unbelief.



In the first two cases, Jesus responds to the blindness of the Pharisees, who are walking by the flesh and whose “blindness” to the Kingdom is by choice. Then, Jesus warns his disciples who are also in danger of hardened hearts, even though they have been reborn into the Kingdom.

Correcting Hardened Hearts



Thus, as a Shepherd of the Kingdom, be prepared to face both types of hardness. Know the underlying causes so that you can also correct those who are outside and in the Kingdom.

Remember the words of Jesus on how to respond to those who are hardened by the flesh. It is far too easy to resort to fleshly devices in trying to correct those who are living by the flesh. But, Jesus says:

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. John 6:63

Resorting to long philosophical arguments, generating AI powerpoints or videos, even constructing positive experiences to entice the blind to come into the light of God's Kingdom have no power to "give life"—only the Spirit does. So, follow the example of Jesus.

Focus:

- 1: Unbelief from Self-Ruling Hearts: seeks to define life-truth on own terms. 8:11-12
2. Unsubstantial Teaching: from unbelief is dangerous- religious or political power. 8:13-15
3. Understanding based on Human Experience: blind and misguided. 8:16-26.

Consider:

The Pharisees come to Jesus Mashiach to “argue with him” in one of many forced showdowns in which the adversaries of Jesus attempt to argue with Jesus, having prepared argumentative traps for him and seeking to force him to contradict or disconnect with what he had previously taught. But, we see that Jesus does not do as they expect, and he never argues in the same way that his opponents argue. He questions, clarifies, explains, responds, or even corrects. But, knowing the *lifelessness* of engaging in fleshly debate, Jesus refrains. Instead, let’s discover how he responds to these four cases of heart-hardness.

1. Willful Blindness: Hardened by Self-Entitlement and Selective Blindness: limited by Self-Understanding. 8:11-12

When this group of Pharisees came to Jesus to “argue” with him, it is not that they were unaware of the power works that he had done publicly. In fact, one of their number, Nicodemus, secretly met with Jesus and admitted, “We know that you are from God, for no one else can do the signs that you do unless God is with him” (John 3:3). So, these men seek a sign “to test him” (Mark 8:11). That is, they are not just seeking a “sign” as a proof of authority to then bow down before him. Rather, they seek a “sign” that he may submit to their requests. They test him, seating themselves as judges on the judgment seat. So, we see that they come to Jesus with a sense of *Self-Entitlement*—they have the right to make demands of Jesus, to require proof as if he is a defendant in their *courtroom*. This sense of entitlement *blinds them to the true identity of Jesus as Mashiach*. For, even if they saw his power and recognized him as God’s appointed Mashiach, would they really *fall down before him in repentance and surrender*?

Thus, this especially wicked form of *heart hardness* that empowers the Pharisees by a Self-appointed *entitlement*, forces them to be *willfully blind*—that is, no matter what Jesus did, even rise from the dead, nothing would convince them. For, they are “willfully blind” because they insist that they are “entitled” before God. And, they have the right to interrogate the Mashiach and force him to acquiesce to their demands.

How does Jesus respond to them? He simply refuses to acknowledge their request. By “refusing” to give in to their requests, he shows that their positions are mere *human appointments* and their rights, human rights. Yes, they can gather social power, but Jesus refuses them any more credence than that. Though they

are entitled in this earth, they have rights in darkness and death, with no claim to Jesus nor his Kingdom.

Likewise, the “sign” they ask for would never be enough for them to acknowledge as *establishing and convincing* of Mashiach’s identity. They are “selectively blind,” seeing only what falls within the horizon of their own understanding.

But, that is the problem with the Flesh and the way that it hardens one’s heart with unbelief. The Flesh, trusting in its own “Self-Understanding,” can never know the True God who transcends the limited, fallen, material reality which the Flesh knows by experience. Thus, the Flesh will only see in its selective blindness:

- **Self-Justifying:** It will only see what proves that its position is “Right” and everyone else is wrong. ‘Of course, Jesus is not the Messiah, because that would mean I have been wrong. But I am always right.’
- **Common Sense:** what is seen must align with my experience and what makes sense to me. “How can a man be born again if it makes no sense to me?”
- **Consensus:** what is seen must be agreeable to the people who have the recognition and the power. “Jesus cannot be the Messiah, because no one I trust thinks so.”

Because those hardened by “Self-understanding” can never recognize or accept anything that is outside their own personal experience and the experiences of their *tradition* and *community*, that Jesus could be the Mashiach is inconceivable to these Pharisees.

Because, as we have already seen, they have long since *voided* the Word of God to see only what is allowed by their tradition. Ironically, Rabbinic Judaism has further narrowed its understanding of what is acceptable to believe about Mashiach by rejecting anything that might apply to Jesus as Mashiach. So, even though rabbinic tradition accepts texts as Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 12 as being messianic references to the Mashiach, modern Rabbis reject these.

Thus, for those who are resolutely blinded by their own Self-understanding and committed to a *selective blindness*, Jesus has only one response: “he sighed deeply in his spirit” and expresses displeasure at this “generation” that are all guilty of a collective unbelief. To the generation he condemned, he promised that “no sign will be given this generation” (12). That is, for the Jews who directly opposed and

reject Jesus as Mashiach while signs (not the ones they demanded) and miracles (the resurrection) were done performed before them, they still chose to be blind to Jesus Mashiach. Jesus is clear to these so willfully hardened. If you choose to cling to your own Self-Understanding and commitment to always being “Right” and “Justified” before God, expect nothing but silence from him.

However, this “generation” which Jesus denounced has passed, just as the generation which tested God in the wilderness all passed away as well.

You may be a Shepherd raised up to go to the Jewish people, and many will still be “willfully blind” and “selectively blind,” clinging to Jewish entitlement and their collective Self-understanding.

Be ready to reveal Jesus Mashiach to them, because your generation will see sign after unmistakable sign that Jesus alone is Mashiach, the Son of God and the Son of David! Signs to anticipate given to Israel:

- First, be prepared for the “**Rapture**” of the Church and its faithful followers of Jesus Mashiach, though many associated with the Christian church will be left behind.
- Second, the predicted “**Birth Pains**” will increase the pain and rebuke Israel’s sense of Self-reliance and any possibility of Self-Redemption apart from Jesus as Mashiach. Antichrist, wars, famines, pestilences, and martyrdom will all test Israel and shake its stubbornness before the Lord, insisting that it is forever Right.
- Finally, there will be **a Day** when the entirety of Israel’s experience will unmistakably shatter Israel’s hardness of hearts, as the nation waits helplessly as its enemies prepare the deathblow. When it **looks upon the face of Jesus**, knowing he is the pierced one (Zechariah 12:10), then it will certainly know as a collective that Jesus is its Firstborn Son and Son it had rejected. Israel too will respond to Mashiach, but not with words but with tears.

So, you who are called to shepherd the people of Israel in the Last Days, time your message to the *sequence of signs* that will unfold before your very eyes. Also, remember that Jesus Mashiach instructed hard hearts by uncovering the *dissonant areas of their lives*, especially as their “common sense” understanding of the world can no longer explain the signs unfolding before them.

2. Illusions of Importance: puffed up by religious or political Self-Importance. 8:13-15.

Fleshly unbelief blinded the minds of the Pharisees, but Jesus also knew that his disciples were still vulnerable to the flesh. So, he warns them about the ever-present threat of fleshly unbelief.

Fresh from his encounter with the Pharisees, Jesus warns his disciples, “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod” (15). When Jesus identifies both the “Pharisees” and “Herod” as being corrupted by a *leavening*, he was making an example of people at the highest levels of importance. Yet, Jesus compared them to producing “leaven”—an active biological agent that puffs up and expands in an unsubstantial way. If the Pharisees are vulnerable to a willful and selective blindness, they spread a worthless, vapid delusion of *importance*—that they things they do and say really “matter,” even though the reality is that they really propagate on people an *illusion of substance, of important work, of significance*. For, whether in the religious realm or the political realm, these puffed up people may produce *airy delights*, but they are as unhelpful to health and growth as selling them *balloons to eat*. So, Jesus cautions against the multiplying effect of this delusion of fleshly Self-importance, which can leaven a community and hollow it out.

All that lasts in the Kingdom is done through the planting of the Word of God as *faith springs up fruitfully* among partners and in households of faith.

But, hear the caution of the Lord Jesus Mashiach. We must never be like the Pharisees or like Herod, powerful leaders in their Religious or Political spheres of power. These men, hardened by a sense of Self-importance, leavened and spread around them an Illusion of Growth, but this was as *airy and lifeless* as the pockets of air filling a leavened loaf of bread!

For, this hardened “Self-importance” not only blinds them, but it also deludes those who are impressed by the appearance of growth, only to realize its lifeless and airy nothingness.

Self-importance and Self-promotion are fleshly sources of power that lead to growth and progress. However, especially in the kingdom, such fleshly growth, will giving the “Illusion” of importance, are really impressive but empty and lifeless shells.

Case Study: the epidemic of Self-Promotion.

In the late stages of the church, the church forgot the caution of Jesus to be wary of the “leaven” of Self-importance and the spreading delusion of lifeless growth. Instead, enamored with traditions of doctrine and men (usually) who championed these traditions, the church rewarded leaders who were *self-important and self-promoting*. These “great ones” amassed substantial followings, sold many books, and built great institutions. You would think the Kingdom had overtaken the world! But, within a generation, these doctrinal institutions imploded, one by one, as the succeeding generations became increasingly *fleshly*, until an entire *fleshly and worldly Church* was born. Despite the billions of dollars collected, the libraries of books published, and the vast empires built, the life and fruit of the Kingdom was replaced with lifeless and airy growth.

The Church, enamored with these *self-important* and self-promoting personalities, often saw these leaders of movements defrocked or defiled. The church had been deceived by the “leaven” of these Self-promoters. But, in the Kingdom’s reckoning, where will they be? One Reformer recommended the *eradication of the Jews and the excising from Scripture of the book of James* because it contradicted his theology; another promoter undermined the entire book of Revelation by his learned “hermeneutics.” Where is he now, having passed into eternity?

You who will shepherd Israel as it harvests the world for the Kingdom, hear the words of the Lord Jesus Mashiach: ‘Beware the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod!’ Remember:

- All teaching, including your own, comes from **One Instructor**, Jesus Mashiach, and we are all brothers. You should not be “inventing” your own ideas but always waiting on the Lord for what to teach.
- We are all brothers, so anyone has a right to instruct and teach the Word.
- Even Jesus did not claim that the teaching was “his” but only what was given to him by the Father.
- Do not exalt men or develop reputations, names, and ambitions, claiming “doctrinal lineages” or acquiring followings. For, we have one Father, and we are all brothers.
- If there are relationships that form in the Kingdom, let them be family relationships as shepherds gather households that form into multiplying

communities, clans, and permeating entire nations. Of course, pass on the teachings within families.

AT the end of the day, the only name that needs to be exalted is the name of the Lord Jesus Mashiach. (you don't even need to know my name, but its Derek, by the way! God-willing, we will meet each other in the Kingdom soon enough!).

3. Understanding based on Human Experience: blind and misguided. 8:16-26.

Especially when discussing the Words of Jesus Mashiach, it is important to not rely on our *fleshly experiences and understanding*, even as disciples in the Kingdom of Heaven!

For, after Jesus cautioned his disciples of the 'leaven of the Pharisees,' the focus of their minds and of their conversation immediately resorted to their fleshly experiences and needs, which misguided them. The disciples were hungry, so they assumed that Jesus was talking to them about yummy bread.

In the later days of the Church, as people became more fleshly and need-driven consumers, this approach to the Bible became very popular. People would seek the meaning of the textual passages:

- From the vantage of their fleshly needs, which became reading priorities.
- From the basis of their own experiences and understanding (which was usually based on a doctrinal tradition Reform, Pentecostal, etc.).

Instead, Jesus expected the disciples to approach the text by faith, seeking the Spirit to help them understand the warning against the "leaven" of the Pharisees and of the Jews.

Question:

Further Discovery:

Mission	1 Beget New Life	2. Bond	3. Build Family	4. Build Faith	5. Build Kingdom	6. Build House/ Homeland	7. Bear Sins
Disciples Stage	Reborn	Infancy: young child	Childhood: Older Child	Adolescence: Young Adult	Adulthood: Mature Adult	Parenthood: Young Parent	Eldership: Raise Parents
Growth	Receive Life (faith) Reject Death (repent)	Walk with (follow)	Plant Word- Teach Together	Represent Responsibly- Partner	Shepherd	Proclaim	Sacrifice
A. Raised up as David's Seed: 2 Samuel 7:12	The Son of God: (life-giver) 1. Son of God. 1:1 (life-giver) 2. Lord 1:2-3 (prepare)	The Son of Man 6. Authority: sp. Power/ life change. 1:21-34. 13. Grieved. Hard Heart. 3:1-12	Lord/ Head of House of Kingdom 14. Head of House Appoints Members. 3:13-21	Lord of the Harvest 23. Authorized Represent/ Proclaim: 6:7-13.	The Son of Man, Suffers to Serve (cross/ resurrection). 32. The Son of Man/ Mashiach Suffers to Serve. 8:27-32 40: Son of Man Serves: Gives Live a Ransom- true glory 10:32-45.	Raised up Seed. The Son of David/ The Son of God. 41. The Son of David. Merciful King. 10:46-52	Passover Lamb/ King of the Jews 57. Anointed for Sacrifice. Fulfilling Passover 14:1-9
B. Builds a House for God and David 7:11, 14	Baptizes (Rebirths) into House 3. Bapt. Rep. 1:4-6 4. Faith/ Bapt. Spirit: 1:7-8	Frees and Heals by His Power. 8. Moved with Pity. 1:40-45.	Appoints, Equips Members in House/ Kingdom. 14	Send out Teams to Bless Households. 24. Responsible Teachers: Report/Rest in Jesus. 6:30-33	Calls Disciples to Surrender to Serve: 32a. Servants Share Suffering: Lose life. 8:32-38	Revealing Himself as King to Children 42. Children welcome King and Kingdom. 11:1-11.	Lays life down Give Life to Household (Lord Supper) 58. Betrayed by Friend. 14:10-21 59. Bringing Life to Household by Sacrifice. 14:12-25. 60. Shepherd Struck: sheep flee. 14:26-31
B. Living in House: 7:11	Receive (Faith) and Reject (repent). 3-4	Following and Bonding with the Lord. 5. Follow Jesus. 1:16-20 11. Bridegroom: Kingdom celebrate.. 2:18-22.	Unity/ Encouraged to do Father's Will. 14a. Living Together in Household Faith. 3:22-30. 15. Family Relations. 3:31-35	Shepherding Needy. 24a. Responsible Shepherds: 6:34-42 30: Compassionate Heart. 8:1-10	Giving Kingdom to Little Children. 35. Kingdom Unity: Focus on Lord not differences for advantage. 9:38-41 36. Kingdom Innocence: Children pure. 9:42-50 37. Kingdom Faithfulness. Marital Unity 10:1-12 38: Children enter Kingdom. 10:13-16 39. Rich Ruler Blocked from Kingdom. Follow Jesus. 10:17-31	King Revealed to Israel. 43. Fruitless Fig Tree: Rejected 11:12-14 47: Seed Raised up for David. Willful Blindness. 12:18-27. 48. Law brings Near to Kingdom: Fear God. 12:28-34 49. Dual Sonship of Seed raised up: Son of David/ Son of God. 12:35-37	62: Crowd rejects Mashiach: 63: Sacrificial Witness. Testifies He is the Son of the Most High God" 14:53-65 64: Peter denies Jesus. 14:66-72 65. King of Jews Crucified. Hidden Kingdom Reality. 15:1-20 66. Crucified on Cross to Save Others. 15:21-32 67. On Cross takes on Dark Sin and Death. 15:33-41 68. Buried in Tomb. 15:41-47
Bp. Prayer 7:13	Confess Sins 3	Devote Self: 7. Devoted Prayer. 1:35-39..	Bind Up Strong man/ Hearing 14b. Prayer: Binding up Strong man. 3:27-30 17b. Prayerfully Hear Word to Testify. 3:21-25	Accountable for Mission. 25. Responsible Prayer: Resting/ Review w/Father. 6:45-51	Praying to cast out unclean Sp. 34. Prayer for Spiritual Cleansing: Kingdom Conflict. 9:14-29	Kingdom-moving prayer. 44. Kingdom Moving Prayer: Israel to be displaced. 11:20-25	Pouring out Soul to do Father's Will. 61: Pouring out Soul in Prayer: Doing Father's Will. 14:32-42
C. Establishes Throne 7:14-16	Testify in Baptism of New Life. 4a. Anointed as Mashiach/ Son: 1:9-11 4b. Earth- Tested as Son (1:12-13)	Bring Needy to Jesus for Healing. 9. Faith: Forgiven/ healed. 2:1-12 6a. Restoring Prayer/Presence. 2:29-34. 10. Physician Calls Sick. 2:13-17.	Cultivate Faith/ resist unbelief. 19. Fear/Lack of Faith. 4:35-41. Who 21. Family Faith: Overcomes Fear. 5:21-43 17. Fruitful Faith in Word. 4:10-25 18. Kingdom Grows Naturally. 4:26-34 22. Unbelief: Fleshly View. 6:1-6	Confronting Hard Hearts to choke Faith. 27. Distant Heart: unbelief voids Word. 7:1-13 28. Defiled Heart. Corrupts person. 7:14-23 31. Hardened Hearts. Blinds Perception/ Misleads. 8:11-26	Models/ raises up Servant Leaders: Surrender Life to Serve. 35. Kingdom Service: Great Position Last to serve all. 9:30-37. Kingdom Faithfulness. Marital Unity. 10:1-9	Confronting Israel's Unbelief/ rejecting Ma. 43a. Israel's Future: House of Prayer for Nations defiled by religion. 11:15-19 45. Authority as Mashiach Questioned. People pleasing. 11:27-32 45a. Dispossessing Heir: oppose Mashiach 12:1-12 50. Sacrificing Life: Offering to please God. 12:38-44	Seated on Throne after Resurrection 69: Women Hear of his Resurrection. 16:1-8
CR. Rules a Kingdom Forever 7:16	Multiply Sons for Family of God. 4c. Proclaim Kingdom (1:4-15)	Release from Dark Bondage. 12. The Son of Man. Restores. 2:23-28.	Plant Word of God for Kingdom Growth/ Build Faith 16. Sowing Word: Kingdom Growth. 4:1-9. 20. Free Unclean Spirit. 5:1-20	Restore worshippers of the Father. 26. Touch: Focused Faith: waits for Lord's Answer. 6:53-56. 29. Humbled Heart. Healed. 7:24-37.	Kingdom Power Revealed. 33. Revealing Kingdom's Hidden Glory. See Jesus alone. 9:1-13	Establishes the Kingdom in Israel 46. Spiritual Kingdom/ Earthly Kingdom: Serving God. 12:13-17 51. Last Days Prophecy: Kingdom Established in Israel. 13:1-4 52. Birth Pains: False Messiahs after Church Ends. 13:5-8 53. Israel Proclaims (3.5 yr.) 13:9-13. 54. Tribulation (3.5 yrs.): Time of Antichris. 13:14-22 55. Son of Man Comes. 13:24-27	Disciples Sent to preach Gospel to Nations: 70. Risen Mashiach sends Disciples to Proclaim Gospel: to the whole world. 16:9-20

						56. Fig Tree Ripens before Birth Pains: Jews to Jesus. 13:28-36	
Topics:	1A. Sons Heaven/Earth 1B. Promised Mashiach	2A. Sacrificial Faith: 2B. Daily Devotion	3A. Praying by Holy Spirit 3B. Households of Faith	4A. Kingdom Partnering 4B. Holistic Ministry	5A. Hidden Kingdom Glory 5B: Redemption Cycle	6A. Raising Up Seed for David 6B. Redemptive Timing	7A. Resurrected Life 7B. Kingdom Come.