

# Holy Spirit Placed Pastors –A Vanishing Breed?

By the late Calvin Perrigo (1993)

*(Editors note: This article has been one of the most read and requested articles. Its timeless instruction merits another re-print to further benefit generations to come and will be archived on the web@pastortim.org).*

**INTRODUCTION:** The church by Christ Jesus is in the world today to fulfill an honorable commission as ordered by Jesus himself. The Father and the Son are now seated in an exalted position as described in the scriptures. The Holy Ghost is that distinct divine person of the one God that relates to the church in this age. (see John 7:39; 14:26; 16:7. Revelation 2:7, 11, 17,29; 3:6, 13, and 22).

Any divine direction, leadership or advice that helps the church to reach its goal, (do the work required by the commission) will come through and by the Holy Ghost. In too many cases the Holy Spirit is expected to do things that were originally designed for man to do. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is accused of things that He is not guilty of directing or causing to happen. The need for this lesson has been prompted by the continued intervention of man into a very important phase of the work that was assigned to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Ghost had the privilege and responsibility in the New Testament age to have the final say when the church made selection of filling the office of apostle or pastor. The title of this lesson implies that this privilege and responsibility of the Holy Ghost may be in danger of becoming extinct. It is being replaced by an inferior and ineffective force, (unconcerned attitudes, personal desires and church politicians).

Come now, and let us reason about some common, present day methods and trends and then be honest with one another and with our Lord. How are we handling the placement of pastors in the Lord's church today? Is it really in harmony with the New Testament pattern?

**LESSON TEXT:** Acts 20:28. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

**READING LESSON:** John 21:1-17.

**AIM OF THE LESSON:** To show a more excellent way for the church to select a pastor.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OFFICE OF PASTOR:**

Perhaps the position of a pastor is not recognized in the proper light in this age. How important is the work of a pastor according to New Testament guidelines? The church by Christ Jesus belongs to Christ. It is His by ownership; He paid for it in full, with His own blood, having given

Himself for it. (Acts 20:28 and Ephesians 5:25). This one truth alone puts a great value on the church. The assigned work of the church adds to the true worth of the body of Christ.

Jesus gave the gift of pastor to the church when He ascended to the Father (Ephesians 4:8-11) for the perfecting of saints, for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of His body left on the earth. As a feeder of God's flock the pastor holds a very important position in the structure and function of the Lord's church. Without proper nourishment and care all living things will become weakened and must eventually die.

The Lord's lambs and sheep are to be fed the word of God by the pastor. The pastor has been given that privilege and responsibility by the Lord Himself. (See Acts 20:28 again and refer back to the reading lesson, John 21:1-17 also). The Holy Spirit placed pastor will give his life for the sheep before he will allow them to go hungry and suffer from malnutrition. Pastors that have been placed by other methods may react differently-the hireling may flee! providing for himself instead of the flock. The Holy Spirit placed pastor will provide food from a menu prepared and supplied by the Lord and will serve it in a way so that it will be taken and digested for proper growth and service.

Don't take the job of pastor too lightly! The Lord considers it a very important gift that he gave unto the church. (See Revelation 1:16 and 20).

**IN LIEU OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S INFLUENCE:** (Jeremiah 2:13) Let us consider some common methods used when a church is faced with pastoral changes. One of the most common questions asked when a pastoral vacancy occurs is: "Who can we get?" Another question is heard frequently during the early hours of the vacancy: "Who is available?" Many church members spend time with thoughts or questions such as these: "Who could we find that would move on the field?" "Who is financially able, so it would not work a hardship on us or him?" "We can't afford him." "He is too young." "He is too old." "He would never give up his present work." "He is happy where he is." "Is he happy where he is?" "We have a lot to offer a pastor." "We will have to get one without any experience." "We must have an experienced pastor."

**THE PULPIT COMMITTEE:** Some churches employ the services of a 'pulpit committee' when looking for a pastor. This committee is chosen by the church from the church. The purpose of the pulpit committee is to relieve the church of the responsibility of the small details that are always present when looking for a pastor. These details include: contacting prospective applicants, arranging appointments for trial sermons, recommending or rejecting certain applicants. The pulpit committee may invite church members to submit names of preachers they feel would take the church or make them a good pastor. The pulpit committee may seek outside information on candidates for the office of pastor. The pulpit committee can push hard for their favorites and they can play down those second or third choices. Pulpit committees may recommend one or more men to the church for their consideration. Do churches call a pastor that the pulpit committee would not recommend? It would be a rare circumstance indeed.

**FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES:** Some churches use opportunities as a method to attract a preacher. Young preachers are often contacted with this enticement: Pastor our church and get some experience; We will consider going full time if you will take our church; We are small but

you have to start somewhere; It may be the opportunity of a life time; (a now or never proposition); We will change our meeting time if you will come. The preacher may entertain these and similar reasons as he ponders the approach of some church member toward his pastoring their church.

**INFLUENCIAL PASTORS:** Churches (or members of churches) often turn to former pastors or other influential preachers for advice, recommendation or guidance in the selection of a pastor. Questions often go in this direction: "Can you recommend someone?" "What do you know about Bro. -?" "Would he make us a good pastor?" "Do you think he would leave his present work?" "Would you put in a good, word for us?"

**PERSONAL PREFERENCE:** Personal preferences are very common and are a strong influence in the selection of a pastor. It would probably be the last method to fall under the Holy Spirit's influence. Our personal feelings are often expressed in the following statements: "I want Bro. \_\_ for pastor." "I feel led (makes little difference by what)." "We had a good meeting when he helped us." "My dear departed really liked Bro.\_\_" "Bro.\_\_can build up our church." "He has a way with young people." "He can get our building debt paid off." "My family would come to church to hear him." Check for these and other methods of calling or placing a pastor in the New Testament and see how big your list becomes.

**WAYS TO PRESERVE THE BREED:** (Isaiah 55:8-9) If we agree, due to the evidence just presented, that the Holy Spirit placed pastor may be an endangered species, how do we prevent his extinction? This task may not be as easy as expected! A spirit is not visible to us and due to there being two invisible forces (God for good, Satan for evil) that wage war for our worship and services; we must be able to discern these two influences. We can have ears to hear the Holy Spirit. We should be able to recognize Satan's attempt to lead us astray. Those with ears to hear are commanded to hear what the Spirit has to say to their respective churches.

The Lord's sheep know his voice and do not follow the voice of a stranger. The Lord's sheep even flee at the sound of a strange voice, (see John 10:5). Remember the point of your salvation? God does not change! Our hearing may have become somewhat impaired due to many things but the familiarity of that still, sweet voice is still unmistakably clear to the delivered soul. Have you been saved? Then tune your ear to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say to you.

The Holy Spirit placed pastor can be saved from extinction by the churches staying within the Bible given qualifications and praying effectually and fervently for the Lord to make choices according to his will. Study Acts 1:15-26 for the scriptural way to make choices as a group (the church). Let Him, that knows the hearts of all men make his choice. Let your thoughts travel toward this great truth; **THE LORD OWNS THE CHURCH, HE IS THE HEAD OF IT, HE IS THE LAW GIVER AND HE DOES NOT MAKE MISTAKES!**

The Holy Spirit placed pastor can be saved from extinction if the available preacher will conform to God's way and let the searching churches know from the first contact that it is a Holy Spirit placement and that they plan to abide by His direction only and that they will not be swayed by any other influence. **PRAYER, FASTING AND MORE PRAYER WILL BRING HELP FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE SPIRIT IS INVOLVED, GIVE HIM HIS DUES. WHEN**

QUALIFICATIONS" HAVE BEEN MET, LET THE CHOICE BE MADE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE CHURCH IS RESPONSIBLE TO KNOW THE QUALIFICAIONS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PLACEMENT. BEWARE OF INFERIOR SUBSTITUTES, SATAN HAS A STOREHOUSE FULL OF THEM!