

"But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." [John 10:12-13 KJV](#)



The word *ōpastorō* comes from the Latin *ōpascereō* to feed. Words that describe clergy are reverend, bishop, priest, minister, and pastor. The Holy Scripture tells us that every believer has been transformed by faith in Christ to *"kings and priests unto God. Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."* Each believer ministers (serves) in the temple of God daily. *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* The Table of Incense which burned continually before the Temple veil was symbolic of prayer going up to God. *"Thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold and thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee....burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations."* Our prayers must never cease. Believers are commanded, *"pray without ceasing."* Each believer must be an able minister (servant). Those who minister for personal gain are *hirelings*. A true pastor serves regardless of compensation, we are instructed, *"muzzle not the ox that treadeth the corn."* Just as the oxen serve by treading the corn, the pastor serves by feeding the flock. We are to properly care for our servant leader's physical needs. Needs met will suffice the true minister. The hireling is always looking for bigger churches, and pay. True sheep will follow a true shepherd who cares not about the size of his flock, but about the lambs in it. Jesus said to Peter, *"Lovest thou Me? Feed my sheep."* He didn't say *"gather my sheep"* and didn't give Peter money or provisions. A true shepherd serves, leads, and guards. If the flock is following the pastor, he is a hireling. If, however, he is obedient to God the Holy Spirit, the flock will only hear the Voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Christ. He will preach and live Truth and the Holy Spirit indwelling every believer will bear witness to that Truth and they will follow. *"Jesus saith unto him, I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE. My sheep hear my voice and they follow Me."* The qualifications of a good pastor are love of God and a servant's heart. Love of God will rule his life. Many who lead large churches are not pastors. Many great men of God minister to small flocks. It's not herd size, but quality of care that makes a good shepherd. If your pastor left or sinned greatly, would you stop following Christ? Therein lies the Truth of who you follow.

The hireling flees when danger looms,
Leaving the sheep to death and doom,
The shepherd will all hell withstand,
To guard the sheep within his band. -CGP

Are you being led in Truth? Sometimes the danger to the flock is bigger paycheck or flock somewhere else. Good pastors will have a great love of Christ. What motivated the Apostles? Why are they followed? How does your pastor's life measure up to God's Word?

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." [Hebrews 13:7-8 KJV](#)