

# Leadership and Ministry Training (Question and Answer)

by Stephen Kaung

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*Stephen Kaung emphasizes the importance of shepherding in ministry, the role of prayer, and the divine nature of discipleship.*

**Duration:** 34:52

**Scripture:** Proverbs 27:17, Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:26, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Ephesians 4:11-13, Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 2:2, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Peter 5:2

**Topics:** "Discipleship Training", "Spiritual Leadership"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of shepherding others, starting with unbelievers if you are a new believer, and progressing to guiding and helping fellow believers. It discusses the responsibility of every believer to engage in shepherding, not being self-centered but useful in God's hands. The sermon also touches on the significance of interpreting the Bible beyond exact quotations, focusing on the spirit of the Word and personal experiences. Lastly, it explores the concept of discipleship, cautioning against humanly arranged discipleship and highlighting the need for divine guidance in mentoring relationships.

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## Transcript

Well, brothers and sisters, we have already reached the climax while we were at the Lord's table. So, I often feel it is better that the Lord's table will be the end of this conference rather than go down into questions and answers. Whenever I have questions and answers, I always like to say a few words.

The title, Questions and Answers, is a wrong title because we may have many questions, but who is the answer? Nobody can answer any question. The Lord himself is the answer. So if you want to get the right answer to your questions, go to the Lord, not to a question and answer period.

So, I hope, brothers and sisters, you will not be disappointed. I have received five questions. Usually I will only ask for three questions, but I don't know why the brothers gave me five questions.

Now, I do not pretend that I know the answers. The only answer that we really can get is from the Lord. So, if you have any real questions, go to the Lord.

It's only when you do not have real questions that you go to man. Now in the questions I have received, I will briefly try to share with you. I hope our brother, Dana, will give the full questions, answers, afterwards.

Number one, in the book *Shepherding*, it mentions about every brother needs to shepherd each other. Can you explain it on how to apply this to younger brothers, shepherd other brothers? Now if you have read the word--the book *Shepherding*--it is suggested in that book that as soon as you are saved, you are supposed to do some shepherding. In other words, we cannot just think of ourselves.

We have to think of other people. Now if you are newly saved, you need to be shepherded. Instead of shepherding--but this is not true.

Because if you are newly saved, it is true you are not able to shepherd other brothers and sisters who have been saved longer than you are. They know much better than you are. But there is a shepherding you can do, and that is you need to shepherd some unbelievers.

God has saved us, not just for ourselves. He saved us for his purpose. So after you are saved, God expects you to do some shepherding.

We cannot be self-centered. We cannot be selfish. We have to be useful in the hands of God.

So if you are not able to shepherd any brother or sister because you yourself are newly saved, but at least you should learn to do some shepherding with unbelievers. Otherwise, we will be self-centered and selfish. So every brother and sister, immediately after you are saved, you are supposed to do some shepherding, not with believers ahead of you, but to unbelievers.

We cannot be self-centered. We have to be used by God for his purpose. I remember Brother Nee used to tell us when he was first saved, he was very zealous for the Lord.

So he began to attack his fellow students. Whenever he saw his fellow students, he tried to talk to them, tried to convince them of the gospel. So eventually, all his schoolmates avoided him.

When they saw him coming, they went the other way. So Miss, not Barbara, Miss, I forgot her name, Groves, Miss Groves, once asked him, after you are saved, how many have you brought to the Lord? He said, no, but I have done my duty. I tried to talk to everybody, but they avoided me.

So Miss Groves asked him, had you prayed for these people before you talked to them? He said, no. So Miss Barbara said, pray for them first, and then God will work. So he began to put in his book a number of the names of his fellow students, and he began to pray for them.

And after he did that, you know what happened. All the names in his books, except two, were saved. God began to work.

And brothers and sisters, it's always good to do some shepherding, because that will enable to be out of ourselves. Otherwise, we will be so self-centered, selfish, and instead of being useful vessels in the hands of God. So brothers and sisters, if you are newly saved, God will expect you to shepherd some unbelievers.

You may not be ambitious to maybe a hundred names in your book, but at least one or two, that you will really pray for them and ask the Lord to give you opportunity to share Christ with them. And that is the way you begin your shepherding. But as you are growing in the Lord, then the Lord probably will give you the burden for some brothers or sisters.

They need some shepherding, and God will use them, use you, to do the work. So I will say, shepherding is not limited to unbelievers. It should include unbelievers.

I wonder, brothers and sisters, after you are saved, had you thought of your friends who were unsaved, and what will you do for them? Will you pray for them, ask the Lord to give you opportunity to share Christ with them? Or you just think of yourself, how can you grow in the Lord? So brothers and sisters, God did not want us to be selfish, self-centered. That is not a good thing. He wants to use even a new believer to do some shepherding.

So I will suggest that you would do that. And I think the greatest joy as a young Christian is to lead others to Christ. I remember the first one that God used me to lead to the Lord.

It gave me such joy. But as the Lord began to use you, gradually, this will be enlarged, increased, until you are able to be used of the Lord, to shepherd not only unbelievers, but even to shepherd believers who need help. And you are growing in the Lord, and you are able to help them.

So I will say, shepherding is a responsibility for every believer. Think of yourself. After you are saved, have you been used by the Lord to lead some others to Christ? After you have been saved so long, have the Lord entrusted to you some younger brothers or sisters for you to do some shepherding? I think there is extreme joy when you find that those whom you shepherd came to the Lord or grow in the Lord.

There is no joy more than that. It's even more joyful about your own salvation. So I will encourage you brothers and sisters to do this shepherding.

Number two, how do we as brothers, elders, shepherds, sisters, what is our place? How do we help oversee the sisters, especially single sisters? I think this is a very practical question. If you are newly saved, and you do not know much of the Lord, you cannot even do shepherding with other believers. You have to begin with your friends, unbelievers, so you'll begin to learn how to take care of other people.

But as you grow in the Lord, the Lord will put in your heart some brother or your sister, some sister in your heart, for you to do some shepherding with them. So this is a growing thing. I think it is, we need to be careful.

If you are a young brother, and you are going to shepherd a young sister, there is always a danger. So in doing this shepherding, we need to be a little careful. Let the sisters, taking care of the sisters, let the elders, the grown-ups, the matured in the Lord.

If the Lord puts some sister into your care, then you can do it. Otherwise, it will be a temptation to you. So I will suggest, if possible, let the sisters taking care of the younger ones.

But you have already grown in the Lord, and if you are older, it is not something that you cannot do with a sister. But in doing that, we need to be careful. I'm really helped and touched by your message on the two wedding garments, particularly the one of gold, the other of embroidery.

Will you please give us the scripture references, since I wasn't able to capture it during the meeting? Thank you very much. I think it is a good habit. When you read a scripture, you try to find other scriptures to confirm the scripture you have been reading.

I think this is always a good practice. But that doesn't mean that every time the Lord has shown you something, now he will at the same time show you another verse to confirm what he has shown you. Now, I do not say that the Lord will not confirm what he has shown you, but sometimes it is not in definite words, but it is a spirit of it.

When you are thinking of the wedding garments, we say the embroidered garments is the working of the Holy Spirit in your daily life. Now, if you want to find another scripture exactly saying the same thing, it may be difficult. But you are familiar with the scriptures.

You know the spirit of the word. Throughout the Bible, the idea of an embroidered clothing of the wife of the Lamb is supported by the other scriptures. I cannot tell you exactly what it is.

Where is it? But as you read the scripture, you will find throughout the scripture, throughout the Bible, this thought has been supported by the other places. Because what the Holy Spirit is doing in our lives, we all have experience. And our experience will show us that this is a correct interpretation.

So, brothers and sisters, how do we interpret the Bible? Is it necessary that you have to find another exact quotation in order for you to believe the interpretation of one scripture? No. Sometimes you do not find the exact wordings. But the spirit of it is everywhere.

Isn't it true? There's quite a Holy Spirit who dwells in you. His work is like embroidering. It is not a quick work.

It is a lifetime work. It takes time. And usually it is stitch by stitch.

And that is coinciding with our experience. So, brothers, I cannot tell you exactly if you can find another verse that will tell you this embroidered quoting means the working of the Holy Spirit in your daily life. I cannot tell you that.

But I can assure you that this idea does not come from me. This idea, from your reading the Bible, and you'll find that this interpretation seems to agree with the places where the Holy Spirit who dwells in us has been doing in your life. This can be proven not by another exact scripture, but by your life experience.

So I will say, do not always be so technical, because you cannot find an exact verse in other scriptures. Therefore, you cannot make any decision as to what this scripture means. And that's the reason why we have to read the whole Bible.

If you read the Bible, only a certain part, but never the whole Bible. If there is not an exact quotation elsewhere that you have read, you probably will take the position of neglecting the interpretation. But this is not always true, that you will find an exact quotation somewhere else in the Bible.

But the spirit of it is everywhere. I think it is quite evident from our experience that when the Holy Spirit is working in your life, it is not a work of one time. The work of Christ as our righteousness is the work of one time.

You experience it all together. But the work of the Holy Spirit is a daily thing. So you have to find it in your daily life.

So, brothers and sisters, that's the way to interpret the Bible. You may not have the exact quotation somewhere else. But as you read the Bible, you find that in other places, when the work of the Holy Spirit

is described, it is exactly like the work of embroidery, making you the wedding garment for the Lord.

So, on the one hand I would say it is good if you can find another exact quotation to support this verse. But if you cannot find it in the exact wordings, the spirit of it is there. And that's the reason you have to read the whole Bible.

You get into the spirit of the Word of God. And that is another secret for interpretation of the Bible. Why don't we today have the kind of discipleship as Paul has with Timothy? Can we bring this kind of discipline, discipleship, back? I'm sorry to say that what I know is limited.

I do not know everything about the Lord everywhere. I know only a part of it. So, I will not say that discipleship cannot be brought back.

But let me warn you. In this country, there was a time, that was when I was young, there was a work of discipleship. I think the older ones will remember.

There were five persons. They were very gifted. They were in Florida.

And they started discipleship. They tried to use human ways to arrange discipleship. Now, they were gifted people.

I know some of them. So, they tried to match up people. Put one person, another person's discipleship.

So, when I was a young man, this idea of discipleship was everywhere in this country. These five men were very gifted. They were greatly used by the Lord.

But eventually, because of this human arrangement, it's not arranged by the Lord. They tried to make such an arrangement. The principle is right, but the practice is wrong.

And doing that, they make it so that one who is under one's other's discipleship has to obey him in everything. He has to know everything about that person. He is in full charge of the person disciplined to him.

And brothers and sisters, you know no human being is perfect. So, sooner or later, problems, more problems coming up. Until finally, the whole idea of discipleship was given up.

That was when I was a young man. So, even discipleship had to be brought back into practice by the Holy Spirit. It is not something of human arrangement.

Paul disciplined Timothy. It was not a human decision. It was because Paul saw this young man was promising.

He could be helped. And Paul being such a person that could help young people, so he put Timothy under his wing. So, dear brothers and sisters, the whole discipleship cannot be humanly arranged.

It had to come from the Lord himself. The Lord may put in your heart of some younger ones, and you begin to pray for them. You begin to be burdened with them.

And you begin to take care of them. I think this is necessary, even in our days. Discipleship is scriptural, but it is not human arrangement.

It must be by divine arrangement. So, in this matter of discipleship, we need to be careful. But that doesn't mean we threw away the whole idea of discipleship.

I believe even today the younger ones should be humble enough to receive the help of the older ones, of those who have more experience than themselves. It may not be in a formal way, but I believe in a spiritual way. Discipleship is still a good thing.

Otherwise, everyone will do what he or she thinks, and that will cause disaster. So, this is all I can share. And hopefully, our brother Dana will give us all the answers.

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