

## SHEPHERDING MOVEMENT

A charismatic Bible study that met weekly in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the "Fort Lauderdale Five" evolved into The Holy Spirit Teaching Mission. This interdenominational group was incorporated in 1966 and expanded its scope with teaching conferences in Florida, later sponsoring conferences in other states. In 1969, it launched a magazine, *New Wine*, and, in 1972, changed its name to Christian Growth Ministries (CGM).

The Shepherding movement arose out of a concern for the weak commitment, shallow community, and the general worldliness characteristic of many American churches. But their solution was extra-biblical requirements - membership in a house-group which included having life-decisions "covered" by the house-group leader, elder, or pastor. Such decisions included things like where to live and work, whom to marry, or whether to see a doctor when someone was ill.[1]

At the zenith of the movement, "They had a national network of followers who formed pyramids of sheep and shepherds. Down through the pyramid went the orders, it was alleged, while up the same pyramid went the tithes." [2] The relationships that were formed became known theologically as "covenant relationships." A network of cell groups were formed. Members had to be submitted to a "shepherd", who in turn was submitted to the Five or their subordinates.

**7 Remember those who led (hēgeomai) you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.**

1.) **Leadership:** What is it?

- a. [Jas 3:1 NASB] Let not many [of you] become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

- b. [Mat 20:25 NASB] But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and [their] great men exercise authority over them. "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."
- c. [Mat 23:10-12 NASB] "Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, [that is,] Christ. "But the greatest among you shall be your servant. "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.
- d. [1Ti 4:1 NASB] But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, [men] who forbid marriage [and advocate] abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

## **2.) Teaching**

- a. [Eph 4:11-14 NASB] And He gave some [as] apostles, and some [as] prophets, and some [as] evangelists, and some [as] pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;
- b. What did Jesus teach? Not health, wealth, prosperity.

- c. [1Co 4:17 NASB] For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.

### 3.) Conduct

- a. [1Ti 4:12 NASB] Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but [rather] in speech, **conduct**, love, faith [and] purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.
- b. [1Ti 4:16 NASB] Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.
- c. [2Pe 3:11 NASB] Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

### 4.) Imitate

- a. [3Jo 1:9-11 NASB] I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire [to do so] and puts [them] out of the church. Beloved, **do not imitate what is evil**, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.
- b. [1Co 4:16 NASB] Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.
- c. [1Co 11:1 NASB] Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.
- d. [Eph 5:1-2 NASB] Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and

gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

- e. [1Th 1:6 NASB] You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,
- f. [1Th 1:7 NASB] so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

## 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

- **Identity**
- [Heb 12:2 NASB] fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

## 9 Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.

- [2Pe 2:1-3 NASB] But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in [their] greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.
- [1Ti 1:3-4 NASB] As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than [furthering] the administration of God which is by faith.

- [1Ti 1:5-7 NASB] But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.
- [2Ti 4:1-4 NASB] I solemnly charge [you] in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season [and] out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but [wanting] to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.