



# Leading through Prophecy and Physical Shepherding

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(All prophecies are Jesus speaking unless otherwise indicated.)

Two are better than one, for if one falls, the other can lift him up (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). That's what shepherding is all about. It's about lifting up your brother, it's about seeing a need in someone's life and helping to encourage, inspire, and challenge them, giving them what they need to be strengthened and stay on the straight and narrow road of the Christian discipleship life. Life is full of learning experiences, and learning can be so much easier when someone is helping you learn and make progress.

I am ready and willing to give shepherding to each individual through the voice of prophecy, and I help to lead and direct you as you come to Me in prayer, seeking My counsel. But the heavenly shepherding I give you personally is not meant to stand on its own. It's supposed to go hand in hand with the physical shepherding of someone who can help you follow My Words, apply them, and live them, someone who can pray for you and encourage you.

Some of you might wonder why that's necessary. Why is physical shepherding needed when you can get shepherding from Me? I'm the greatest shepherd in the universe, so shouldn't getting My instruction be enough? Well, if you are looking at things that way, you are only seeing one side of the picture when it comes to shepherding. Shepherding isn't just getting instruction and guidance. There is another side to it.

Shepherding is support. Shepherding is encouragement. Shepherding is prayer. Shepherding is having someone fight beside you against the Enemy to help you overcome. Shepherding is having the help that you need to be able to put all the instruction that I'm giving you into daily use. If getting instruction were the only aspect of shepherding, then yes, just hearing from Me would be sufficient and you wouldn't need shepherds in the physical. But good shepherding is so much more, and you need physical shepherds to provide all the physical aspects of shepherding.

Particularly in these last days, when the Enemy is out in full force fighting the children of David with all his might, shepherding is needed more than ever, because it's a law of My Spirit that while one can chase 1,000, two can put 10,000 to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30). You need the support of shepherds to help you stand up to the Enemy and resist his attacks and fight and overcome. Why go at it on your own when you can get the help of those who love you and are concerned about you and will be by your side during your time of need?

I do give a lot of instruction to you individually when you hear from Me in prophecy, and that is very important. But it doesn't replace the need for an earthly shepherd. A good shepherd will lead you to Me and help you get the instruction you need for your life from Me. But they won't just leave it at that. They'll help you apply that instruction in your life. They'll pray for you and give you tips and counsel and encouragement to keep moving forward. And

sometimes they'll give you a little admonishing when you are getting off track and not obeying what I have been telling you. No one is perfect, and you all need someone else to help you.

Trying to go at it alone, just between you and Me, when there are others who can help and shepherd you, is pride and self-righteousness. It's feeling that you are good enough to just get your instruction from Me and that's enough, you'll take it from there, no one need bother to help you. Well, that just doesn't work, and it's not an attitude that I can bless. I bless those who are humble, who are open, who seek My help and the help of others.

I've made you in the Family to be a team, with the goal of being more like Me, so that you can be My face to the world and reach this lost generation. But in order to be the team that I want you to be, you must have that closeness and bond that comes from everyone walking in love and humility. And being open to shepherding is part of that walk.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). And unity comes in great part through all being open to shepherding--My shepherding and instruction and also the help of those shepherds that I have anointed to be your support and the glue that helps keep your team together.

Shepherding is a wonderful blessing. Having someone you can depend on for godly counsel, for prayer, who is willing to be a safeguard to you, is something you should be so thankful for. It far outweighs the little sacrifices that you have to make to take advantage of that blessing. Good shepherding will bear abundant fruit in your life and help propel you forward to greater heights in your walk with Me. <sup>(1)</sup>

(Dad speaking:) You're going to save yourself a lot of problems and wondering about things if you just ask the Lord what you should do, and you're going to save your shepherds a lot of time. Of course, you still need your shepherds and you need each other, your mate and your friends. It's not like you can do without the help, counsel and prayers of your co-workers and family--but most of all, you need to hear from the Lord.

I'll grant you, there may be times when you're having a big battle and you feel like you're in such a muddle you can hardly make it, and your immediate reaction will be to run to your shepherd or a mate or a co-worker and ask for prayer right away. There may be times when the Devil is hitting you full force and you feel like you need an initial prayer to be able to make it through--and if that's the case, you'd better get it. You might shoot up a prayer and ask the Lord for a confirmation whether you should get prayer on the spot, and He'll tell you to go quick and get prayer so that you can get a grip on things.

In this case, the initial prayer you have with your shepherd will bring sweet relief and calm to your spirit, and can help to clear away the clouds so that you can then continue to pray and seek the Lord for His instruction.

But this scenario I've just painted for you is only one small facet of the big picture, folks. Most of the time, when you need prayer, counsel, instruction or direction, instead of running to your mate or shepherd first and asking them what you should do, ask the Lord and get His counsel. Some things you probably don't even need to ask your shepherds about, and they probably wish you'd just pray and ask the Lord yourself. That's what they have to do with your questions--they have to go to the Lord and ask Him.

You're probably wondering how you're supposed to know when to go to your shepherds for help and when not to. How are you supposed to know what things to counsel with others about and what things you're supposed to ask the Lord about yourself? Well, you can always go to your shepherds for counsel and help; that's what they're there for, to guide and support and help you do the Lord's will. But before you go to your shepherds you should be asking the Lord what you're going to talk about, how you're going to present it, when to go to them, and for any other direction He might want to give you.

That's an important key--asking the Lord and hearing from Him before you go to someone for counsel, prayer, instruction or direction. For example, say you're having a battle about something and you're wondering if you should go and ask someone to pray for you. First of all, it's difficult and humbling to ask someone to pray for you when you're in the midst of a battle, but you know you need the help, and the Lord has told you that there's power in praying together with others. So it's not so much a question of whether you should ask someone to pray for you--you know you should when you need it. But if you stop and hear from the Lord, He'll show you who to go to, when to go to them, and what to say.

What the Lord tells you will be very helpful and encouraging not only to you, but to the person who you go to for prayer, because the Lord will show you what to say. He'll clarify things in your mind enough so that you can present your prayer request. He'll give you the encouragement you need to ask for prayer and help to dispel the Enemy's lies and doubts.

You can give your shepherd the message the Lord gave you about the battle you're having, and it'll make it so much easier for your shepherd to understand what you're going through, how the Lord sees it at the moment, and what counsel the Lord gave you. It will help your shepherd to know how to pray for you, how to seek the Lord for you, how to encourage you and guide you. Even if you don't know what you need, even if you're in such a muddle that you don't know what's wrong or where to begin, if you hear from the Lord about it, He'll tell you something, even if it's simply encouraging you in the first step of going and asking for prayer.

Sometimes you can't put your finger on what's wrong, but you can ask the Lord about it and He'll tell you. He'll lead you step by step. He might not tell you everything all at once. He might just give you the first step, and then expect you to come back to Him for the next step. It will help so much to relieve your battles if you go to the Lord and ask Him about things. Of course, you can go to your shepherds and you need to do that; you need their help, encouragement and prayers. But you also need to know how the Lord sees things and what He has to say. That's what will give you real strength and faith to go through the battle and come out finer gold.

It's really a teamwork--the Lord, you, and your shepherds. You need to be hearing from the Lord together about battles and trials. You can't expect your shepherds to have all the answers, and you also can't make it on your own without their help and support. You all need the Lord's help, and if you seek Him, He'll speak to you and give you clear counsel and direction.

When you're having a battle, you need to seek the Lord for yourself and ask Him your questions and hear directly from Him for yourself--but you also need to seek the help and

counsel of your shepherds or others who are spiritually strong. The Lord will speak to you and to your shepherds, sometimes showing different sides to the question, different angles of the situation, and when you put it all together, you'll have good, well-rounded counsel which will be a great strength and help to you. <sup>(2)</sup>

## **When an Outside Perspective Is Needed**

Why is there a need for shepherding? You know that you need it and that I want you to have it because I've said so in My Word. Most of you even know that to be true from experience, to varying degrees. But it's always good to review matters. Why don't we get a little more detailed about it? The more aspects or angles of something you understand or can relate to, the easier it is to receive it more wholeheartedly, see the need for it, and embrace it.

For example, maybe you've seen or been in a situation where there's an idea or project to do, or a problem that needs to be resolved, and you come to a roadblock, a point that you're having a hard time getting past. Normally this makes you focus even more on whatever that obstacle is, so much so that you become very close to its details, and every angle and aspect you can think of. However, someone not so closely involved--in fact, maybe not involved at all--comes and sees it in a completely different light and from a different perspective. And that fresh perspective is often the key to coming up with the missing piece of the puzzle. Then the impasse is overcome and you're well on your way to progress again.

The same principle is at work with you, My brides, in the spiritual realm, in your relationship with your shepherds. You face many situations, circumstances, and battles where you can benefit from the help of your shepherds--those I have specifically called, prepared, worked in and through, and anointed for this task. It is not of themselves; it is a calling that I have given them.

I call shepherds to be receptacles of My love, wisdom, guidance, counsel, and to help point you to My Word and to the answers I have given and can give. I do this for you, My brides who I love and adore. One of the ways that I meet your needs for support and answers is through shepherds that I have called and anointed. They are those who can come to your aid with that fresh perspective, coming in from outside the situation, whether it's a problem, battle, blockage, lack of understanding, relationship, friendship, work situation, project, health matter, or matter of the heart. Whatever it is, I have the answer, and I often--in fact, usually--use others to help you along the path to victory, progress, and solutions.

Shepherds can be a fresh and objective source of counsel. You have your maps and the instruction manual of the Word, but sometimes you run into bad weather or get a little sidetracked or off the main path, or encounter obstacles that you aren't sure how to get around or overcome, and it's easy to be so "into it" that it's hard to back off and get a bigger picture. Your shepherds are like guides all along the way who you can call on for help in those times. They may simply refer you to the map or manual and point out where you missed part of the directions or instruction. Or they may help you to get your communication device with headquarters more finely tuned so that you can have better communication with HQ; or they

may use their own communication device of prophecy to hear from HQ for you.

They may share some of their own experiences about when something similar happened when they were climbing a similar trail. Or they may bring you needed supplies or sustenance to help you through that portion of your journey, and simply be an encouragement and a support. They may journey with you, staying close by your side to help you as you navigate that particular portion of the trail that is more difficult or has more obstacles. They are there to help you, either personally or by calling on headquarters to send what is needed.

Of course, I am your ultimate Guide and you are personally connected to Me. But sometimes storms or static or other interference breaks up your reception and you need outside help.

What are some of the things that you sometimes need outside help with, or that extra perspective or well-rounded way of viewing things for? With most emotional matters, it can be a great relief and blessing to have help from someone who is not as involved as you are. Emotions cloud your logic and often distract you and create static, which the Enemy will try to take advantage of to get in and jam your channel to Me. He'll try to fill you with his perspective and "take" on things.

He uses your carnal human nature, emotions, and mind against you. Whether it's a crisis in a friendship, marital problems, jealousy, a heartbreak, a breakdown in communications with one of your loved ones, difficulties with one or more of your children, or a family problem, having a fresh outside perspective--one that is bathed in prayer, desperation, humility, and hearing from Me--can be a great comfort, relief and blessing when the road gets rough and rocky and you need a helping hand.

You can always come to Me, and of course I love it when you come directly to Me first of all and hear from Me. But sometimes I choose to give part of My message or instruction through others because I know that it will be more comforting, or more clear, or easier for you to receive, or maybe because you're just not open enough to hearing it straight from Me at that time. There are all kinds of reasons why I sometimes choose to work through your shepherds rather than solely through our connection via prophecy and the Word.

Your shepherds are there to be a help and a safeguard to you. They are extensions of Me and My love for you in human form, My aides. <sup>(3)</sup>

If you find that you don't want to ask Me about something because you're afraid I'll say no, or if you find that you always receive a yes and never a caution or a no, then you probably need some outside help in praying about your decisions. But if you're willing to hear from Me with an open channel, willing to accept whatever I want to tell you, even if it's a no, then you'll find that through My Words I'm able to keep you on track for the most part, and you'll make your shepherds' job--and My job--a lot easier.

It will be easier on you, too, because you'll be open and yielded and used to hearing from Me and even receiving correction from Me. So when the times come up that you need to receive it from your shepherds, you'll be used to it, and it will be easier to receive. And that is an important point: even if you think you're being open in your times of hearing from Me, you'll still need to be open to the counsel of your shepherds, and willing to let others pray and

ask Me about things if a question comes up.

So keep that in mind as you pray and ask Me about things. It's crucial that you're willing to receive a no, if that's what I want to tell you. Otherwise, you're just going through the motions, you're not really protected, and the Enemy will see you as an open target to get you off track and harm your spiritual health and fruitfulness. He'll use the little things--little things that I could protect you from easily--if he knows that you're not really willing to receive My full counsel, and thus are somewhat "on your own" in trying to stay on track spiritually. So pray for openness.

And if you feel that you may be going through a time when you're not as open to My counsel, go on the attack and ask for prayer. When a question comes up, ask others to pray for you or with you about whatever issues you're struggling with, and get a well-rounded answer. If you do that, I am able to protect you fully. <sup>(4)</sup>

Down through the ages I've used the analogy of shepherds and their flocks. It's a spiritual principle that no matter who you are, and wherever you are at in your relationship with Me, it's always helpful to have someone to turn to, to counsel with.--Someone who can give you My godly counsel, sometimes in the form of his or her own experience, and other times through sharing My Word with you, or expressing a concern that I have laid on their heart to share with you.

Can't everyone get shepherding directly from Me? Well, yes. I am your closest shepherd. I want you to have that direct link with Me, so that no matter what, and no matter where, you always have My counsel just a prayer away. When you are accustomed to communicating with Me, asking Me your questions, and also at times letting Me speak to your heart on anything I may have to give you, it's a wonderful blessing and boost to your spiritual strength.

Everybody not only can, but should, get shepherding directly from Me. However, you also need someone you can talk to face to face, develop bonds with, laugh and cry with, etc. You need both. I've made it so that there's a balance of shepherding--a teamworking--between you, Me, and your earthly shepherds and guides who are hearing from Me, and who also love you and care about your well-being, as I do.

There's also the factor of humility that enters in when you have others watching out for you. If you never had to answer to anyone on Earth for your actions or your spiritual state, but you only communicated with Me about it, that wouldn't give you opportunities to grow in the area of humility, would it?

Sharing your heart, receiving the counsel of others, and admitting weaknesses or mistakes to your brothers and sisters helps your spirit to grow by leaps and bounds. It's a spiritual principle--like asking for united prayer--that works because I make it work. You're humbling yourself and putting Me on the spot by faith, and consequently, you're putting yourself in a position where I can really do the most for you, and give you full, miraculous answers! <sup>(5)</sup>

(Dad speaking:) Everyone is being shepherded by the Lord in this new day through the Word and through direct personal prophecy. Your shepherds are being shepherded by the

Lord, and the Lord expects everyone to learn to receive His shepherding much more in their personal lives by tuning in to His voice of prophecy.

But there's also a balance in hearing from the Lord all the time for yourself and your own shepherding, and using your earthly shepherds to help you stay on track. The Lord still works through your earthly shepherds. He uses your earthly shepherds to help you until you become spiritually strong enough to be able to be shepherded mainly by the Lord Himself. The Lord will use your earthly shepherds to teach you how to receive your shepherding from Him step by step.

You should share any significant personal prophecies with your shepherds. You might have to ask them to receive confirmations about things, to pray further about things. You might have to counsel with them and ask for their help in showing you if you're on the right track, if you're doing everything the Lord is showing you, if you're interpreting prophecy correctly and applying it correctly.

Receiving the messages in prophecy is the first step, but it takes time to learn to interpret them, study them, understand them, and then implement them and do the things the Lord is saying.

Some people can get off track if they depend solely on the personal messages they receive from the Lord for their shepherding and never discuss them with their earthly shepherds. Not because the Lord can't shepherd them like He promises, or tell them what they need to know, but because pride, independence, laziness, lack of faith, the cares of this life, and all those human weaknesses can tend to enter the picture when it comes to interpreting the messages. So it really pays to seek counsel and confirmations and further prayer from your shepherds, to make sure you're staying on the right track.

The Lord can tell you what you need and give you the right counsel for your personal situation, but humans tend to be a bit cafeteria-style and extreme in what they choose to obey. If you tend to only implement the things you like and you ignore other important parts of the message, you can get a little off track. That's where your shepherds can gently help you and keep you on track.

Sometimes if you have no one else around to counsel with, no shepherd, no other spiritually strong person who you feel you can confide in, then the Lord will keep you on track and shepherd you personally for as long as needed, if you stay desperate. It's not that people can't be shepherded by the Lord alone; sometimes there will be situations where you will have to be shepherded by Him alone. But generally speaking it's wiser and safer, considering human weaknesses, to counsel with others about your personal prophecies and the personal shepherding you're receiving from Jesus.

Jesus won't make mistakes in your shepherding. He won't give you the wrong counsel, but you might need help understanding it, interpreting it, and applying it correctly. So it's generally a good idea to share your personal prophecies with your shepherds and ask for their counsel and insight. The time will come when you won't have that opportunity and blessing to counsel with others so easily, and you'll have to depend much more on your personal connection with Jesus, so use these days now to learn how to be shepherded by Him. <sup>(6)</sup>



## We Need Both the Lord and Shepherds

(Question:) Why do we still need shepherding from physical shepherds when we have a personal channel with the Lord and are able to hear from Him directly through the Word and through the gift of prophecy?

(Jesus: ) Here's a list of some of the advantages of having physical shepherds, in addition to hearing from Me personally. If you ask Me what other advantages there are for you personally, I'll give you further examples of how shepherds can benefit you in your life and situation.

\* It helps you to stay open. When you are receiving input from other people, in order to accept what I'm saying through them, you've got to put your own opinions and mindset aside. Being open to others helps you to stay soft and receptive to what I want to tell you, whether I tell you personally through prophecy or tell you through the counsel of others.

\* It keeps you humble. It's humbling to open your life to others. Letting someone else see inside your heart, including the trials and problems and battles and weaknesses, is humbling. It's so much easier to act like you've got it all together and don't need help. But this humbling is spiritually strengthening.

\* It stretches your faith. Often it's harder to receive things from others than it is to receive those things directly from Me. It takes faith to believe that your shepherd is hearing from Me and is following the direction I want him to follow. It takes faith for you to accept things that others point out to you, especially when they're different or in opposition to the way you see things, but that's good because it forces you to grow.

\* It keeps you desperate. Sometimes it's easy to feel that you can just be accountable to Me and things will only be between Me and you. But when others are involved too, it is a safeguard. It helps you to be more desperate to stay on the straight and narrow. It's human nature to not want to fail others, so when you give others the opportunity to be aware of your spiritual life and how you're doing, it can help to keep you on track because you know that there are others who are aware as well.

\* It gives you support. Two are better than one. If you're going through a time of trials and difficulty, having someone else who knows about your situation can be a big help. They can help to safeguard you in areas that you need it. They can be a strength and support if you're going through a particular trial. They can be a staff that you can lean on, and their encouragement can help you make it through. They can pray for you.

\* It gives you perspective. For example, some people have a tendency to shoot too high and set unreasonable goals for themselves or others. When this happens, it's often helpful to get a bit of outside perspective from a shepherd. On the other extreme, some people might tend to not put enough emphasis or priority on things that I tell them to do. In such cases, having a shepherd who can remind you of My personal counsel and help you to follow through on it can be very helpful, even necessary.

Even when you're hearing from Me, sometimes you need help in interpreting that counsel and finding a balance in how to apply the things that I'm telling you. I don't want you

to set your goals so high that they're unreasonable or unrealistic, nor should you be laid back about them. You have to move at the pace I've shown to be right for you, and that I know will work best in your life. Being able to counsel with your shepherd about how to implement what I'm asking of you can often be key to applying My counsel correctly and finding a good balance in your goals and efforts.

\* It gives you prayer power. If someone is aware of your personal situation, they can pray for you and give you spiritual "backup." The power of prayer is real, and the more prayer power and support you can get, the better off you are!

\* It builds bonds of closeness with your brethren. When you open your heart to someone else and give of yourself in this regard, there's often a bond of closeness that's formed between you and them. The unity that results is a powerful defense and even a weapon against the Enemy's attacks on you and on others.

\* It's a safeguard. Let's face it, everyone makes mistakes, and no one's channel with Me is 100% clean and reliable all of the time. Earthly shepherds are a safeguard, an additional means I can use to get through to you when necessary. Or, if your hearing from Me was influenced by your own opinions and strong feelings on a matter, then I can use your earthly shepherds to help point this out to you. It's not easy to receive that kind of input, but it is necessary and it's good for you to have this safety net.

\* It's good for you, and sometimes it's the easier way. Everyone needs counsel and even correction from time to time, and sometimes I have a hard time getting through to you on certain points in prophecy, so I often use earthly shepherds and co-laborers to point something out to you. If you never receive anything from others and insist on getting everything directly from Me in prophecy, I will probably eventually be able to make My point clear, but sometimes that might require My allowing you to have to learn some things the hard way, which isn't always pleasant. It's so much easier for you if you can take things from others and get things pointed out to you in that way.

\* Counsel makes for more well-rounded decisions. Personal decisions are yours and yours alone to make. But getting counsel from earthly shepherds can be a big help in helping you prepare to make those decisions. It's still your job to hear from Me and make the final decision, but very often getting counsel and input from someone can help point you in the right direction. <sup>(7)</sup>

## **Different Avenues of Shepherding**

To maintain a life that is truly connected to Me, following closely and remaining in My perfect will, one needs to be open to many sources of shepherding--shepherding from Me personally through My voice in prophecy and the checks of the Spirit that I give, shepherding through the voice of the Word, studying My Word and applying it and letting it convict and change you, as well as shepherding from those who are right there by your side in flesh and blood--your brothers and sisters, friends, mate, spiritual shepherds, and even those who are younger than you. I use many different means to give shepherding, and those who are open to

receiving shepherding in many different forms are those who are the wisest and who will remain on track and fulfill My highest will.

If you choose to rely only on receiving shepherding and help from your overseers or those who are your official "shepherds," you'll be as a child whose growth and maturity is stunted, who has become so dependent on their parent that unless the parent is around and watching their every move and telling them what to do, they have a hard time knowing what is good and right.

As you mature spiritually, I expect you to take more spiritual responsibility. Your shepherds don't have the time or the ability to keep up with every aspect of your life, to remind you of every duty that you need to perform, or advise you about every attitude that isn't quite in line with My Word. And waiting to pay attention to a weak area in your life until someone points something out to you is dangerous, not to mention that, chances are by the time that happens, it's gone pretty far and the situation is far more serious than if you had been open to the checks of My Spirit and heeded them.

But while I do expect you to help shepherd yourself via your link with Me, feeling like you can only receive shepherding directly from Me means that you will miss out on the equally important avenue of shepherding from your brothers, sisters, friends, and loved ones, as well as your "official" shepherds. Just as I give you My love in many different ways, through different methods and forms, so I wish to use many different avenues to give you My instruction, counsel, and input. Shutting yourself off to input and shepherding from others dams up an important avenue of shepherding--the guidance that I want to give you through others.

The key to receiving all of the help and shepherding that you need is to be open to it coming from many different sources and in many different ways. One day I may choose to give you a personal check about something in your life that needs some tweaking or that you need to pull up your socks in, and that will be sufficient to get your attention and to give you the incentive to change. Some days I may choose your earthly shepherds to point out something that you wouldn't have been able to see otherwise. Sometimes I might use a friend or a co-worker to mention something to you or to check you about something so that you will bring that aspect of your life to Me for My input and counsel.

The more forms of shepherding you are open to, then the more channels I have available to get through to you. Depending on only one form of shepherding, or even limiting it to a couple of forms, is sort of like trying to do a task with only one hand rather than using both hands. You should try tying your shoe with just one hand. Go ahead, give it a shot. It's pretty tough, isn't it? While you might be able to do it, not only will it take you longer, but it probably won't be as good a job as if you did it with both hands. Try cooking a meal using only one hand: chopping the vegetables, spicing the meat, mixing or sifting the ingredients, etc. You'll find that it's suddenly extremely difficult to accomplish these fairly simple tasks with only one hand.

Well, trying to maintain a high standard in your spiritual life while only accepting one certain avenue of shepherding is sort of like trying to do such physical tasks with just one hand--it's a lot more difficult, if not impossible. If you do manage to do it, the quality of the job

leaves something to be desired.

You'll find that it's much easier to maintain your spiritual life if you avail yourself of the many different avenues of shepherding I have set up for you: hearing from Me in prophecy, receiving the checks of My Spirit when I speak to your heart, gleaned counsel and wisdom from the Word, as well as being open to counsel, instruction, input, suggestions, and even correction from others--whether they're your shepherd, your mate, a brother or sister, or even one that you consider "younger in the Lord" than you are. Granted, it might be easier to receive input from one avenue than another, but if you truly want to reach your full potential as a disciple, then you should actively work on being open to all the ways in which I shepherd and assist you spiritually.

Just as a top athlete or sports star may have a number of coaches or trainers who pay attention to different aspects of his training and performance, because he knows that it's the way he'll really achieve his very best, so you can reach your best, and grow and learn and advance much better and more quickly in spirit if you're open to any channel that I might use to get a message through to you.

If you look at it objectively, you'll agree with Me that it's the message, not the messenger, that's most important in this case. In other words, it doesn't matter what avenue the shepherding comes from, because shepherding in all forms is important to your spiritual life and growth and progress. So pay attention to My messages, take them seriously, and bring them back to Me for confirmation and My advice on how to apply them. Stay hungry in spirit, desirous of any and all tips and counsel that I send you through various avenues.

It's human nature to want to be self-sufficient, to not be open to help and advice. But if you really want it, you'll benefit so much from the little hints and tips and input that I can give you through many avenues, and you'll probably save yourself a lot of grief down the road because I'll be able to get your attention when there are small things in your life that need improvement, and so you'll avoid a lot of bigger problems. <sup>(8)</sup>

1. Why Shepherding, Part 1 #3640:55-64
2. Ask Me Everything, Part 3! #3272:44-54
3. Why Shepherding, Part 2 #3649:37-47
4. Issues, Part 14 #3442:38-41
5. Why Shepherding, Part 1 #3640:65-69
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