



**“The Freedom Church --
A Movement Empowered by
the Holy Spirit: Serving our
Flock”**

**Leading and Feeding the
Lambs**

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“Children Don’t Have a Junior Holy Spirit,” is a phrase you will often hear me rave as I talk about teaching, training, and leading children in God’s presence. If nothing else gets you excited, this should. In my imagination, I can see Jesus through the scripture of Matthew 19:13-15, as children are being brought to Jesus by parents who have been given the role and the responsibility of God to “train them in the way they should go” and “teach them (the word) diligently unto your children.” I can imagine parents with children in their arms, children hands gripped in their hands, being lead to the place where the Son of God has arrived, rushing to bring their children into the presence of the Living Word where He lays his hands on them while rebuking his disciples to “let the children come and do not hinder them for such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” I can see it! Can you?

It’s through this vivid illustration that I am reminded that there is a call for us to serve and lead children. If Jesus did it, so are we to do it, but in a way that is Holy Spirit-inspired and empowered. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says to Peter, “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” **Children**

don’t have a junior Holy Spirit because they don’t fight junior devils. Jesus knew that the gates of hell would try and desire to not only have Peter, but all God’s disciples and that includes children. This is what makes this call to serve children a clarion call. Although Jesus had to rebuke the disciples for trying to keep parents from bringing their children to Him, the enemy did not think like the disciples did. He looks at children as prime real estate to steal as his own possession.

As we examine this movement that is Holy Spirit inspired and empowered, we must understand that we have a vital decision to make. Will we answer the call to serve the flock that God has placed Before us; children, or will we continue to see them after the flesh and not after the Spirit? Children need Jesus. They need His salvation, indwelling and transforming power and His strength to carry them throughout their lives. Three times Simon Peter, in John 21, is asked and three times he is commanded by Jesus to “Feed my lambs, Feed my sheep.” What a calling! I leap for joy in my children’s ministry heart to know that “lambs” were the first sheep mentioned. A young lamb needs loving care, attention and training knowing they will perish without a shepherd who takes their spiritual well-being to heart.

As Peter was commissioned by God for such a great task and calling, his exhortation to us in 1 Peter 5:2 is to “Care for the flock (children) that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly-not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God.” In serving God, we must be ignited in our hearts to care for the flock of children in which we have been assigned. We have to keep before us the vision of the spiritual potential of kids and be forced to reconsider our methods as children directors, leaders, teacher and parents in leading, teaching, equipping and discipling them.

- **Put into Practice** -Serving children as flock takes a different approach than serving adults. As lambs, children need to be cared for in a more gentle way because their hearts are pure and their actions are easily swayed. Children are continually growing and transforming as they receive new information concerning life and the Word of God, so we must be sensitive in leading children as flock so they don’t become mis-handled, confused, damaged or wander away towards more enticing things. We can do this by considering the following:

- **Caring for the Flock** – If your church has one child or 30+ children, you have a flock. Change how you view them. Renew your mindset. Decide to see them after the Spirit of God and not after their flesh no matter their behavior. Spend time writing out how you desire to care for your flock. Remember, your flock is not based upon numbers or attendance. If your church has one child or 20+ children, you have a flock. Connect with parents, individually. Let them know who you are and ask if they have any needs that you can help them with in leading their children at home. Be present. Make phone calls, send cards, and pray diligently for them. Make sure your curriculum and lessons are well prepared to meet the needs of your flock. Talk to the children and allow them to share their feelings, concerns, and be an open listening ear in confidence. Be humble, gentle, caring and loving.

- **Watch Over It** – The enemy want to devour our children. Pray without ceasing! Protect their souls! Create an index card with each child individually. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you areas where you need to pray for each child. Add their photo on one side and use the backside to add prayer requests concerning them. Spend time talking with them about video games, cartoons and TV shows they are watching, so that you can have an understanding of how the enemy is trying to entice them and use this as a way to create better lessons to teach them about their **Identity in Christ and godly living**. Don't be afraid to teach the children how to defeat the enemy, how to put on the armor of God daily, and how to strengthen their faith muscles. Remember, kids don't have a junior Holy Spirit! The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in the children if they are born again. Children are never too young to be taught deeper spiritual things as long as they are taught in portions and ways that they can receive and understand. It's necessary to actually demonstrate how these things are done, then allow them to do it by walking them through a step by step process. Most of the time they need to be shown repeatedly before they can do it well. Don't just teach, train children to WAR in the Spirit!

- **Be Eager to Serve God** – Show up for you flock! You have been assigned such a great task to shepherd lambs! This means that you have an opportunity to walk with them as they grow and develop spiritually for the next level in their re-

lationship with Christ. You only have a certain amount of time. Make the best of it! Be eager and enthusiastic that God wants to use you as his vessel to plant or water the words and the spiritual gifts he has placed in the lives of children. Prepare your lessons with excitement! Teach and train children with passion. God is always watching. Spend time adding to your lessons where children can experience God's presence. Your programming for Christian education & discipleship should be well planned and executed with a spirit of excellence. When children can see you are eager to serve God in serving them, it sparks a fire on the inside and they will be eager to serve God too!

God never leaves us alone in this life, neither in the endeavors that He has called us to do. He gave us the Holy Spirit to enable and empower us to do this work. It doesn't matter if we are new to spiritually-shepherding children or if we are a veteran, all of us need the power of the Holy Spirit. Be encouraged. Shepherds are not perfect and neither are flocks. We have a Holy Spirit that intercedes, comforts, supports and advocates for us in your weakness. As we continue to learn how to serve our flock, and we will always be learning, flocks of children will grow from lambs to sheep and our methods may change, but the Gospel in which we impart into our children, is transformative for them to live righteous and faithful lives in relationship with the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

