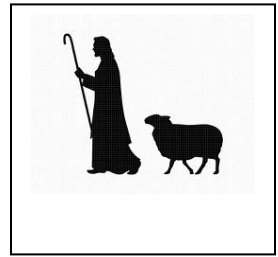


Practical Spiritual Leadership Shepherd Model

The purpose of God from before time began was to **glorify God** the Father through God the Son as it has been revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. He created man in His image to glorify Himself. God the Son had a mission, a purpose in coming to earth, it was to glorify God the Father through the perfect sacrifice of sinless God the Son.

"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. (John 17:3-4) (NAS95)



Christ **glorified** God while on earth- (Phil. 2:8) *Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

The purpose of God the Son was to **glorify** the Father, the method was by humble obedience on the cross.

Our purpose on earth is to **glorify** the Father and the method is by humble obedience to His word, we are to fulfill the ministry of reconciliation.

Jesus charged the apostles to "Go make disciples" to evangelize the world, teaching them to obey My will. Man has reduced the term "evangelism" to ONLY mean outreach to unbelievers, the beginning point of the "Good News" and reconciliation.

(2 Corinthians 5:18-21) Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:18-21) This is how we GLORIFY God!

God the Father, all wise, all-powerful, all-knowing could have chosen any number of different leadership styles for those whom He chose to lead His people. Authoritative, Consultative, Democratic, Collaborative, and many others, however, He chose the shepherd model to give direction to His children. There are references throughout the Old and New Testaments.

The shepherd model is a **leadership style** that is based on the image of a shepherd who guides, protects, and nurtures his flock. [It is a servant leadership style that emphasizes the leader's responsibility to serve and care for the needs of the followers](#)¹²³. [The shepherd model is characterized by qualities such as wisdom, benevolence, guidance, provision, protection, trustworthiness, and sacrifice](#)¹². [The shepherd model is more of a state or attitude than a strategy](#)². [It is often associated with religious or spiritual contexts, but it can be applied to any organization or group that values the well-being of its members](#)-- Bing AI

People often will say, "I don't know anything about sheep or a shepherd". That same person probably doesn't know how the internet works but has no problem using it all the time. There are 450 passages that refer to shepherds and sheep, it must be important.

The shepherd model or style of leadership is pure and simple when the scriptures are the guide and instructions for both the shepherd and the sheep. When either, crosses God's boundaries, then there be corrections made according to His instructions.

The essence of spiritual leadership; sheep follow a shepherd because they know and trust him. This kind of trust and allegiance can only be gained one way- by a shepherd touching his sheep, carrying them, handling them, tending them, and feeding them to the extent that he *smells like them*. Dr. Lynn Anderson-They Smell Like Sheep

Spiritual leadership is not a man-made institution, but part of God's plan to reconcile the world to Himself.

The term "church" to many refers to the physical building and its contents rather than the people. The term "elder" has come to mean "in charge like a CEO" excluding the scriptural "shepherd model", and many "elderships" have become administrators, managing the deacons [which many think of as a steppingstone to becoming an elder], relegating the deacons to building maintenance, with little spiritual responsibility. My theory is that deacons are responsible for removing distractions during worship services, they make things happen so God will be **glorified** in our worship.

David stated, "The Lord is my shepherd" Psa. 23 (Genesis 48:15) He blessed Joseph, and said, "The God before whom my father Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my **shepherd** all my life to this day. Other translation use led, fed in place of shepherd which is the very essence of spiritual leadership. God is the perfect example of the shepherd model for us to follow.

THRIVING CHURCHES are following ACTIVE shepherds.

The mission of every Christian is to GLORIFY GOD through obedience to His word to become HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. (2 Corinthians 5:21) *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the **righteousness of God** in Him.*

This is the eternal goal! Everything we do must **glorify** God, everything we do must be guided by following His will, and everything shepherds do must lead the sheep to be a living sacrifice [Rom. 12:1] moving toward the righteousness of God. This is accomplished by mentoring, equipping, and nurturing the sheep.--- *For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice,* (Psalms 95:7)

(Matthew 9:36) *Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.* Sheep need a shepherd to prevent them from wandering off, scattering in different directions, and becoming easier prey for Satan.

He who wishes to fulfill his mission in the world must be a man of one idea, that is, of one great overmastering purpose, overshadowing all his aims, and guiding and controlling his entire life" (William Bate).

Our mission is our main purpose for living. It is the one thing that we would most like to accomplish or achieve while we're alive. All of us have some such goal or reason for living. We may not have thought about it much. In fact, we may not even be honest enough to admit to ourselves what the real motivation is behind our actions. But whether it is written or unwritten, and whether it is conscious or unconscious, all of us have a motive and we have a mission. There is always some goal or interest that guides our doings. Gary Henry

The shepherd's mission is to **glorify** God while preparing the sheep to spend eternity with God.

The following lessons are designed to guide us in completing our mission of “becoming the righteousness of God”. We want to move the discussion from authority and rule to vision, connecting, culture, and excellence shown in lives of faithful service, leaving a legacy that **glorifies** God, which can only be accomplished through the congregation maintaining a “culture of Stability”.

A pastor is one who pastures!

Practical Spiritual Leadership

Culture

Every congregation is unique and different as a fingerprint. There are different terms used to describe the culture of a congregation, atmosphere, attitude, DNA, spirit, and climate. Probably the best term is identity. It is how things are done, and how it operates. Put another way, thriving churches have a healthy culture, dying churches have an unhealthy culture.

Spiritual leaders create the culture.

A healthy atmosphere is created by.

- (1) Timely execution vs slow decision-making that leads to distrust.
- (2) Clear, timely, and open communications vs. Silence.
- (3) Solid built trust vs. suspicion
- (4) Develop authentic relationships vs. casual acquaintance
- (5) Leadership development vs. stagnation
- (6) Proactive and responsive vs. silo thinking
- (7) Sense of urgency for the lost vs. they will wander back.

Sheep will follow shepherds in a healthy culture! A healthy culture is the perfect work environment to actively follow God's instructions. (Ephesians 4:11) *And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,* (NAS95) Apostles and prophets have completed their work leaving the fulfillment of God's instructions to evangelist, pastor, and teachers.

Evangelist- NOTICE-Culture change- He is the paid preacher. [1Cor. 9:14] BUT 1Pet 2:9 EVERY Christian is to be a **proclaimer of the good news**, an evangelist. Shepherds set the tone and example and change the culture.

Pastor- Shepherd- Relationship with the sheep- know each other by name, voice, and smell- defends, protects, and guides because he loves and cares for them.

Teachers-instructors to provide an understanding of the doctrine of Christ.

(Ephesians 4:12) *for the equipping [perfecting] of the saints for the work of service,*-there is a job to be done, the work of service to the Lord, we must be properly equipped for the job to do it right, be pleasing to Him, and with proper understanding to not offend the living God.

Evangelists, shepherds, and teachers are responsible for equipping [complete or perfect] the saint to be able to please God with his service. [1 Thess 3:10] Paul prayed for this very circumstance-Col 1:28, 2:10

to the building up of the body of Christ; God's purpose is carried out by the strengthening of the body of Christ, the church. (Ephesians 2:21) *in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,* A healthy culture will produce this result.

(Ephesians 4:13) *until we all attain to the unity of the faith*, -This is the perfection, the completeness, the excellence that can only be obtained in a healthy culture, [don't even think it, nobody is perfect] God desires each and every one of us to be complete [2pet 2:3]

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. Notice – Christ is the standard, the goal we strive to reach, a mature person, [a meat-eater] through the knowledge of Christ-sound doctrine. we start as babes in Christ [Gal 4:19] milk drinkers and grow into spiritual grown-ups. God always provides.

(Ephesians 4:14) *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.* A great challenge for all shepherds is to identify the “unstable” of the flock, to provide a healthy culture that will help them develop a relationship with the shepherds and solid members to establish their knowledge of His word and strengthen their faith in God and removing them from a toxic situation into a healthy culture. That culture will provide for the spiritual maturity to be stable, resisting the deceitfulness of sin.

(Ephesians 4:15) *but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,* the basis of our maturity[growing up] is truth [sound doctrine, whole purpose of God-acts 20:27]

The culture is available to be active in “disciple-making” Followers are growing into leaders, by the example of godly lives, demonstrating joy in worshipping God, and eagerness to share the gospel with family, coworkers, and total strangers. We MUST never be a Christian mannequin, just standing there looking good, but doing nothing. We must put into practice the things we learn and exercise them. Heb 5:12-14 We glorify God as we learn, grow, and mature, His pattern of growth.

(Ephesians 4:16) *from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.* The excellence of God's desire for mankind.

This is what a thriving church with a healthy culture looks like, glorifying God by obedience to His will for His purpose. 2 Cor 5:21

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God,

that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

And do not neglect doing good and sharing,

for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

^(Hebrews 13:15-16)

VISION Shepherd Model

Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, But happy is he who keeps the law. (Proverbs 29:18) (NAS95)

The word vision is used in three ways, the ability to “see” with objects in our eyes, God’s method of revealing information to prophets, and the third is a combination of insight and imagination. It is a valuable tool that is developed, not inherited, or caused by the environment. It comes from our character, which is always choosing a path that glorifies God. Vision is comprised of wisdom, discernment, prudence, and perception. Those who have this vision have developed the qualities of imagination, creativity, and ingenuity.

The work of the Lord is in desperate need of those with an elevated vision, the ability to visualize worthy goals, and how to achieve those goals. Anticipating unseen consequences that any decision may bring to a congregation.

A vital part of shepherding is visualizing the needs of the flock.

Shepherding the shepherds is a difficult task. Maintaining these qualities will prevent many of the difficulties that could arise.

- (1) Culture of stability- Men living godly lives, with humility and respect for one another, transparency, and the desire to lead the flock of God to His **glory**.
- (2) Unity- one mind, one voice will come from all having the same purpose- **Glorify** God.
 - a. Satan’s tactic- take out the shepherds by disunity.
 - b. Equality- No junior or senior elders- all humble shepherds.
- (3) Willing to sacrifice- Themselves—time, energy, family, everything [John 15:11]

From a foundation of shepherds leading to glorify God the needs of the flock can be identified and provided for to reach the goal.

The responsibility of the shepherds has three categories.

- (1) Themselves-
- (2) Flock
- (3) Individual sheep

The shepherds must maintain good spiritual health, ever learning, growing, and striving for excellence. Shepherding is a very strenuous job, defending against the wolves will test the strength, stamina, and durability of each one. Maintaining good physical health, and avoiding burnout is very important to reach the goal of **glorifying** God.

What is the shepherd’s vision of where he will be in 3 years, 5 years? What is your vision for the future?

The needs of the entire **flock** are the primary concern of the shepherd.

- (1) **Mentoring**- Setting the example to follow- Sheep instinctively follow the shepherd they know and trust but will wander from those they don’t know.
- (2) **Equipping**- Providing everything to reach the goal of **glorifying** God. [2 Tim. 3:17]
- (3) **Nurturing**- Instruction, admonishing, and discipline to reach the goal-**Glorify** God.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. (Psalms 23:2) The good shepherd knows where the green pastures are located, the good diet, and the quiet waters that satisfy the thirst without chaos and turmoil.

What is the shepherd's vision of where the flock will be in 3 years, 5 years? What is the vision for the future?

The needs of an individual **sheep** may require more than the entire flock.

- (1) Additional mentoring- that fits their individual needs.
- (2) Additional equipping- tutoring in some specific area.
- (3) Lots of nurturing- for the weak, and injured lambs to restore their health.

The goal of shepherding is NOT to create a flock of happy or comfortable sheep but to reconcile them to the **glory of God**.

The **preacher** is among the flock but is an individual sheep and critical to the success of reaching the goal of **glorifying** God. He might also be a shepherd who is delegated to preach to the flock.

- (1) He may need mentoring- especially in the early preaching years. Remember Peter
- (2) He may need Equipping- Remember Apollos
- (3) He WILL need nurturing- Burnout- stress- emotionally drained, especially if the shepherds fail to be open and be available to the sheep. Talking to shepherds should NOT be like going to the principal's office. [R.S.]

Where do the shepherds see the preacher in 3 years? 5 years? What is your vision for the future?

The **deacons** are also among the flock but are individual sheep and vital to reaching the goal of **glorifying** God. When functioning properly deacons are delegated to eliminate distractions from the services. They enhance the seriousness of our service to God by providing organization to details to bible classes, and worship services. Much of what they do is physical but has a dramatic effect on the excellence of our spiritual service to God. They are NOT jr. elders, however they are viewed by the flock as spiritual leaders so they must remember the instruction in 1 Tim. 3- Men of dignity, reverence, and blamelessness – you are mentoring others by your example. These qualifications are not required for building maintenance but are for serving the Lord as a deacon.

Deacons are very important to the flock to reach the goal of **glorifying** God.

Where do the shepherds see each deacon in 3 years or 5 years? What vision?

The vision of Jesus was that all men should be saved from their sins. Mt. 18:11 --Reconciled to God. Are the shepherds committed to that goal? Has that commitment been instilled in the flock? If so, then the growth of the kingdom will come.

There is a need to consider the future physical needs of the congregation.

Parking, classroom space, seating, location ----long-term maintenance- equipment upgrades

What is the shepherd's vision for 3 years, 5 years?

The ONLY positive thing that came from the COVID-19 event was the realization that we may need to adapt to change--- not affecting sound doctrine but the way we move to more effective methods of reaching the goal of **glorifying** God.

Shepherds cannot just be on autopilot, following the same format year after year, and expect to produce effective results toward the goal of **glorifying** God. Thriving shepherds will "example" excellence in all they do in their efforts to **glorify** God.

The example and teaching in the Old Testament required the "first fruits", the very best be sacrificed to God in their effort to **glorify** God. In the New Testament, the first fruit offering was Jesus Christ, the sinless son of God [1Cor. 15:23], the very best that could be offered to **glorify** God.

What is the shepherd's vision of their "first fruits"? Have those qualities been instilled in the sheep to EXCELL in their striving to reach the goal of **glorifying** God? Prov 22:29 NKJV

The vision of Jesus was that all men should be saved from their sins. Mt. 18:11 --Reconciled to God.

Practical Spiritual Leadership

Connection shepherd model

The shepherd model is the perfect example of the need to develop a TIGHT connection with the flock and with the individual sheep. My father-in-law raised cattle, he knew the names of each one in a herd of over a hundred, and he knew the offspring of each one by name and the next generation because he was with them all the time. The same would be more compelling with the shepherd because they would be with the flock night and day, it was a very intimate relationship. Jesus had a similar relationship with the twelve, they were together constantly.

Today's shepherds cannot be expected to quit their day jobs to live with the sheep however their responsibility requires that they spend time with the sheep, and know their name, faces, and their life stories. Be open, approachable, and hospitable [generous and cordial welcoming of guest-Webster]

Consider - (Luke 15:4) *"What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?" (NAS95)*

The shepherd was vigilant in observing the flock, he realized that one was missing, out of 100 sheep that all looked alike.

Today shepherds must recognize a "wandering " sheep, slipping away, arriving late, and leaving early, not involved, missing some services, and losing their connection to the group. Some members feel alone in the pew. A Christian who feels alone is a target for Satan because he does feel like he has a secure place like home, a place of safety a connection. Gen. 2:18

One member said it would take a safecracker to break into your circle.

How will shepherds react to a lamb that is "slipping away" and losing their connection? Will they wander away?

The shepherd of Luke 15, acted immediately and searched for the lost sheep, he did not wait for the sheep to return and searched until he found the lost sheep. He was intentional.

(Luke 15:5) *"When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. He had compassion, love, and care for the lost sheep carrying it back home to a place of safety where there was great rejoicing over the one that was lost, rescued from the dangers of the world. Jas. 5:19-20*

(Luke 15:6) *"And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'*

What a great atmosphere, no scolding, or shame but rejoicing with love and compassion.

(Luke 15:7) *"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.*

In Ezekiel 34:1-6 the Lord describes poor, ineffective shepherds and how they had failed to care for the flock of God. They had failed to tend the flock.

How will today's shepherds prevent leadership failures? Culture of stability

(Ezekiel 34:16) *"I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.*

This is God's instruction to fix the problem that now exists. An old saying- an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

(1 Thessalonians 5:14) We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

Everyone, every person that comes to the assembly comes for a reason, they have a purpose for coming. Some are travelers just looking for a place to worship, some may be looking for better spiritual food, and some are looking for a connection. We all need to be good shepherds and help them fulfill their needs.

(Romans 15:1) Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

(Hebrews 12:12) Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble.

Their weakness is usually not physical, but often emotional problems that greatly affect their spiritual life. We are not psychiatrists HOWEVER we can bring them to the healing power of the GREAT PHYSICIAN!

Most people will never come to our assemblies because they have no religious connection with anybody. 57% in my county of residence [2020 census] have NO religious connection.

We must focus on this need with intentionality.

(2 Corinthians 5:18-20) Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:18-20)

Paul instructs—make an appeal to the world to reconcile to God—Begging you in the name of Christ to Reconcile to God- most of this group are NOT coming to our assemblies -how are we appealing to them? How are we holding forth the word of life?

HOW WILL THEY MAKE A CONNECTION?

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Planning Shepherd Model

Planning is a strategy to implement the stated vision of our purpose of **glorifying** God.

Commit your works to the LORD And your plans will be established... (Proverbs16:3) (NAS95)

The planning for the local congregation must be done through the prism of **glorifying** God in everything that is done by following His will. (Proverbs 16:9) *The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.*

Shepherds are responsible for mentoring, equipping, and nurturing the flock of God. This is accomplished by following the instructions of given in God's word.

*(Acts 20:28) "Be on **guard** for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

- (1) **Guard**- protects the sheep from the wolves, and false teachers. [Mt 7:15] They are everywhere, they are sly and deceitful, trying to creep in unnoticed [Jude 1:4]

David as a shepherd killed a Lion and bear to rescue a lamb. 1Sam. 17:34, and they protected against robbers by laying in the door of the sheepfold when abiding in the field.

What safeguards are in place to protect the flock from Satan's agents? Electronic sheep robbers are especially dangerous around the world.

- (2) **Oversee**- The shepherd oversees everything about the flock and the individual sheep. (Isaiah 40:11) *Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather* verse shows the relationship between the sheep and the overseer.

*Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, **exercising oversight** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be **examples** to mentoring the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3)*

How are the overseers planning to mentor the flock?

- (3) **Tend**- The greatest challenge for the shepherd was finding good grazing and fresh water. Proper diet- nutrition- sheep will not drink stagnant water, only fresh water that quenches their thirst. The shepherd is responsible for taking care of the weak, injured, or sick of the flock. An individual lamb may be spiritually sick and need individual care, to prevent loss. Isa. 40:11 John 10:17 **Nurturing**

Are there specific plans to nurture the sheep?

- (4) **Feed**- *"Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding. (Jeremiah 3:15)*
*(Colossians 1:28) We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present **every man complete** in Christ.*

How will knowledge and understanding be provided to the flock?

(5) **Equipping**- Follow Jesus method of equipping His disciples.

- (1) Encourage them to serve.
- (2) Qualify them to serve.
- (3) Understand their needs. John 14
- (4) Instruct them.
- (5) Pray for them.

From "Jesus on Leadership" G. Wilkes

(Hebrews 13:21) **equip** you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be **the glory forever** and ever. Amen.

(6)- **Seed-Sowers**- Preach the word, [Acts 8:4] Preach the good news-Acts 13:32- God is glorified when the seed is sown on good soil and produces good results.

How will the seed-Sowers be trained and equipped?

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Practical Spiritual Leadership

Legacy

Shepherd model

One of the most important aspects of good shepherding is the development and maintenance of a legacy. The importance can be seen when the culture of congregations begins to change, the stability of the group begins to falter and there is no structure of legacy to right the ship.

A solid legacy is built on understanding the purpose of God, to glorify Him by humble obedience to His will in fulfilling the mission of reconciliation.

To complete that mission successfully, will require leadership that has a vision of the needs of the flock of God, and how to shepherd, mentor and equip the sheep to be prepared to carry out their mission. Avoid Ezek. 34:1-10

To establish a solid legacy----- shepherds must have a vision for the future, to prepare the group for 3-5 years by examining the need for leadership. Will we need additional shepherds? Different preacher? Additional deacons? Training men for the job.

As these needs are assessed, planning becomes very important to complete the mission. The motto for a successful legacy is "MISSION- GLORIFY GOD". This must be the foundational thought for every phase of planning.

The flock must be guarded at all times, planned security is vital to the mission. Because violent attacks on some religious groups raised our awareness of the need for physical security because most had no vision of this situation. Most had some response to this threat to the congregation and adjusted to add a higher level of safety.

Do we have a heightened awareness of the "spiritual security" of the flock?

How are we planning to face this ever-present threat from wolves and lions? If our security is poor there will be many more lambs to tend, be carried for, wounds to bind, and more lost sheep.

One of the strongest links in spiritual security is a "tight" connection between the shepherds and the sheep. That connection is forged by being together, sharing, and having things in common [Acts 2:42] this is the exact point of the shepherd model in John 10 and Luke 15. The sheep trust the shepherd because he is daily

providing for them [green pastures, quiet waters Psa. 23] there is a dependence on each other, which develops an “authentic relationship”. They know his voice, they follow him, and he smells like sheep because of their close association.

It is a tight connection!

This may be the weakest link in the chain of “spiritual security”, loosely connected sheep are the first to wander, to be scattered, and have the highest need for recovery. The lion and wolf always attack the stragglers, the weakest, and those alone. To develop a strong legacy must include tight connections with the flock or the mission will fail, and God will not be glorified.

With the vision of understanding God’s purpose in place, the planning complete to focus on the job to be done and a circle of tighter security erected it is time to set to work to complete the mission. That will be accomplished by the “culture” how things are done, and who we are.

The shepherds set the tone, the example, and motivated them toward completing the mission. Sheep will follow sound, energetic shepherds who are bringing their best, open, alive, and welcoming to all. The weak and unstable will see the value of this “safe culture” and be encouraged, stabilized, and established. The process of “disciple-making” will move forward at a quicker pace toward the mission of glorifying God.

Every sheep is part of the flock, shepherds must utilize the abilities of every sheep in the conquest of reaching the lofty goal of glorifying God. We can only be successful if we excel in exercising what we learn [Heb 5:12-14] so that the WHOLE BODY [all the sheep] is working together in unity, 1-mind, 1-spirit, 1-purpose.

What does a solid legacy look like?

**So that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent,
children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse
generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,**

(Philippians 2:15)

Influence for these thoughts came from a podcast “Thriving or Dying Churches.”

It is available on the Dowlen Road Church of Christ website.

They Smell like Sheep by Lynn Anderson

Leaders & Followers by Matt Hennecke

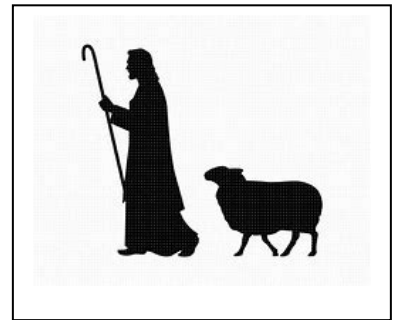
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BRETHERN AND FELLOW SHEEP

Plea for attention continues.

God the Father all-powerful, all-wise, all-knowing could have chosen any one of many different leadership styles for those who would lead His people. He in His wisdom and sovereignty chose the shepherd model. It reflects His characteristics, provider, sustainer, guide, and protector of His people.



Moses the Chosen Shepherd

*(Exodus 3:1) Now Moses was **pasturing** the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. (NAS95)*

He had spent many years tending sheep in the wilderness, no doubt toughened by work, and environment. It was the responsibility of the shepherd to know where to find good pasture and flowing water, which meant moving often while keeping the sheep safe from predators.

Moses was given a challenge that none of us will be asked to face. He had been raised and educated in the royal court of Pharaoh, however, that was 40 years ago, and many things had changed, including Moses. *(Exodus 7:2) "You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.*

(Exodus 7:6-7) So Moses and Aaron did it; as the LORD commanded them, thus they did. Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

A demonstration of God's power was on full display as the ten plagues brought on Pharaoh and the nation of Egypt. A temporary humbling of Pharaoh caused him to agree for the Israelites to leave Egypt.

Pharaoh's pride and arrogance caused him to pursue after them with his army.

But Moses said to the people, *"Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. "The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent."* (Exodus 14:13-14)

The shepherd provides courage [do not fear] leadership [see-observe- salvation from the Lord] as he demonstrates faith and dependence on the Lord, showing strength coupled with meekness.

The daily responsibility of a shepherd is to provide food for the sheep. The nation of Israel had about two million people [603,550 soldiers] and they complained because of no food. Moses appealed to God for help and God provided food, and bread rained down from heaven. [Ex 16:4] God always provides nourishment and protection for His people.

In Numbers 11 Moses learned the value of delegation, sharing some responsibilities with dependable men. Moses learned he could not do it all, God provided help.

Moses was humble and meek[not easily provoked to anger] (Numbers 12:3) *(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.)* as he was daily facing complaining people, complaining about the food God provided from heaven.

Even in the face of a rebellion Moses defers to God, [Ex. 16] Moses was accused of “lording over them” as he followed God’s instruction. Moses always followed His instructions, but in his frustration with the complaining people, he lost his meekness for a moment, with one exception, [Ex. 20] This is an example for us today.

Put yourself in the place of Moses in Deut. 9, he has been on Mt Sinia with God for 40 days, God has written on the stone tablets when He saw the golden calf that Aaron had made, his excuse was interesting, “The people throw gold in the fire and calf came out” LAME LIE

Moses makes his strongest appeal to God not to destroy this stubborn people. Moses prayed for the disobedient many times to prevent their destruction! He never gave up on them.

The greatest commendation of Moses is recorded in Exodus 40:16 *Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did.*

This is what God requires of all shepherds and the sheep that follow the good shepherd.

In Numbers 27 God revealed to Moses that the time of his death was near, and He showed Moses the promise land. (Numbers 27:16-17) "May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the LORD will not be like sheep which have no shepherd." Moses knew that there MUST be a shepherd to feed, guide, and protect the flock, so Joshua was chosen.

(Judges 2:7) The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

(Judges 2:10-11) All that generation also were gathered to their fathers, and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.

Sheep without a shepherd. Mark 6:34--No culture of stability

PRACTICAL Spiritual Leadership

Shepherd Model

Shepherds – consider imitating the positive traits from David’s life many he learned from his time “tending” his father Jesse’s sheep. Apply them to your life as you shepherd God’s people.

DAVID

Jesse the Benjamite had 8 sons. David was the youngest and the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. In 1 Samuel 16, David was in the field with his father’s sheep. (1 Samuel 16:11) *And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the children?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."* (NAS95)

Samuel anointed David as they all stood among his brothers who were not anointed to be the next king of Israel. David was thought to be about 20 years old. He returned to tending the sheep.

The 3 oldest brothers had joined Saul’s army against the Philistines, David was making trips between the Army camp and his father’s house carrying provisions for the brothers. 1 Sam 17:34-36 records the well-known event of David facing the giant, Goliath, and reveals other events of strength and courage.

(1 Samuel 17:34-36) *But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."* The power of God was demonstrated through David, he had protected his father’s sheep against a lion and a bear, and he had protected God’s people against their enemy.

(2 Samuel 5:2) *"Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in. And the LORD said to you, 'You **will shepherd** My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.'"*

(2 Samuel 7:7) *"Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel.*

(Psalms 78:70-72) *He also chose David His servant and took him from the **sheepfolds**; From the care of the ewes with suckling lambs He brought him to **shepherd** Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance. So, he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart and guided them with his skillful hands.* This passage gives some insight into the shepherds’ care and compassion in assisting the ewes[mother sheep] with lambs that are not weaned, and they require

additional care. Secondly, shepherding people requires integrity and skillful hands to feed, guide, and protect them from dangers everywhere.

David was anointed king in 2 Samuel 2:4 and became a great king and leader for the nation of Israel.

God saw the heart of David, not just his physical appearance, and He chose David because of the integrity of his heart and even in his youth, David understood that his strength and courage came from his trust in God.

(Psalms 31:4-6) *You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, For You are **my strength**.* Over and over David acknowledges that God is the source of his strength.

*Into Your hand I **commit** my spirit;* -David committed himself to the Lord and held nothing back.

*You have ransomed me, O LORD, God of truth. I hate those who regard vain idols, **But I trust in the LORD.*** His trust in the Lord was developed as a shepherd boy in the fields with the sheep, communing with God, relying on Him for strength to feed, guide, and protect his father's flock. When he became king that same commitment to the Lord gave him the strength and courage to feed, guide, and protect God the Father's flock.

David showed his love and commitment to God when he refused to harm Saul. He had attempted to kill David several times, but because Saul was God's anointed, chosen of God, David showed respect for the Lord. David mourned the death of Saul because he was God's anointed.

"After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.' (Acts 13:22)

There is a clear contrast between Saul and David.

- (1) David was committed to God's word and His worship.
- (2) His heart was filled with God's desire.
- (3) Lead Israel according to the Law of Moses and the Prophets.
- (4) He never allowed idolatry.
- (5) He never attempted to subvert his office.
- (6) He was pious, humble, and devoted to the Lord.
- (7) He was a man and subject to temptation.
- (8) He had a penitent heart, sorrowful for his sins.
- (9) Prayed for a clean heart because of the damage from sin.

Saul was none of these things which was displeasing to God, He tore the kingdom away from him because of his rebellion. [1 Sam 15:58] No culture of stability

David provided many attributes required to be a successful shepherd and to be pleasing to God.

Practical Spiritual Leadership

Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd

In the 10th chapter of the gospel of John, Jesus gives us a beautiful word picture of the Good Shepherd. He outlines the positive aspects of the relationship the shepherd has with the sheep and contrasts the difference between the “true” shepherd and a “hireling”. In the first five verses, Jesus is drawing a clear portrait of himself.



(John 10:1-2) *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. (NAS95)*

(John 10:3) *"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*

Jesus knows His sheep, there is a close personal relationship, He knows their name, and their problems and an injury might be treated with animal grease and honey, [healer] The effective shepherd has a tender affection for the sheep. (Isaiah 40:11) *Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs and carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes.* Because of the personal relationship between the sheep and the shepherd, he will be able and willing to care for the individual needs of the sheep, which limits the size of the flock. How many sheep can an effective shepherd provide green pasture, quiet waters, and protection from wolves in sheep clothing?

The effective shepherd leads the sheep from the sheepfold out to the good pasture- (Psalms 23:2-3) *He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in **the paths of righteousness** For His name's sake.* The effective shepherd will lead with a skillful hand away from the dangers of the world into the “paths of righteousness”.

(John 10:4-5) *"When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. "A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."*

Jesus, the Good Shepherd has given us the perfect example of an effective shepherd, FOLLOW HIM!

(1 Peter 2:21) *For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to **follow in His steps**, (Matthew 16:24) Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to **come after Me**, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.*

He will be a faithful guardian to the sheep- (1 Peter 2:25) For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the **Shepherd and Guardian** of your souls. FOLLOW HIM!

(John 10:11) "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

(John 10:9) *"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.* The door is symbolic of the access to salvation is through Jesus Christ, the only access, as a sheepfold had only one door, salvation is available ONLY through Jesus God's Son.

Going in and out The shepherd leads the sheep to the pasture and good water to provide nourishment for health and growth. He watches over the sheep to protect them from predators. (John 10:11) "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. When in the high pastures that was too far to return home, the shepherd would use rocks and brush to construct temporary sheepfolds

and at night would lay down across the opening to prevent the sheep from wandering. He literally became the door and would fight any robber or predator.

Jesus is foretelling the sacrifice that He would make for the souls of man.

(John 10:12-13) *"He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep."*

Jesus speaks of careless, unfaithful shepherds, (Jeremiah 23:1) *"Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!" declares the LORD.* Failure to lead to green pasture and good water is destroying the sheep, failure to prevent them from wandering or seeking those that become lost allows those sheep to be destroyed and scattered.

No joy when sheep are destroyed or scattered! Luke 15:6

God has ALWAYS provided shepherds for His people, to guide, feed and protect. The final selection God made was a succession of men to fill the role of shepherd. Through the scriptures, He gave the requirements, examples of the responsibilities, and needed character to be an effective shepherd that will lead God's people in the "path of righteousness".

(Ephesians 4:11) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers. The apostle's and prophets' work are completed, and those functions have ceased. The work of the evangelist, pastors, and teachers is a continuing duty. The purpose of the responsibilities is defined in verse 12. for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.

The goal of the equipping and building up is defined in verse 13- 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.

This is God's plan from the beginning to create a culture of stability for the sheep to thrive in, grow, and develop into full-grown sheep. It always works when man accomplishes his part.

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Practical Spiritual Leadership

Shepherding Shepherds

One of the more difficult tasks of a shepherd is shepherding other shepherds. Their responsibilities to one another and the congregation require that they watch after the souls of their fellow elders. Although accusations must not be made against an elder except with two witnesses, there are times when elders are found in sin or a situation that must be addressed. Like all Christians, an elder is accountable to God and must live by His standards. When his words or actions are displeasing to God, then his fellow elders must go to him in love with the purpose of restoring the one who has been overtaken by a fault.

Those who depart from the faith must not be allowed to go unchecked. (Galatians 1:9) *As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! (NAS95)*

(Galatians 5:19-21) Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Elders whose attitudes are belligerent or combative must be reminded of the qualifications that pertain to attitude; “not quick-tempered, not pugnacious, gentle, not quarrelsome, not violent, self-controlled [Titus 1, 1 Tim.3] They should be reminded of the general admonition to all; “Kind, to all, good behavior, the gentleness of wisdom” [1tim.2-3, Jas 3]

Those who seek the preeminence, the sin of Diotrephes, must not go undeterred. (James 3:16) *For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. (Matthew 20:26) "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant.*

A shepherd of God's people must be an exceptional person in scriptural knowledge and guidance., in personal attributes, in relationships, and in listening to the concerns of those he seeks to guide. He must, with fellow elders, based upon scriptural and sound facts, implement church programs with loving care, without partiality, or political overtones, seeking what is pleasing in the Lord's sight and what is best for the congregation as a whole. Those are noble aspirations and tasks. May Godly elders be richly blessed in their labors of love.

Written by B. Wesbrooks about 15 years ago.

Leadership is only mentioned 6 times in the bible, and servant 900 times!

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