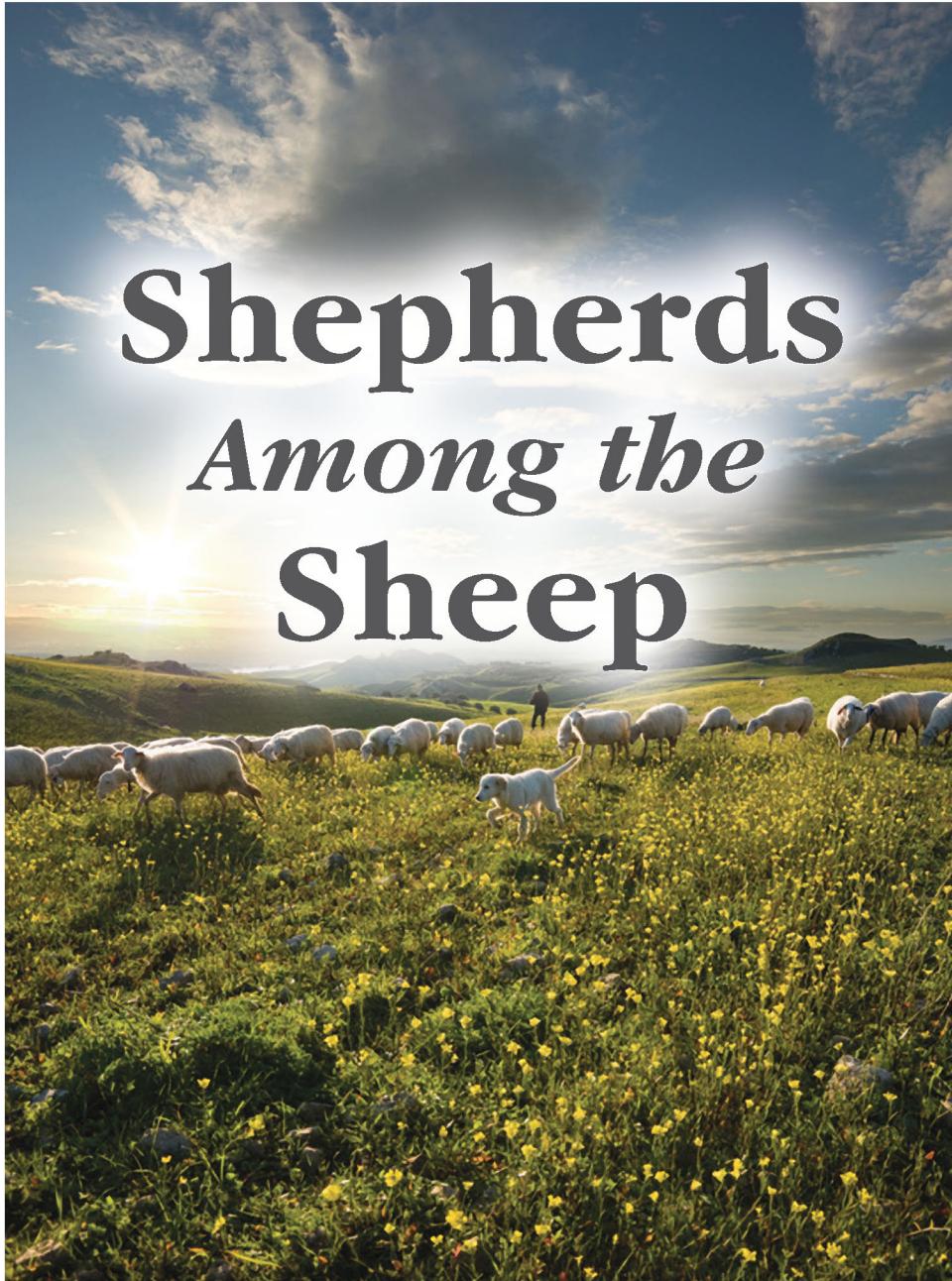


Study Guide

Shepherds *Among the* Sheep



by Truman Scott

SUNSET
International Bible Institute



SHEPHERDS AMONG THE SHEEP

A Study of the Work of
Spiritual Shepherds

by
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Instructions and Requirements Certificate of Basic Biblical Studies (Non-Transferable)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVD, or CD. Listen to or view the recorded lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

Reading: One book is recommended: "*They Smell Like Sheep*" by Dr. Lynn Anderson. (Worth and added 5% on your grade). You will be greatly benefitted by reading this book. You will also be greatly benefitted by reading: "*Shepherds Among The Sheep*" by Truman Scott.

Tests: There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Preview each lesson by reading these questions first. There will be two tests to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6) and the other will be done at the end of the study, after completion of lesson twelve (12). Each test will cover only the previous six lessons studied. You must receive a grade of 70% or above on each test to successfully pass this course.
(The two tests will be 80% of your total grade.)

Memory Work: Memory verses are to be done as you go through the study. You are to quote them to the administrator during the course of study. He will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You have 15 memory verses. (**Memory verses will be 10% of your final grade**)

Due by the mid-term test: (6 verses)

Psalm 23:1-6

Due with the final test: (9 verses)

1 Thessalonians 5:12; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-16

- * The Self Exam questions for each lesson **MUST** be completed in order to pass this course.
 - * The memory verses assigned must be completed and written or quoted before the mid-term or final test is taken.
 - * Reading the two recommended books will give you an extra 5 points on your grade.
 - a. Memory verses. 20%
 - b. Mid-term and final exams. 80%
- | | |
|------------------------------|------|
| TOTAL | 100% |
| Recommended reading. | 5% |

Instructions and Requirements for Bachelor of Biblical Study

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the video tape, DVD, or CD. Listen to or view the recorded lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

Reading: There are two textbooks required for this course other than the Bible, “*They Smell Like Sheep*” by Dr. Lynn Anderson and “*Shepherds Among The Sheep*” by Truman Scott. You are required to write a 2 or 3 page evaluation presenting what you learned from the book. “*They Smell Like Sheep*”. The evaluation should be double-spaced with 1 inch margins. (**This paper will be 15% of your final grade**)

Memory Verses: You will have **twenty-three** (23) verses to memorize in this study of *Shepherds Among the Sheep*. These are to be done as you go through the study. You are asked to quote your memory verses to your administrator who will report them to us. (**Worth 10% of final grade**)

Due with the mid-term test: (14 verses)

Psalm 23:1-6; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5:1-4

Due with the final test: (9 verses)

1 Thessalonians 5:12; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-16

Tests: You **must complete all the “Self Exam”** questions in your Course Guide and **you must complete the Mid-term and Final exams with a grade of 70% or over** to receive your certificate. (**Worth 75% of final grade**)

Grade: Your total average grade for the course must equal 70% or above. The course requirements listed above will be given the following percentages in making up your grade.

a.	Readings and evaluation paper.....	15%
b.	Memory verses.	10%
c.	Mid-term and final exams.....	75%
	TOTAL	100%

LESSON ONE

God's Shepherds

INTRODUCTION



The following will give you an introduction into the contents of each lesson. Each lesson is designed to picture biblical shepherds as they work among God's flock.

PART ONE: Focus on the Shepherds

- I. **God's Shepherds** — a study of the reoccurring shepherd themes of the Bible, underlining that "shepherding" is an overarching view of God's leaders.
- II. **The Life of a Shepherd** — a biblical shepherd has lived a life of increasing maturity, resulting in exemplary qualities in his moral life, his family life, and in his relationships with the sheep.
- III. **The Work of Shepherds** — from the verbs used in relation to shepherds a reader of Scripture can identify the work of shepherds among the flock.
- IV. **The Heart of a Shepherd** — the love of a shepherd for the sheep towers over the skills, the moral qualities and knowledge that he needs to care for the sheep.
- V. **The Aim of Shepherds** — a study of shepherds who help each member become a part of a loving body of servant believers who are whole in life and loyal in their oneness: love, life, and loyalty.
- VI. **When Shepherds Hurt** — shepherds are men who have feelings, needs, frailties and flaws.
- VII. **When Shepherds Work Together** — the Chief Shepherd is watching over the whole flock of God.

PART TWO: Focus on the Sheep

- VIII. **The Fold of the Sheep** — the communion of the saints, the Church, is the fold of safety, the place of renewal and growth.
- IX. **Among the Sheep** — a study of ten life situations to illustrate effective "shepherd among-ness."
- X. **Endangered Sheep** — a study of the threatened and damaged sheep from which some, being neglected, may stray and be lost, or be hindered in their expected growth.
- XI. **The Faithful Sheep** — faithful sheep follow the under-shepherds who the Chief Shepherd has assigned them.
- XII. **The Shepherd's Joy** — a study of how the shepherd's sweat, agony, and longing turn to joy as the Chief Shepherd's aims are fulfilled in the life of each sheep and throughout the fold.

When God spoke of His relationship with His people or of the appointed leaders' relationship with God's people in the Old Testament He frequently spoke with pastoral language: shepherds, sheep, pasture, fold, etc. Probably for two reasons:

1. His people were nomadic shepherds with a long and rich pastoral history or they lived in pastoral cultures.
2. A shepherd's care of the known needs of sheep was so characteristic and picturesque of God's care of Israel and His expectations of His appointed leaders.

Jesus continued the “shepherd language” to describe His person and work. He clearly drew his language from the Shepherd passages of the Old Testament. Although the church moved out in conquest of a world with more diverse occupations, leadership styles, and designations, the New Testament writers continued the shepherd descriptions of church leaders.

Our society is even more diverse in occupations and distant in leadership expectations. Yet, shepherding is still sufficiently known and still clearly describes the continuing expectations that God has of His spiritual leaders. So great is the descriptive fullness and history of the shepherd language that it may best serve our generation to over-arch discussions of the broad subject of spiritual leadership. Especially, since the words “bishop,” “pastor,” and even “elder” have been so religiously abused so as to hinder accurate understanding and use.

LESSON AIM: To provide the student with some basic knowledge about the character and work of God's shepherds.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Get an overview of the word “shepherd” as it is used in the Bible.
 2. Learn how the word is used in relation to God in both the Old and New Testaments.
 3. Become acquainted with four Greek words and their meanings as they relate to God's leaders.
-

A SHEPHERD OVERVIEW

The Hebrew word *raah* was a primary term for feeding, pasturing, keeping a flock together in view of providing the best care of the sheep. It was used to validate the rule of kings as they readily and capably cared for their people (2 Samuel 5:2).

Biblical leaders (prophets, priests, and, kings) were considered good shepherds when they fed the flock of God with God's truth. God was considered the ultimate provider of the flock of Israel.

A. God – The Shepherd God

1. The Shepherd who gives strength. Both from their pastoral experiences in life needs and God's revelation through the prophets, the people most often praised God as the Shepherd who gives strength (Genesis 49:24).
2. As the Mighty One of Jacob, Rock of Israel, God of their fathers, God Almighty they called on Him as “*Shepherd of Israel . . . stir up your might and come to save us*” (Genesis 49:24, Psalm 80:1).
3. They sang of His care in every season of life (Psalm 23: 1-6).

- a. They saw Him and praised Him for His Shepherd care of them as hungry sheep, dependent lambs and full of patience for those with special needs (Isaiah 40:11).
- b. In contrast to the failed shepherding of God's appointed leaders He describes what He will do to rescue and care for His abused and abandoned sheep.
- c. He stood as the constant model to all future leaders as He foresaw the coming of the shepherds' Shepherd (Ezekiel 34:2ff).

B. The Shepherds of God's Israel

- 1. Most of what is said of shepherd leaders is either said in warning judgment or longing (Isaiah 56:11; Jeremiah 23:1-4; Jeremiah 50:6; Ezekiel 34:2ff).
- 2. The Eternal Shepherd's deepest and most reoccurring lament and the prophet's wail was that God's "*sheep have not shepherds*" (1 Kings 22:17).
- 3. His most constant endeavor was to give His people leaders with shepherd hearts like His who would feed them with knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:15).
 - a. Nothing else seems to matter if leaders fail in "*pasturing God's flock*".
 - b. The end of God's patience seems to be near the beginning of a shepherd's neglect and abuse of the sheep.

C. The Shepherd of Shepherds

- 1. All the care, feeding, tenderness, mighty power and sacrifice of the Ancient Shepherd of Israel erupts in the coming of the long announced Shepherd of Shepherds.
- 2. The first announcement of the innocent, lamb-like entry of the New-Covenant Shepherd was made to shepherds.
 - a. The first to see Him, to worship Him, to speak to others of Him.
 - b. The first to glorify and praise God for Him and return to their shepherding, marveling over Him (Luke 2:8-18).
- 3. Jesus described the scattered sheep of His times as the Old Testament prophets saw God's ancient flock – as sheep without shepherds (Matthew 9:36).
 - a. In contrast to hirelings, He spoke of Himself as the Good Shepherd.
 - b. He would gather all of God's sheep folds into one fold and serve as the one shepherd (John 10:2-16).
- 4. The apostolic writers spoke of the Lord Jesus as the "*great Shepherd of the sheep*" (Hebrew 13:20).
 - a. They urged all to return to "*the Shepherd and overseer*" of souls (1 Peter 2:25).
 - b. They extolled the Chief Shepherd who will give a crown of glory to faithful shepherds of the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2-4).

D. Shepherds of the New Covenant

- 1. Jesus set the shepherd context in which He intended His appointed leaders serve with His last hour mandate "*Feed my lambs*," "*Tend my sheep*" and "*Feed my sheep*" (John 21:15-17).
- 2. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders, as shepherds, to be on guard, for themselves and the flock.

- a. To feed and to protect against savage attacks (Acts 20:28-31).
- b. To equip the servant believers for ministry and fullness of growth (Ephesians 4:11-12).
- 3. Peter urged eager feeding, watching and modeling – if the fadeless crown of glory would be their eternal joy (1 Peter 5:1-4).

NOTE: All the admonitions given to spiritual leaders and the response of those led relate to the shepherd / sheep relationship seen in the Shepherd God and His exalted Shepherd of souls.

SHEPHERDS AS ELDERS, OVERSEERS, MODELS AND LEADERS

These designations contain a simple, but far-reaching message and leadership mandate. Shepherds are to be wise, trustworthy men who are present and watchful among the flock – who precede the sheep in love, life and loyalty and validate their leadership in caring for the needs of each sheep of the fold.

A. Elder (Gk. – *presbuteros*) (Counselor)

- 1. Of the 67 New Testament usages, 16 specific references are made to “elders” in the church.
 - a. The word is prominent in a word family that includes ambassador, legate, etc.
 - b. More than age is to be valued – what age has produced in their person.
 - c. Age is required to produce knowledgeable, competent, whole and committed leaders.
- 2. Their long, faithful and fruitful life experiences among the flock of God have prepared them to achieve shepherd results. (See: Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2-16; 20:17; 21:18; 1 Timothy 5:19; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1; cf. also 1 Timothy 4:4.)

B. Overseer (Gk. – *episkopos*) (“near-watcher” – mentor)

- 1. Aside from ecclesiastical minded translations, the word better describes the nearness, watchfulness, protectiveness and readiness to know and care for seen and less seen needs of the members.
- 2. It perfectly describes the attentiveness and involvement of the Shepherd. (See: Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25; cf. also 1 Timothy 3:1; Acts 1:21; 1 Peter 5:2; Hebrew 12:15.)

C. Models (Gk. – *proistamai*)

- 1. Beyond the usual translations “rule over,” “manage,” “to take the lead” the word means: “one who stands before.”
- 2. Therefore, leadership is seen in a readiness to stand before in protection, in example, in instruction, in encouragement, and proceeding others.
 - a. An emphasis is on “up-front” visibility and exemplary modeling.
 - b. A willingness to expose oneself transparently and risk the hurts of that vulnerability.
- 3. Shepherding overarches all those conditions and events. (Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Timothy 3:4,5; Romans 12:8 cf. also Romans 16:2ff.)

D. Leaders (Gk. *agoumenos*)

1. The word designated governors, rulers, and chief men with the core meaning being leading, guiding.
2. The emphasis is on going ahead, leading, showing the way.
3. It is not by autocratic rule (1 Peter 5:2-3), but a leadership that fosters and calls for voluntary, sensitive, respectful and affectionate submission of the flock (Hebrews 13:7,17; 12:24).

Conclusion

With the backdrop of the Shepherding of God in human history, Christ coming among us as a Shepherd and groups of shepherds joining Him in the early decades, we are privileged to have rich and ample insights into the acceptable and vital work as shepherds. Shepherds today are chosen men who, by reason of years profitably spent growing and serving in the flock, have gained spiritual maturity and deep insights to the spiritual needs of the sheep. Out of such maturity, they stay near, always ready to help, to protect and meet the spiritual needs of each member in feeding each on the living Word of God. Their shepherding keeps them in the midst and before the congregation as examples to inspire, as shields to protect and as guides to lead, the faithful in fruitful lives.

As older, more mature men, they are respectfully looked to by the younger, less mature members who have requested their guidance; by the older and weary who are more secure with their concerned and protective care; by the strong and eager who yield to their wisdom; by all who hunger for their feeding them from the Word.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE

1. The first announcement of the New-Covenant Shepherd was made to whom?

2. The New Testament writers referred to Jesus as the _____.

3. Give the meaning of the following four (4) Greek words and how they relate to God's shepherds.
 - 1) ***Presbuteros*** _____

 - 2) ***Episkopos*** _____

 - 3) ***Proistamai*** _____

 - 4) ***agoumenos*** _____

LESSON TWO

The Life of a Shepherd

The well-being and progress of the sheep depend greatly on the quality of lives of the shepherds on whom the sheep rely. Jesus made a sharp distinction between “the true shepherds” and the hirelings who would sacrifice the sheep in their own self-interest (John 10:12-13). Ezekiel was told by God about shepherds who placed their human interests over the needs of the flock, neglecting the health, nourishment, healing and survival of the sheep (Ezekiel 34). Who a shepherd is and how he lives his life makes a crucial difference in the well-being of a flock.

LESSON AIM: To give to the student the knowledge of biblical leadership as to responsibilities and qualities.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: Your will . . .

1. Investigate the qualities and responsibilities of shepherd-leaders as they are patterned after the Great Shepherd.
 2. Learn the qualities required of the leaders selected in Acts 6:1-7.
 3. Study in-depth the basic principles for leaders of all time.
-

WHAT WE CAN KNOW ABOUT THE LIFE OF A SHEPHERD OF GOD

The Scriptures give us clear pictures of the life traits that should characterize those men who accept the responsibility to lead and care for the sheep of God.

A. Shepherds of Ancient Israel

1. Men who loved the flock more than they loved themselves.
 - a. Men who would sacrifice themselves and their own pleasures to assure the safety and well-being of the sheep.
 - b. Men who would be affectionate, caring, tender, insightful, courageous and persistent in all of their dealings with the sheep.
2. God took personal offence when the lives of the shepherds of ancient Israel did not measure up to the honor and responsibility bestowed on them.

Shepherd Passages in the Old Testament: Ezekiel 34:1-16; Psalms 23; Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 23:1-4.

B. Jesus, the Shepherd of Shepherds

1. The Shepherd-God foresaw the coming of a Shepherd who would share fully in His love and care of the sheep of His pasture (Ezekiel 34:23-24).
2. This prophecy was to be fulfilled in raising up of another kingly shepherd to reassert the Godly care of the people of God.

- a. Jesus of Nazareth, the son of David (Matthew 1; Luke 3).
- b. Jesus proclaimed himself as the long-awaited Shepherd (John 10:11-16).
- 3. The life of the prophetic Shepherd was openly observed by both friends and enemies and casual observers. What he did was transparent and recorded for all ages to see and know.

C. The Shepherd Manifested

- 1. He drew what was arguably his own portrait in the opening address in Matthew 5:1-8: the beatitudes.
- 2. He described the royal enterprise that would reflect his purposes and nature: the kingdom of heaven (cf. Matthew 13).
- 3. He announced his unique claims in his “I am...” statements (I am: the door, the bread of life, the light of the world, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth and the life, the vine, the good shepherd, from above, etc.).
- 4. He described himself as “*gentle and lowly in heart.*” (Matthew 11:28).
- 5. When the Apostles spoke of him they described him as one who “*went about doing good*” (Acts 10:38).
 - a. One who left us an “*example that we should follow in his steps...who committed no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth. Who, when he was reviled, did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but committed himself to Him who judges righteously*” (1 Peter 2:21-23).
 - b. Jesus is called “*that Great Shepherd of the sheep*” (Hebrews 13:20), “*...the Shepherd and Overseer*” of our souls (1 Peter 3:25), “*...the Chief Shepherd*” (1 Peter 5:4).

NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHEPHERD LEADERS

A study of the New Testament churches confirms that they had some clear and shared principles that guided them in the development and selection of their leaders. We can have confidence in the validity of those principles because they were transmitted from Christ to the churches by Spirit-led Apostles. Whenever and wherever churches were planted in the 1st century, it is clear, that they chose their leaders with a common standard in mind. It seems compelling that all of the churches were taught and practiced the same principles concerning leadership development and selection.

A. The Prototype example – Acts 6:1-7

- 1. Servant-leaders were chosen in Jerusalem in response to a stated need.
 - a. They were chosen in the number required to address the need.
 - b. They were chosen with the qualities needed to accomplish the purpose.
- 2. High moral and spiritual qualities were set by the Apostles.
 - a. The unity and progress of the church weighed heavily on their being mature and skilled enough to serve the church in such a crucial time.
 - b. The emphasis was placed on the inner qualities of the men.

B. Qualifications For Serving

- 1. **Full of the Spirit:**
 - a. In a practical sense, these men were yielded to the Spirit in their lives,

bearing the “fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

- b. They were knowledgeable and skilled in the Word (Ephesians 6:17).
- 2. **Full of Wisdom:**
 - a. Through the faithful practice of truth in their lives they had gained valuable insights and comprehensive understanding of people.
 - b. They had gained healthy principles of working with people.
- 3. **Full of Faith:** these men were convicted on well reasoned evidence and the source of their convictions was the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

C. An Extended List of Qualities for God’s Leaders – I Timothy 3:1-7

- 1. There had been elders at Ephesus some years prior to Paul’s letter to Timothy (Acts 20:17-38).
- 2. Evidently, there was a need to strengthen or add to the leaders in the church.
- 3. Paul, as he did to Titus (1:5-9), gave the young evangelist the instruction he would need to guide the Ephesian church in constituting itself biblically.
 - a. His instructions were to appoint mature, exemplary and skilled men in their lives, in their family, in the church and in the community.
 - b. Competent leadership does not just happen. It must be an intentional commitment pursued with the greatest level of seriousness and self-sacrifice.

D. Basic Principles for Leaders of All Time. There are three, underlying principles that must characterize the core values of a church leader’s life.

- 1. **Passionate to be close and helpful to the brethren.** The opening statement, “If any man *desires* (*aspires*).... suggests a deep longing, a compelling and urgent purpose, a fervent and boiling-over intent. Driven by such fervor, a man will give a high priority to preparing and to serving.
 - a. The word “*bishop*” or “*overseer*” literally means, “*being near-by, at the side of, at the very elbow of....*”
 - b. It is not a hierarchical word (“over” Gk. *epi*). It describes a mentor, a benefactor, a protector, one who has a close relationship of assistance.
- 2. **Eager to do good.** The second statement of motivation (“*desires*”), suggests an eagerness to stretch or exhaust every resource in order to do good – “*to be well pleasing*” to God (1 Corinthians 5:9).
- 3. **Determined to live above the common life standards, being exemplary in all areas of his life.** A prospective leader is to be “*above reproach or blameless.*” The term is not speaking of a flawless life.
 - a. The Greek word suggests that such a man would not be “*arrested*” if the police went out looking for someone misbehaving himself.
 - b. This person is a law-abiding citizen – would never be charged for misconduct.
 - c. Based on Hebrews 13:7, the concern and scrutiny of the church in their selections were to be focused on life results, on the current outcomes of the lives of the men being considered.
 - d. Some may have had a worldly past (1 Corinthians 6:9-11), but, at issue is how have they grown since their redemption by the Lord?

NOTE: Grammatically, it would be well to place a semi-colon (;) after the statement, “*above reproach*,” meaning that he is to be exemplary in the following qualities in vs. 2-7. The word, “*must*” appears in the singular four times in the text, denoting that each elder is to have the indicated qualities.

E. Three Areas of the Leader’s Life in Which He must Be Exemplary

1. **Exemplary in His Family Relations.** What a man is and does away from public scrutiny is important in his leadership role. What is his relationship with his wife and children? What kind of leadership does he provide to his family? What has been the outcome of his years as a husband and father?
 - a. **He must be the husband of one wife.**
 - 1) The statement has often been limited too much to a leader’s legal status. It would be instructive, refreshing and insightful if we placed more emphasis on the *quality of the marriage relationship*.
 - 2) The literal meaning of the phrase is that he must be “*a one-woman kind of man*.”
 - a) He sees God’s emphasis on the person and place of the woman – that her diverse needs are to be identified and fulfilled.
 - b) He understands her equal partnership and uniqueness and value in the marriage is to be honored. She takes precedence over all other human relationships or concerns (Genesis 1–2).
 - 3) In his service to God, his full love and devotion is given to the one woman. He loves her without reservation, loving her more than life itself, seeing and following the example of Christ who gave himself for the church (Ephesians 5:25).
 - 4) He unselfishly serves her with the same awareness of her need and with the same care as he responds to his own needs (Ephesians 5:21-23).
 - 5) Experiencing such masculine affection, the wife is secure in the love of her husband.
 - a) She feels free to respond with dependency on him, trust and belief in him, recognizing and affirming his value and praising his accomplishments.
 - b) He lives with her intelligently, always trying to learn how to be a more affectionate, thoughtful and helpful husband.
 - c) He is considerate of her femininity, understanding that the passing seasons of womanhood call for added and different responses.
 - d) He honors her as a spiritual equal, treasuring her partnership in the Gospel, profiting from her spiritual insights and feminine ministry.
 - e) He remembers daily that his relationship to God in prayer depends directly on his right relationship with his wife (1 Peter 3:7).
 - 6) A man can best serve as a leader of God’s people when he is singularly devoted to his wife, committed to building an exemplary relationship wherein both are being fulfilled in growing together to their maximum, marital maturity.

- b. **He must manage his household well.** The statement is best translated by “standing before his household” (*proistami*) as a model, as a guide as a protector.
 - 1) It is more than functioning efficiently in finances, making good use of time and other resources.
 - 2) In all matters his family should observe modeled behavior that gives them a context of security, purpose and affirmation.
 - 3) The emphasis of the text is on the impact his conduct has on his children.
 - 4) Orderly children who hold their father in high esteem reflect how a man has “stood before his household.”

NOTE: The “*believing children*” statement in Titus often has been the major, disqualifying consideration in the leader selection process. The meaning of the word, “*believing*” or “*faithful*” most often has been limited to obedience in baptism. The word translated “*believing*” also can be translated “*persuadable....convincible....teachable*.” That being a possible, core understanding of the word, then, the emphasis would be on the learned mind-set or attitude of the children. What is the attitude of the children toward listening, learning, being corrected? Are they fair minded, reasonable or open minded? If so, they are probable reflections of a father who, as a leader in the church, would be fair, open-minded, easily entreated, easily informed.

Further, it might be well noted that the Titus context suggests that the children’s open-mindedness and teachability are most closely related to morality than to doctrine or to religious activity. This emphasis of Titus 1:6 becomes even more instructive when studied against the backdrop of Proverbs. The book urges the son to be eager to listen to instruction; to prize knowledge and wisdom above all treasures. The writer of Proverbs repeatedly emphasizes that heed to instruction saves one from untold moral failures. Titus 1:6 is a one-sentence commentary on the Book of Proverbs. From what has been stated concerning children, both 1 Timothy and Titus are similar in their emphasis on attitudes of children that result from the type of father/child relations they have had.

What this section on the family comes down to can be stated in two sentences:

- 1. A leader must be developing a marital relationship wherein his wife is secure in the mature love of her husband.
 - 2. A leader must have children who enjoy a secure relation with their father, expressing high regard for him, having learned from him self-discipline in wise decision making and moral choices.
2. **Exemplary in His Moral Maturity.** As men develop toward shepherding a flock they must become exemplary in their ethical and relational qualities (socio-ethical), that will determine the strength of their influence on others.
- a. In I Timothy 3 there are nine relational traits. In Titus 1 there are eleven such traits. Perhaps this suggests not just different conditions in the churches in Europe and in Asia but that Paul is simply emphasizing how important it is that our leaders be mature, exemplary Christians.
 - b. It is obvious that neither of these two accounts or any other listing of virtues contain all of the desirable qualities of Christian maturity.

- 1) I Corinthians 13 does not give all the qualities of love.
- 2) Galatians 5 does not exhaust all of the desired results of the work of the Spirit in character formation.
- 3) Ephesians 4 does not include all of the communication principles of speaking the truth in love.
- 4) The accounts in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 do not list all of the relational qualities that leaders must have. But, both accounts emphasize the demand for mature, competent men in leadership.
- c. They must be mature in the following qualities:
 - 1) **Temperate** describes a person who is calm, wise, cautious, vigilant. Such a person is not extreme in anything.
 - 2) **Sober** describes one who is serious, under control.
 - 3) **Of good behavior** speaks of one who is organized, orderly. He is predictable because of his systematic discipline.
 - 4) **Hospitable** pictures one who enjoys helping the needy, who understands the plight of traveling strangers, who is unselfish in helping resolve difficulties of others.
 - 5) **Not given to wine** (literally: “*not sitting long as his cup*”) extols the virtue of self-control and resisting enslavement or addiction. Possibly, the New Testament prohibition of addiction to wine in a wine drinking society, could authorize us to speak against addiction in any area: money, power, work, play, etc.
 - 6) **No striker** precludes a man being in the leadership who is contentious, quarrelsome and hurtful in his treatment of others. Beyond being argumentative, this kind of person hurts others by his abusive manners and verbal assaults on others.
 - 7) **Gentle** applauds one who is fair, reasonable, not unduly rigorous or demanding.
 - 8) **Not a brawler** marks one who, perhaps, not as hurtful of others as the *striker*, but one who is always finding a provocation to quarrel. He is easily offended, quick to be defensive.
 - 9) **Not covetous** (literally: not fond of, not having a liking of silver) commends one who is free from greed and free to work for the good of others. To Titus, Paul said, the leader “*loves what is good*” and is sensible, just, devout and self-controlled.

NOTE: These relational qualities enhance one’s leadership opportunities to gain the respect and co-labor of fellow Christians. Most of the problems in leadership spring from deficiencies in these relational qualities. Strong churches have leaders who are mature in these qualities.

- 3. **Exemplary in His Church Relations and Service.** Beyond a man’s family relations and personal maturity there are two qualities that every leader must achieve:
 - a. **Apt to teach** requires one to have discovered and developed his potential as a teacher. The Biblical terms that specifically refer to a spiritual leader underscores the teaching aspect of leadership.
 - 1) The word “elder” emphasizes the wisdom to be used in counseling, which is instruction at its most personal.

- 2) The word “overseer” emphasizes mentoring or individualized instruction.
 - 3) The word “ruler” emphasizes standing before the sheep in teaching and modeling, a powerful form of instruction.
In the Ephesian letter, Paul characterizes the elders as “*shepherd-teachers*” (Ephesians 4:11), charged with the assignment to “*equip the saints for ministry*.”
- b. **Not a novice**, literally, not “*a recently planted tree*.” The emphasis is not simply on being young or old in years, but in being mature. Paul cautions us not to thrust men into prime leadership before they have demonstrated the deep root-set and fruitfulness of mature growth.
 - c. **An example in the Community.** The church was not envisioned as a secret society or a clannish fellowship.
 - 1) The Lord saw it as “the salt of the earth....a clearly, visible light in the world.” It and its message were intended to be seen, heard and examined in the world and by the world.
 - 2) Therefore, its leaders are required to be attractive and convincing in their relations in the community. They display before the world what Christ does in the lives of His followers.

Conclusion

Twenty-First Century Shepherds. The distance of the centuries has not lessened the need of mature, strongly relational and skilled shepherds of God’s heritage. The openness of our societies and the highly educated populace in most nations may require even more advanced qualities of our leaders. The “good old boy” criteria was never a healthy standard for church leadership and is likely less acceptable today. If we would only equal the investment in training elders that we make in training our preachers we would be light years ahead. If we would demand of our congregational leaders what we demand in knowledge, skills, relationships and life, as we do of our local preachers, our congregations would be better served and church growth would be more greatly promoted.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO

1. What was the quality of God's shepherds of ancient Israel? _____

2. What passage of Scripture gives us the prototype example for choosing church leaders? _____
3. The qualifications for serving in Acts 6:1-7 were:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
4. List three (3) basic principle for leaders of all time.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
5. Men chosen to be leaders must be exemplary in what three (3) areas?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
6. Two qualities which help define the leaders exemplary family relationships are:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
7. Three areas describing the exemplary nature of a leader's church relation and service are:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

LESSON THREE

The Work of Shepherds

Leadership, in the New Testament, is seen as **a work** to be accomplished, not a title to be worn or a position to be filled (1 Timothy 3:1). Leading and caring for sheep is work, can be exhausting and even dangerous. It is not a work to be entered but by men who are highly motivated, unafraid of work and fully ready for the stress and demands of the assignment.

The precise nature of the work is outlined in Scripture by the verbs that describe action. In the sections that follow in this lesson, one can see the work well defined and described by the Holy Spirit. The work of shepherds today can be no less than what was expected of God's shepherds across the centuries.

LESSON AIM: To educate the student as to several areas involved in the work of the shepherd's oversight of the church.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn six (6) specific areas indicated in the agenda for the shepherds of Israel in Ezekiel 34:1-10.
 2. Understand seven (7) assignments given to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17-32.
 3. Look at several aspects of leadership, both in lives lived and work to be accomplished from passages in 1 Thessalonians, Hebrews, 1 Peter and Ephesians.
-

GOD'S AGENDA FOR THE SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL (EZEKIEL 34:1-10)

On the reverse side of God's laments to Ezekiel about the shepherds of Israel we find the positive work of shepherds well defined:

A. Shepherds Are to *Feed* the Flock

1. This would involve searching and finding healthy pastures, leading sheep safely to the best places, and storing up and providing feed for the times that pastures could not be reached.
 - a. A good shepherd would be concerned for, both, the quality and quantity of food so the feeding needs of the flock would always be available.
 - b. The spiritual shepherd would see, likewise, the urgency that every member has the availability of spiritual nourishment.
2. Spoiled content would be thrown away hastily.
 - a. The teachings would be age-appropriate, spiritually adapted to the level of maturity and effectively administered by capable teachers.

- b. No member would be stifled in growth for the lack of instruction, mentoring, discipline or for the lack of encouragement or model.

B. Shepherds are to *strengthen* the flock

1. Spiritual shepherds know that people learn and grow by getting involved in the lives and needs of others.
2. Sitting in a pew and never putting into practice the body of knowledge one can receive over the years can never result in spiritual maturity and fruitfulness.
3. Modern shepherds will plan for open doors to be regularly placed before all members to lead them into works of service, outreach and stewardship of their resources.

C. Shepherds are to *bring healing to the sick*

1. Sickness comes to healthy sheep as it does to healthy, growing members.
2. Often shepherds have to pass from preventative care to caring for the sick.
3. Healing must be a constant concern both for survival and for getting back to the business of the flock.
4. With members who are sick in body or sinful in life, shepherds may need to practice James 5:16: go to their sides, in case of sickness, pray and anoint with oil and, in case of sinfulness, encourage confession of sin and help find the joy of receiving forgiveness.
 - a. A person may struggle to forgive, may fail to confront anxiety, or may be selfish and insensitive.
 - b. Once such obstacles are recognized, life plans need to be initiated to bring healing.
 - c. A shepherd is placed among the sheep to assure that each sheep in the flock is healed when sick.

D. Shepherds are to *bind up the wounded*

1. Spiritual shepherds see lives that are broken by sin, hearts that are broken by losses of loved ones in death, relationships that are broken by unfaithfulness in marriage and dreams that are shattered by reverses in carefully laid plans.
2. The shepherds of God cannot be aloof, distant from these tragedies or too involved in lesser concerns to know or care.
3. Surrounding the wounded ones by love, prayer and needed assistance is the beginning of treating the wounds of dear sheep.

E. Shepherds are to *bring back the strays*

1. Some sheep wander off, little by little, until they become separated from the flock.
2. Sometimes they are drawn slowly away with some fascination, some promise of pleasure or even enticed by some evil plan of others.
3. He knows that straying away can prove to be dangerous and even disastrous to the well-being of the sheep.
 - a. Praying earnestly for and going after a straying member become high priorities of God's shepherds. Finding them and bringing them back to the fellowship are what matter.

- b. Bringing them back without shaming them or embittering them, using love, mercy and grace rather than guilt, judgment and self-righteousness.

F. Shepherds are to *search for the lost*

1. The whole church, led by the shepherds, should leave no initiative untried or one hour wasted in trying to bring a lost one home.
2. Often pride gets in the way of shepherds looking at possible failures on their part or of the church that may have discouraged the lost member.
3. Sometimes, the member has been difficult and it may seem “good riddance.”
 - 1) This is one for whom Christ died.
 - 2) This is the one that has been gifted for great things in the kingdom.
 - 3) This is the one that the church has invested many resources to bring them thus far in the faith.
4. Only when a church and its shepherds have exhausted every known resource can they declare the search is over, for now.

NOTE: God severally reprimanded the shepherds of Israel because they had failed in their six-fold mission to the sheep. For whatever good they might have been doing, they had failed in their central mission: *feed, strengthen, heal, bind up the wounded, bring back the staying and search for the lost*. No church can prosper if its shepherds are busier in other things to the neglect of the sheep.

GOD'S ASSIGNMENTS TO THE SHEPHERDS OF EPHESUS (Acts 20:17-38)

Seven assignments to be fulfilled, both in regard to the flock and to themselves:

A. Be Attentive to Their Own Faithfulness (v. 28)

1. Shepherds need to be especially attentive of their fellow-shepherds.
 - a. Once a man becomes a shepherd, God is still at work in his life. And so is Satan at work to tear down the best among us. He knows the truth of Zechariah 13:7, “*Strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter.*”
 - b. Jesus applied the truth to Himself in Matthew 26:31 just before Satan had his best shot at crucifying the Shepherd
2. Shepherds need to be concerned about the continuing doctrinal soundness, the warmth and depth of a man’s love toward the flock and in his family, the time spent in prayer and in the study of the Word and the moral clarity of each, fellow-shepherd.
3. Openness in confession, fervency in group and individual prayer and candor in sharing must characterize every group of under-shepherds.
4. Shepherds must make themselves individually accountable to one another.

B. Keep a Close Watch on All of the Sheep in the Flock (v. 28)

1. Shepherds can have favorites in a flock that behave delightfully and consistently well.
2. Then, there are some others that are obstinate and difficult to be around.
3. There are still others that are so marginal that it becomes easy to forget them. There could be prejudicial barriers in matters of race, gender,

economic status and maturity. Paul urged the Ephesian shepherds to watch over *all of the sheep* in the fold. Each one is to be valued, tenderly cared for and protected with all diligence.

C. Feed, Sustain Each Sheep According to the Individual Needs (v. 28)

1. Shepherds today can disappoint God in neglecting the spiritual needs of the sheep (Ezekiel 34).
2. Shepherds need to stay abreast of available teaching materials and learning opportunities.
 - a. They must stay attuned to the changing and varied needs of the flock.
 - b. They must help each member maximize his/her ministry gift potential.

D. Be Vigilant to Every Conceivable Threat to the Sheep (vs. 29-31)

1. Every sheep in every flock is in possible danger of multiple threats.
 - a. Accidents, getting lost, overtaken by intended evil, feeding on infected pastures and overfeeding are ever present.
2. No danger, no threat and no person has claim on any sheep in God's fold.
 - a. Shepherds are not hirelings that flee in the face of danger.
 - b. They serve under the "Good Shepherd" and share in His sacrificial love for the sheep (John 10:11-12).

E. Pursue Greater Strength and Hope in a Vibrant Relationship with God and in His Word (v. 32)

1. Paul urges the Ephesian shepherds to stay "in the book."
2. Shepherds must have an unbroken flow of strength and hope to keep them strong, focused and directed.
3. Shepherds who spend little time in personal, in-depth study of the Word, soon start sharing their poverty of knowledge, purpose and motivation with the members, starving the sheep entrusted to their care.
4. They essentially leave the flock without shepherds, one of the greatest reasons for God's grief (Mark 6:34).

F. Support the Weak (v. 35)

1. Shepherding is to be known for its heart and outreach to the weak.
 - a. It is not about ignoring the pleas of the weak and hoping they will go away.
 - b. It is about lifting those who stumble in their walk, about patiently picking them up again after another fall, about being attentive to their real needs and supplying them through sacrificial service.
2. Paul is an example of how far one should go to "supporting the weak." When he had little for himself and worked to support his preaching, he also supported the weak.
3. Shepherds do not hide behind "the benevolence budget" in decisions to support the weak. They make sacrifices so that no one among them has unmet needs.

- G. Enjoy the Blessing of Unselfishly Helping Those Who Have Nothing to Give in Return (v. 35).** The expression, “*It is more blessed to give than receive...*” was addressed to shepherds to encourage them in their sacrificial giving of themselves to insure the good health of the flock, to help them fight their battles against the lurking wolves, to remain strong in the Word and to sustain all members.

A THREE-DIMENSIONAL PICTURE OF LEADERS IN I THESSALONIANS 5:12

Industry, courage and skill stand out as part of the job description of leaders of God’s people:

- A. Industry:** Leaders are described as “*them that labor...*” Leaders work rigorously on behalf of the church. Beyond what is seen during the public services, there are the hours in prayer, in visiting, in mentoring, in soul-winning, in minding the affairs of the Body and in watching for opportunities for growth and service.
- B. Courage:** Leaders are seen as those that “*stand before the church.*” Leaders stand as protectors against error coming into the Body (Titus 1:10-11), as models of the virtues and values of the faith, as teachers of vital truths and as encouragers in righteousness (Titus 1:9).
- C. Skill:** Leaders are pictured as those who “*admonish*” the members. Leaders are more than “good old boys.” They are effective in teaching, in strengthening and in encouraging members in their talk and walk in the Lord.

INSIGHTFUL INFORMATION CONCERNING LEADERS IS GIVEN IN HEBREWS 13:7, 17

Some of the richest insights into the work of God’s leaders are given in these verses in the concluding chapter of Hebrews: Lives well lived, skills well used and responsibilities faithfully fulfilled.

- A. Lives Well Lived:** Leaders are noted for the “outcomes in their lives.”
 1. Leaders are like all other men. They are the composite of all of their experiences as impacted by the influential people in their lives, the values they have adopted and the skills they have learned.
 2. Each of them have made some mistakes, failed to take full advantage of opportunities and lived through some tragedies and plateaus in growth. He has learned from his experiences and continued to improve in his life and service.
 3. When selecting leaders, the question to ask is not what did he fail in doing, but, what has been the outcome of his life?
 - a. In his marriage is he now an exemplary husband?
 - b. Is he now an accomplished servant?
 - c. Has his years of parenting resulted in responsible, adult believers?
 4. The selection of leaders is not a “line-item veto” on every act across the

years of his life. But, now, has all of his life and labor resulted in his being a model of Christian manhood and a trustworthy Christian leader?

B. Skills Well Used: Leaders are respected as having “*spoken the Word of God.*”

1. A valid test of the validity of a man’s leadership is how directly his life and service has impacted the lives of others.
 - a. From his teachings of the Word, have lives been impacted and changed?
 - b. Has he made a difference in the lives of many in his ministry of the Word?
2. Whatever else is to be said about a leader, his knowledge and personal dependence on the Word and his sharing it effectively with others are of paramount importance.

C. Responsibilities Faithfully Fulfilled: Leaders are seen as those who “*give account*” to the Lord.

1. The most sobering responsibility of a leader is giving an account to the Lord concerning his own faithfulness and the faithfulness of those he leads.
2. Members need to know that a leader, at the end of the day, has to be accountable why members are not being responsible, why the church is not growing, why souls are not being taught and why opportunities are not being used.
3. Members have a lot to do in making the accounting hour a pleasant one or one that weighs heavily on the leader.

PETER, AN ELDER, URGES FELLOW-ELDERS TO BE FAITHFUL AS SHEPHERDS (1 PETER 5:1-2)

It is brief, but Peter said much about shepherding in his comments to the elders in Asia Minor. He speaks of a core mission, a core responsibility and a core attitude:

- A. A Core Mission:** Shepherds are “*to feed the flock of God.*” This is not a work that can be delegated to other workers, leaving the shepherds free to do nothing of core importance for the sheep.
- B. A Core Responsibility:** Shepherds are “*to take the oversight*” of the flock. Oversight has more to do with a custodial responsibility than authority over another.
- C. A Core Attitude:** Shepherds are to do their work, *willingly, of a ready mind.*” A shepherd does not serve out of duty as he serves more out of an attitude of love for the sheep.

THE WORK OF SHEPHERDS IS PIN-POINTED IN EPHESIANS 4:11-13

When speaking of the structure of leadership in the local Church, Paul pinpoints the place and purpose of shepherds in their shared work with evangelists. They are assigned the specific work of equipping the saints in view of results in five, important

church growth areas. With each assignment being introduced by the Greek word eis (*into, in view of, in the direction of*), it is suggested that it is an ongoing work as new members are coming into the fellowship and there being always much for every member to learn.

- A. ***The Works of Service (v. 12)***. It is the assignment of the shepherds to help each member discover, develop and employ the specific, ministry gifts God has given.
- B. ***Building up of the Body of Christ (v. 12)***. Every church has much work to do to assure that every member is functioning adequately in the basic, Christian traits: coping with stress, winning over anxiety, freely serving others, being open and transparent, sensitive, unselfish, confident in the Lord, forgiving and self-disciplined.
- C. ***Growing Toward Unity in the Faith and in the Knowledge of Son of God (v. 13)***. Unity in the faith is an unfailing partner with the knowledge of the Son of God. For unity to prevail within a church there must be systematic and reproducible truths being consistently taught in every initiative of the congregation.
- D. ***Becoming Mature (v. 1)***. Shepherds are guided by the expectancy that all of their work will result in the members becoming fully grown and fruitful. Like a mature tree, the members are to produce after their own kind. They are to produce other Christians who become mature and fruitful in kind (cf. 2 Timothy 2:2).
- D. ***Attaining of the Whole Measure of the Fullness of Christ (v. 13)***. With Christ as the ultimate measure of moral and spiritual qualities, all Christians are guided by the shepherds to reach to the highest levels of spirituality as life and opportunity allows.

Conclusion

The work of caring for God's people is a "good work," worthy of whatever any man has to do to prepare himself for the assignment and worthy of any work he must accomplish. It is a work that identifies with the Shepherd of Shepherds, Jesus. It is a work connected with a long line of shepherds who faithfully fulfilled their appointment. It is a work that applauds the Shepherd of Israel in the tender and loving care given to sheep of His pasture.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE

1. What are six (6) works assigned to the shepherds in Ezekiel 34?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

2. In studying Acts 20:20-35 we locate seven (7) assigned work of God's shepherds. List these seven assignments.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____

3. What is the three (3) dimensional picture of leaders in 1 Thessalonians 5:12?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

4. Three insightful things we learn about God's leaders in Hebrews are:

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

5. What four (4) things do we learn in Ephesians 4:11-13 about the work of elders?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

6. Write a brief paragraph summarizing what you have learned about godly leadership from this lesson.

LESSON FOUR

The Heart of a Shepherd

After all of our talk about the work, the life and knowledge of one who shepherds God's flock, as important as each topic is, the *heart* of a shepherd calls for our best attention. From the beginning we knew that "*out of the heart*" come the issues of life (Proverbs 4:23). What a man is in his heart, ultimately, tells us everything. His motivations, his basic values, his overwhelming commitments and what he thinks about in his most treasured times are at the fountain head of all that he is and what he does. **What is the Heart?**

Some would define the "heart" as the seat of the emotions, the source of all affections and feelings. By this definition, feelings become a prominent issue in a study of spiritual leadership. Another perspective broadens and deepens the discussion in defining the heart as an integral composite of **the mind, the will and the emotions** of a person. This perspective combines the *rational*, the *volitional* and the *emotional* aspects of a person.

LESSON AIM: To examine the character and nature of the shepherd heart and the means of achieving a heart like that of the Great Shepherd.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Look at the make-up of every person and how it relates to the overall personality of people.
 2. Study and examine the nature of the heart of God and of the Shepherd Messiah.
 3. Learn the transformational building blocks toward achieving a shepherd's heart.
-

THE HEART – THE MIND, WILL AND EMOTIONS OF A PERSON

A. Every Complete Person Has Been Given a *Mind*

1. The cognitive aspect of the heart is seen in Proverbs 23:7: "...as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."
 - a. How effectively and consistently he uses the mind, what values and attitudes he mixes into the research, what authority he honors and who and what resources he brings into the discussion are important in the outcome of his thinking.
 - b. God would want a man to think biblically, submissively and with an attitude of wanting to think like Jesus in arriving at every conclusion.

- c. The goal of every mind, intentionally, is to gather adequate knowledge and understanding of the truth so that a right conclusion can be reached and a rejection of anything erroneous can occur (John 8:32).
 - 2. A heart conclusion is based on sound thinking resulting from an attitude of courage and candor. (Cf. other Scriptures: Proverbs 2:2; 22:17; 23:12; Ecclesiastes 1:13; 9:1).
- B. Every Complete Person Has Been Given a *Will*** – with which to decide to act upon what the mind has determined is true, important and/or urgent.
1. A decision, influenced by revealed truth and prompted by recognized need, must be made to launch any action of lasting value. James forcefully points out that conviction, a result of a mind at work (faith), without a decision to act (works) is a spiritual sham (James 2:14-26).
 2. Psalms 119:59 explains how an informed mind impacts a willing spirit: “*I thought about my ways and turned my feet to your testimonies.*”

- C. Every Complete Person Has Been Given *Emotions*** – with which to ignite a conclusion of the mind and a decision of the will.
- a. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes speak of how the mind is to determine the truths of God and to act faithfully upon the revealed knowledge.
 - b. Psalms sing out of the deep feelings that come when one commits himself with all of the heart.

NOTE: The heart of a shepherd is one that thinks soundly, determines to act rightly and to do so with all of his well-directed emotions.

THE HEART OF THE SHEPHERD GOD

- A. Psalms 23 Shows the Heart of God in His Attentive Care of the Sheep**
1. He attends to all of their needs, leads them in rich pastures and along quiet streams of water and provides a restful place. Through dark shadows of fearful times, he protects them from dangers and seats them peacefully in choice banquets.
 2. He gives lasting assurances throughout one’s journey in life and speaks of a “forever” relationship.
- B. Ezekiel 34 Shows the Heart of God in His Protection of His Sheep**
1. Ezekiel points out God’s adamant rejection of His appointed shepherds for their failure to have His heart in the care of the sheep and in His promised and tender care of His precious flock.
 2. His heart is angered when those who are appointed to care for His sheep think only of themselves and even abuse the sheep because of their greed and selfishness.
- C. Isaiah Records God’s Intimate and Personal Attention to His Flock (40:11)**
- “*He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lamb in his arms and*

carries them close to his heart; He gently leads those that have young.”

Notice: “*tends, gathers, carries and gently leads.*”

THE HEART OF THE SHEPHERD MESSIAH

The Shepherd God, fully frustrated with how greatly His appointed shepherds had failed in caring for His sheep, spoke of a day when He would renew His presence among the sheep with another shepherd who would share His love and purpose for the sheep: The Messiah Shepherd.

A. The Heart of the Shepherd Messiah Seen in the Gospels

1. The gentle care of Jesus to those in multiple needs, the patience with those who were slow in learning.
2. The fierceness with those shepherds of Israel who were acting as the earlier shepherds of Israel in Ezekiel 34.
3. The grief of the widow of Nain in the death of her only son (Luke 7:11-17).
4. As he felt the plight of the sinful woman thrown at his feet in Jerusalem (John 8:1-12).
5. He mourned at the passing of his dear friend, Lazarus (John 11:28-37)
6. As he looked out over and lamented over the recalcitrant city of His fathers (Matthew 23:37), or even in his Shepherd prayer in John 17.

B. The Heart of the Shepherd Messiah Seen in the Garden

1. Seen in the agony of the garden and in the excruciating, passion events of the following day.
2. His full heart was engaged throughout the last days: he devoted His *mind* to reaffirming His knowledge of the will of God, he committed His *will* to submit to the will of God and he devoted every *emotion* to completing His mission on earth.

THE HEART OF THE UNDER SHEPHERDS

Shepherds among the flock of God in any century must focus their minds, will and emotions on reflecting what they see in the purposes and ways that the Shepherd God and the Messiah Shepherd focused their whole hearts on the well-being of the sheep. From inspired, Apostolic writings we can see the transforming impact of the heart upon the life and work of a shepherd of God’s sheep:

A. Acts 20:17-38: Being Spirit-appointed to be among other shepherds of God’s sheep in a local pasture (vs. 20:28). One must:

1. Be *courageous* against certain threats to the sheep.
2. Be *introspective* in concerns among the shepherds themselves.
3. Be *committed to the Word* of Grace as a source of strength and hope.

B. Ephesians 4:11-12: The “teaching-shepherd” shares in a multi-sided ministry.

1. He will have a *devoted heart* to fulfill his part of the assignment.

- 2. He will build up the body of Christ to achieve “*unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*”
 - 3. He will mature the saints, “*speaking the truth in love....growing the body, edifying themselves in love.*”
- C. I Thessalonians 5:12-13:** A shepherd, stands before the sheep, and will be working out and among the sheep, busy in admonishing each one.
- 1. The flock recognizes his value and is aware and sensitive to his efforts.
 - 2. He is not an absentee shepherd or too busy in his own affairs to know which sheep need attention.
- D. 1 Timothy 3:1-7:** As a lover of God’s people who yearns to stay close to them as a mentor (*epikopos--overseer*), a leader is one who has devoted his best thoughts, his decisive choices and his deepest longings to becoming all that God has desired for His appointed shepherds.
- 1. His heart, with all of its thoughts, choices and feelings, has been united in a life-long quest to be God’s man for His people.
 - 2. He will be exemplary in his family relationships, his moral maturity, his ministry activities and his reputation in the community.
- E. Titus 1:5-11:** Paul describes didactic qualities of leaders.
- 1. Men who are *sound in doctrine*, able “*persuaders*” of members who need to change their ideas and ways.
 - 2. Men who are *forceful confronters* of antagonists of the Gospel. It takes “heart,” that is, a sound mind, a decisive will and a good balance of emotions to serve the dual teaching role.
 - 3. Men who will convince both the member of their misconceptions and those that could be described as “*idle talkers, deceivers and wrongly motivated, false teachers.*”
- F. Hebrews 13:7, 17:** “*one who has stood before*” the flock of God as a teacher, a protector and a model (i.e. “*ruler*”).
- 1. He has shared the Word, a certain assignment of shepherds, to guide the faithful.
 - 2. He is to be a model in the *outcomes* in his life.
 - a. This “up-front” man deserves the voluntary, submissive respect of the ones being helped because his assignment is to “*watch for their souls*” and bears the heavy accountability for the well being of each believer committed to his charge.
 - b. His day is not over until he has made a shepherd’s report to the Chief Shepherd on the conduct of each sheep.
- G. I Peter 5:1-4:** This is one of those densely rich passages that brings many of the responsibilities of spiritual leaders together in one place: *elders* (experienced and wise counselors), *shepherds—verb form* (sustaining the needs of the sheep) and *overseers (mentors and benefactors)*. (Cf. Acts 20:28 and Titus 1:5-7 for similar listings)

ACHIEVING A SHEPHERD'S HEART

The transformational, building blocks toward achieving a shepherd's heart include the following:

A. A Yielded, Submissive Believer

B. A Lover of the Holiness of God

1. The Christian walk, motivated by an obedient faith, begins with repentance, a deliberate and purposeful change of mind resulting in a radical change in life.
2. Isaiah 6:1–6 – In looking upon the holiness of God, Isaiah was profoundly convicted of his uncleanness and abject unworthiness to stand in the presence of the Holy God. He cried out of his sense of lostness and human futility. In a display of mercy and grace, a foretaste of the love of God in the Christian age, cleansing and acceptance were extended to the confessor, Isaiah.
3. So must the shepherd's heart develop in its humility before a Holy God, sobered by his unworthiness and elated by his cleansing and the gift of serving.

C. A Reverent Worshiper

1. The book of Psalms has been the worshiper's hymnal of praise and devotion for millenniums. No book reaches its heights in proclaiming the awesome greatness of Jehovah.
2. The heart of the shepherd reveres the Shepherd God, feels deeply the heavenly invitation to come into His presence and revels in the glory of His holiness.

D. A Servant to Others

1. The best shepherds are those whose greatness is seen in their giving up of themselves to bless the lives of others.
 - a. Our Chief Shepherd rightly spoke of Himself as "*a good shepherd*" (John 10:11) because he came to serve, not to be served.
 - b. He lived up to the promises of the Shepherd God in Ezekiel 34 as one who would not neglect or abuse the sheep but would attend to their every need.
2. Serving others comes out of strength and succeeds only when one is strong enough to bow to the needs of even the undeserving.
3. Serving requires one to set aside his own, often superior abilities and ambitions, to attend lesser needs on more elementary levels.

E. A Passionate Searcher of the Lost

1. Following Jesus in His personal ministry one both hears and sees Him dedicated to "*seeking and saving the lost*" (Luke 19:10).
2. Good shepherds go out into the gorges looking for lost sheep.
3. Good shepherds place their bodies between the sheep and the ravaging wolves so as not to lose one.

F. A Convicted Custodian of Truth

1. Truth is discovered, defined and retained with someone paying substantial prices.
2. It must be defended and confirmed by faithful guardians of truth, even in fierce battles.
3. Paul says that one who “...correctly handles the word of truth” is able to confront the ungodly teachers who would destroy the faith of some (2 Timothy 2:17-18).
3. A spiritual leader is required to be able to confront false teachers and “paint them into a corner,” (literally, *shut their mouths, silence them*), Titus 1:10-11.
4. They are to do so “with gentleness and respect.” (1 Peter 3:13-16).

G. A Covenant Keeper

1. God is a covenant maker and a covenant keeping God.
2. To be a son of such a God, one must have the same heart toward solemnly making promises and faithfully keeping promises.
3. In every society keeping promises faithfully and promptly is fundamental to a good relationship and a productive ministry.

NOTE: Serving with a full heart, a man joins the long line of shepherds who have and are serving in shepherding God’s flock. As James A. Garfield (1831-1881) felt he was stepping down from the eldership to become the 20th President of the United States, so should every appointed shepherd feel the honor, the sober challenge and providential empowerment of the Chief Shepherd.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR

1. What three things has God given every complete person?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
2. Complete the following sentence:
The heart of a shepherd is one that _____, _____
and to do so with all his _____
3. The teacher lists seven (7) transformational building blocks toward achieving a shepherd’s heart. Write these below.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____

LESSON FIVE

The Aim of Shepherds

INTRODUCTION:

A precise view of the shepherd's aim (priorities, objectives) is of central importance in providing a context in which essentials are definable. Ignorance, neglect or distortion of shepherd aims explain a majority of the reasons why the flock of God faces avoidable peril and hurt.

1. Knowing the aim helps a church determine how prospective shepherds are to be prepared in their lives, attitudes and skills.
2. Knowing the aim enables a church to choose shepherds well.
3. Knowing the aim defines the job description and the job standard for congregational shepherds.
4. Knowing the aim projects the expected results of shepherding well.

A vibrant, growing church will be led by shepherds who understand the aim of shepherding. In defining the aim of shepherds, three distinctions must be made: 1) The distinction between what the church is in its essential nature and what the church does because of its essential nature, 2) the distinction between the essential, identifying priorities among all the positive aims of Shepherds, and ,3) the distinction between the practical approaches and expected outcomes in the faithful pursuit of the shepherd's aim? Jesus determined what the church was to be in its essential nature, what it was to do because of what it was and what were the expected outcomes. Deletion of any one of these three aspects or confusion among them obscures a shepherd's view of his aim.

LESSON AIM: To determine the importance of having an aim and the critical necessity of all the shepherds knowing the aim.

LESSON OBJECTIVES; You will. . .

1. Learn that shepherds form and lead a church as they view its essential nature.
 2. Determine that shepherds must set priorities as their primary activities based solely on the Lord's instruction from His written word.
 3. Know that a church that lives out of its essential nature of ministry and pursues its major priorities of love, life and loyalty will achieve predictable results.
-

THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE CHURCH CLARIFIES THE SHEPHERD'S AIM

A. The Shepherds Form a Church and Lead a Church as They View its Essential Nature

1. If their view is correct, but incomplete, or correct, but focused on only one aspect of the essential nature of the church, serious losses will follow.
2. Is the essential nature of the Church evangelistic? Educational? Benevolent? Worshipful? Militant? Social?
3. The essential nature of the church “to glorify God through an obedient faith and servant heart” giving priority attention to each of these approaches in ministry.
4. Making any one ministry approaches the whole or major aspect of the church would leave vital priorities undeveloped and fruitfulness precluded.

B. The Church Was to Be a Ministering Body of Servant-believers

1. Jesus focused His mission on ministry (Matthew 20:28; Luke 19:10; John 10:10).
2. Jesus struggled to form a central sense of ministry in His disciples (Luke 22:24-27; Matthew 23:11-12; Matthew 20:20-28; John 13:4-5; 13-16).
3. He knew that the church of the towel would have power to sway the nations and make a lasting difference in society.
 - a. The Spirit, consistent with the purposes of Jesus, gifted the church for ministry (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:10).
 - b. The apostolic leaders were to equip servant believers for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13).

C. Ministry Is the Overarching Nature of the Church

1. Its ministry to God is worship and wholesome lives.
2. Its ministry to the body is well defined in the "one-another" instructions.
3. Its ministry to the world is everywhere to everyone preaching of the Gospel and doing good to all men

PRIORITIES CLARIFY THE SHEPHERD'S AIM

Shepherds must set priorities as their primary activities. The priorities are activities or practiced beliefs by which a people want to be known or identified to all others.

A. John 13:34-35: Mutual Love Is a Priority Identification of Believers

1. The "upper room" model of love spoke of mutual friendship, affection, service, sacrifice and loyalty.
2. Fraternal love was to be the badge of discipleship, the means by which the world would know that believers were genuine followers of Christ.

B. John 15:8: Wholeness Is a Primary Concern of the Church

1. Mature, fruit bearing lives are impressive and inviting to people of the world.
2. Fruitfulness in the lives of disciples comes out of their relationship with Jesus.
3. He is the source of life even as the vine gives life to all of the branches.
4. Jesus makes the fruitfulness of the vine/branches relationship an evidence of discipleship.

C. John 17:21-23: Oneness Is a Priority of His Followers

1. Oneness of relationship, resources and purposes – the objective of believers.
2. Unity overshadows and takes precedence of most all other considerations.
3. To Jesus, glorifying the Father was more important than the agony of Calvary.
 - a. Shepherds lead the flock in keeping lesser considerations from overshadowing the greater importance of unity.
 - b. A united church, able to maximize its resources, makes it easier for the world to see that Jesus was specifically sent by God to a lost and needy world.

NOTE: Shepherds must lead the flock of God in fully understanding and practicing the priorities that Jesus has established: **fraternal love, wholeness of life and oneness in faith and mutual loyalty.**

EXPECTED RESULTS REAFFIRM THE SHEPHERD'S AIM

A. Love is The Basis for Distinguishing Authentic Believers

1. Conflict resolution – Diminishing or hurting brethren just to prove who is right forgets or disregards the pressing reason for fraternal love:
 - a. "*that the world will know you are my disciples*" (John 13:34).
 - b. "*that you may prove to be my disciples*" (John 15:8).
2. Shepherds must effectively develop an environment for conflict resolution and healing, for forgiveness and reconciliation without falling into the trap of "peace at any price."

B. The World Will Know of the Divine Sonship of Jesus Christ (John 17:31)

1. A church whose history is dotted with unresolved conflict and disrupting divisions cannot be very helpful in communicating to the world that Jesus is the divine Son of the living God.
2. The best, most trustworthy measure the world has to determine the truthfulness of Jesus' claims of divinity is the serious conduct of His followers.

C. The World Will Know That God Loves His Son: Jesus the Son of Man (John 17:23)

1. When people come to believe that Calvary is a love story, following Jesus is compelling.
2. The greatest act of love ever told came to a climax on a cross.
 - a. It was love by God for a lost world (John 3:16).
 - b. It was love by Jesus for sinners (1 Timothy 1:15).
 - c. But, the love story is one that begins and ends with the love shared between Father and Son.
3. The warmth and care felt in a church can be quickly traced to the love sources in the Father and in the Son.

**D. The World Will Know That God Loves and Longs to Embrace Each Sinner
(John 17:23)**

1. Among the deepest needs of a human person is to feel loved, wanted and valued.
2. God the Creator knows the need and supplies the need in offering His grace and peace in a Good News message of redemption and sanctification.
3. A church focused on the priorities given by Jesus has the energy, resources and freedom to focus on sharing the good news.

E. Jesus Wanted a World Brought to Union with the Father

Before he defined the action, extent, content and intent in the Great Commission He clearly defined the essential nature, priorities and expected results. Making union with the Father possible by His sacrifice He fully expects the church in all ages to call all men into that saved union with the Father (Matthew 28:18-20).

Conclusion

In a few words, the shepherd's aim is to help grow a church to the glory of God:

1. A church whose essential nature is ministry: ministry to God, believers, and the world.
2. A church whose priorities are fraternal love, life wholeness and body oneness.
3. A church whose intended results identify them as authentic believers, intent on everyone viewing Jesus as divine, loved and commissioned of God and to convince the world that God loves everyone and longs for union.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:

1. Ministry is the overarching nature of the church expressed in what three ways to what entities?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
2. What are three (3) priorities which help identify an aim oriented church?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
3. Complete the following sentence: Among the deepest needs of a human person is to feel _____, _____ and _____.

LESSON SIX

When Shepherds Hurt



Shepherds are men who have feelings, needs, frailties and flaws. Although their maturity protects them from much of the “fiery darts” that are hurled at them, they can be hit and hurt. How they act and how they respond are important to their continuing leadership in the pastures of their ministry.

This chapter assumes that the shepherds under discussion are men who have matured in their *personal qualities*, are capable in their *job descriptions* and are actively fulfilling their *job standard*.

LESSON AIM: To examine the context in which shepherds sustain hurts, the protection they have against hurts and how they respond to hurts.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See that elders are men who are matured in at least three ways: personal qualities, in the description of their tasks, and the standards of their assigned job.
 2. Learn that elders are often hurt by people or groups of people such as other shepherds, preachers, the sheep and unbelievers.
 3. Learn a seven step process that will help the healing process for elders and any other person who has been hurt.
-

ELDERS ARE MEN MATURED IN THREE AREAS

A. Personal Qualities: According to I Timothy 3 and Titus 1, these men are:

1. Passionately driven to be close to the dear brethren and have stretched their resources of time and energy to do the good work of serving.
2. They stand before their families to protect, inspire and guide, being singularly devoted husbands and good instructors of their children.
3. They have risen above those common, human flaws and have become exemplary in a wide range of convincing moral and relational qualities.
4. They are experienced in leadership and able teachers among the brethren.
5. They are a clear testimony of uprightness in the community and in all dealings with those in the world.

B. Job Description: According to Ezekiel 34 and Acts 20:17-38,

1. They are unselfish feeders, guides and protectors of the flock.
2. They are alert to all dangers, quick to rush to the sick and wounded.

3. They are courageous to brave all threats to bring back those driven away and to search for those who are lost.
4. They are very conscious of the specific and unique attacks of Satan and watch for one another and commit themselves to a continual search of the Word for strength and direction “*which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*”

C. Job Standard: According to Ephesians 4:11-16, they should be accomplishing measurable results in the congregation in which they serve:

1. They are inspiring and promoting opportunities for the whole church to be busy in serving others (v. 12).
2. They are building a strong church that is growing in number, opening doors of mission and service and strongly lead in sound doctrine (v. 12).
3. They are leading a church through conflicts, external and internal to be united in beliefs, values and attitudes (v. 12).
4. They are leading a church in becoming mature (v. 13)----a beatitude church (Matthew 5), a love church (1 Corinthians 13) and a Spirit church (Galatians 5).
5. They are leading a church that is attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (v. 13) – a church that thinks, feels and acts like Jesus.

With all of these strengths, shepherds still get hurt. They bruise and bleed like everyone else. What they do in those circumstances not only can impact the church, even for decades, but can determine how fruitful and faithful they will continue to be.

HOW DO SHEPHERDS GET HURT

Most of their hurts come in being shepherds. The sources of hurts are varied: other shepherds, preachers, the sheep and unbelievers.

A. Other Shepherds (Acts 20:17, 27, 30)

“*...keep watch over yourselves*” because “*from among your own number some will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.*”

1. Be on guard concerning those who would cause division in the Church.
2. Be confident in one’s own relationship to God and to others.
3. Many members pay enormous prices in sifting through the debris of the division.
4. In a church division, shepherds often doubt their own leadership abilities or worthiness.
5. Some may feel rejected, unappreciated and unwanted.
6. Many take on themselves the full guilt in blaming themselves for the disaster.
7. Paul sees the solution in three areas:
 - a. **The shepherds must keep watch over one another** (v. 28).
 - b. **The shepherds must be committed to the Word** (v. 32).
 - c. **The shepherds must be dedicated to selfless serving** (vs. 33-35).

NOTE: Shepherds need, not only to spend much time together praying, serving, making decisions, leading others and putting out fires, but, they need to spend leisure time together getting to know each other better, building a deeply felt friendship, appreciating the true, inner strengths and understanding the flaws of each other. It is inspiring to see the shepherds *pray* together, even as it is inspiring to see the shepherds *play* together. Even the sheep can appreciate the *lighter moments* in the lives of their shepherds.

B. Preachers

The overwhelming number of preachers are God-redeemed, Christ-filled and Spirit-gifted men. Yet, shepherds are occasionally hurt in trying to work with a less willing and wrongly motivated preacher. Paul's wise admonition to shepherds was to "be on guard." How can shepherds be on guard in all cases?

1. **Close scrutiny on who is invited to serve as a preacher.**
 - a. Bringing a preacher into the fellowship is one of the most crucial and problematic decisions shepherds can make.
 - b. A clear vision of the kind of man, the specific work to be accomplished and the description of the life, work and nature of the local church must be communicated to applicants.
 - c. The final decision, with sober input from the congregation, can mean much to the future of the congregation.
2. **Careful efforts to agree on clear job descriptions and job standards.**
 - a. It is imperative that both the shepherds and the new preacher will have discussed and agreed on the exact job description.
 - b. To be accountable, to be accurately directed and to be fruitful a preacher must know the expectations of the job.
 - c. The shepherds and the preacher should come to grips if the man is gifted to help meet the specific needs of the church.
3. **Equally as important to the job description is the job standard.**
 - a. The shepherds and the preacher should have clearly in mind what is the expected outcome of their mutual work.
 - b. Shepherds and preachers have been given the job standard in Ephesians 4:11-13:
 - 1) A church busy in serving others (v. 12).
 - 2) A church being built up (v. 12).
 - 3) A church growing toward unity in the faith (v. 12).
 - 4) A church becoming mature (v. 13).
 - 5) A church attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (v. 13).
 - d. Specific emphasis will have to be placed on his effectiveness in preaching, teaching, evangelism and reaching out to the members.

C. The Sheep

If the shepherds are truly *among the sheep* they will sometimes get hurt.

Fighting against those attacking the sheep, going to dangerous places where sheep have fallen, getting in the middle of two sheep fighting, getting hit inadvertently as sheep are rushing to feed or drink are just a few of the ways that shepherds can be hurt serving the sheep.

1. **Members must be taught their responsibilities as sheep.**

In Hebrews 13 there teachings for members in fulfilling their responsibilities to leaders:

- a. Members are to “remember” their leaders, literally, “look to them with feeling” (v. 7).
- b. Members are to “consider” (study carefully) the lives of their leaders (v. 7).
- c. Not to criticize or diminish, but to “imitate.” (v. 7).
- d. Members are to “have confidence” in their leaders (v. 17).
- e. Members are to “submit” to the authority that has been given to the leaders to carry out their responsibilities.
 - 1) The word, as in the case of the submission of a wife to her husband (Ephesians 5:22), means to “voluntarily arrange your life in response to.”
 - 2) The reason – the leaders have the heavy responsibility of watching for the souls of members and must give an account for them (v. 17).
- f. Members must be committed to making the work of their leaders a joy and not a burden (v. 17).

NOTE: Added to this selection in Hebrews would be I Thessalonians 5:12-13 (NIV):

“Now we ask you brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord, and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.”
(Also I Timothy 5:17-20).

2. **Members must be motivated in doing good.**

- a. Paul’s instruction: “...be steadfast immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58-NKJV).
- b. Members who are fruitfully serving in meaningful ministries have little time and less desire to hurt the shepherds, or anybody else.

3. **Members must be affirmed in their growth.**

- a. Significance comes from doing meaningful things that are recognized and acknowledged by people of regard.
- b. Shepherds need to be attentive to the many good things that are being done by faithful members.

4. **Members must be cared for by the shepherds.**

- a. The sheep of Ezekiel 34 who were being neglected and abused by the shepherds of God would soon lose whatever regard and warmth of feeling they might have had.
- b. The loss of respect and dependence sets up the context for resistance and rebellion and consequent hurt to the shepherds.

- c. When sheep know that shepherds are watching for their soul's benefit, that they are working hard in the Lord on their behalf and are making a good report to the Chief Shepherd they will believe in, respect, love and submit to the responsibility oriented authority of the shepherds (Hebrews 13, 7, 17, I Thessalonians 5:12-13).

D. Unbelievers

- 1. There is hurt to be expected from outside of the family of God.
- 2. Unbelievers may feel hostility to religious leaders and leaders of a particular, local church because of some real or perceived hurt that was incurred in the unbeliever's family.
- 3. Nonetheless, a shepherd will do good to all men whenever he has the opportunity (Galatians 6:10).
 - a. He will love his enemies and pray for those that make life difficult for him (Matthew 5:43-44).
 - b. He will look beyond the sinful and broken lives of unbelievers and any hurts they cause and see that they, too, can be washed, sanctified and justified "*in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God,*" even as each member has joyfully experienced (1 Corinthians 6:11).

HOW DO SHEPHERDS HEAL FROM THEIR HURTS?

A. A Seven Step Process That Will Work for Any Person Who Has Incurred a Hurt

- 1. He must learn to process the anger that comes in a hurtful situation and consistently turn it into understanding, acceptance, forgiveness and service.
- 2. Anger management is a choice – a choice of forgiveness and reconciliation or a progressive and hurtful ill will.
 - a. A choice to be honest: to acknowledge hurt and anger.
 - b. A choice to make a healthy response: to repress, to explode or to give direction and control to hurt emotions.
 - c. A choice to confront the hurt: to verify if it is real or perceived, if it is important, if it is current or in the past.
 - d. A choice to understand the offender: to put in context the significant hurts that have been verified, to ask "why" questions.
 - e. A choice to desire the best for the offender: to practice the Calvary choice on behalf of the offender, to practice love.
 - f. A choice to forgive the offense: to stand at the side of the offender as a defense attorney and plea the case for clemency.
 - g. A choice to confirm the forgiveness in word and in deed: to decide to be a servant and assume some responsibility in the rehabilitation of the offender.
 - h. A choice to maintain vigilance and discipline in anger management from future hurts: to practice the preceding principles each time that new hurts occur.

B. The Fruitfulness of a Healed Shepherd

1. A healed shepherd is able to help others who are hurt to discover the joys of being healed.
2. He is able to serve with a more robust, enduring and patient spirit.
3. He is less defensive in facing criticisms. He is more courageous in facing threats.
4. He stays longer at his shepherding job than those who knew less how to heal.
5. He leaves a legacy of tenderness, compassion and love, long to be remembered by the lives he had touched.

Conclusion

Profile studies indicate that 45% of church leaders do not know how to heal. No wonder that shepherds do not last long, on the average, in leading congregations. No wonder that, too often, some shepherds have a reoccurring history of causing friction in churches. No wonder that many shepherds withdraw from shepherding with bitterness, ill-will, resentfulness and feelings of defeat and being unappreciated. All shepherds will get hurt. It is the Lord's intent that all shepherds will find healing, forgiveness and reconciliation. Being whole, they will serve long, they will serve well and they will enjoy the memories of having served faithfully.

SELF EXAM LESSON SIX:

1. In what three areas are shepherds to be matured?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

2. What passage of scripture indicates that shepherds are to be overseen by their fellow shepherds? _____

3. From what people or groups of people can an elder expect to receive hurts?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

4. List three ways elders can safeguard against being hurt by preachers.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

5. There are four areas listed wherein elders can expect to be hurt by the sheep of their flock. What are the four ways listed in the study notes?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

6. Write down the seven step process that will work for any person who has incurred a hurt.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____

LESSON SEVEN

When Shepherds Work Together

INTRODUCTION

The Chief Shepherd is watching over the whole flock of God. All shepherds in the individual congregations work under His grace. When shepherds work together, feeding, guiding and protecting the flock, the purposes of God are empowered and rich harvest times are frequent.

LESSON AIM: To impress on the student the critical necessity for a body of elders to work in close unity and harmony.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Review the previous material presented concerning the work of a shepherd and the job description.
 2. Learn a working plan for shepherds containing six (6) imperatives designed to promote unified work among elders.
 3. Study and learn seven (7) considerations important in carrying out the work of elders in a fruitful fashion.
-

WHAT DO SHEPHERDS DO TOGETHER?

A. The Need of a Clear Definition – What Is Their God Given Assignment?

1. Shepherds cannot work effectively and fruitfully together without all of them knowing that they are under divine mandate to accomplish specific assignments.
2. They must be similarly committed to fulfill their responsibilities.

B. In Chapter Three, *The Work of a Shepherd*, the Job Description Was Discussed

1. Review of nouns used to describe God's leaders:
 - a. *elder*, a wise, perceptive counselor
 - d. *overseer*, one who stays near the people as a mentor and guide
 - c. *shepherd*, one who sustains the needs of the people
 - e. *leader*, one who stands before the people as a model, defender and guide
 - f. *steward*, one who manages the household of God
2. Review the verbs describing the work of God's leaders in lesson three.
3. Outlines for the job descriptions taken from both the Old and New Testaments.
 - a. (Ezekiel 34:4) – "...you do not feed the flock, the weak you have not

strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost, but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.”

- 1) Feed the flock
- 2) Strengthen the flock
- 3) Bring healing to the sick
- 4) Bind up the wounded
- 5) Bring back those driven away
- 6) Search for the lost
- b. (Acts 20:17-38):
 - 1) Be attentive to the faithfulness of fellow shepherds (v. 28).
 - 2) Keep a close watch on all sheep of the flock (v. 28).
 - 3) Feed, sustain each sheep, individually (v. 28).
 - 4) Be vigilant to every conceivable threat to the sheep (v.29-31)
 - 5) Pursue greater strength and hope in a vibrant relationship with God (v. 35).
 - 6) Support the weak (v. 35).
 - 7) Enjoy the blessing of unselfishly helping those who have nothing to give in return (v.35).

A WORKING PLAN FOR SHEPHERDS

There are some imperative principles that must guide shepherds in working together.

A. Imperative One: Encourage Growth Among Themselves

Shepherds being mutually supportive in encouraging continued growth among themselves.

- 1. The value of continued growth – Paul emphasized the value of continued growth when he committed the Ephesian elders, “*to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*” (Acts 20:32-NIV).
 - a. Most elders feel it is right and productive to spend church money to educate children and youth, even adults, but are hesitant to include budgeted funds to underwrite their attendance at leadership seminars and Bible lectureships.
 - b. Some elders encourage the building of a church library but do not insist on good leadership books and materials being included.
 - c. A look at an elder’s personal, home library and counting the number of good books on Biblical studies and leadership is a fairly good commentary on his commitment to his own growth.
 - d. The reading practices of an elder of materials designed to promote his growth is critically necessary.
 - e. Growing shepherds spend disciplined time in personal and group prayer, in personal and group study and in searching widely for things to learn that will enhance their giftedness and skills.

B. Imperative Two: Share a Common Vision

Shepherds sharing a common vision, with committed goals.

1. Shepherds need to spend some quality time to claim a united vision and renew it periodically.
 - a. The vision must overarch every major decision.
 - b. New shepherds must “buy into” the vision,
 - c. Evaluation time must be devoted to see if the vision is being faithfully pursued.
2. A vision without specific goals remains a powerless dream.
 - a. Goals without a powerful vision chase after illusions with only short term and shallow results.
 - b. Well shaped goals are desired results that are consistent to an overarching vision.
3. Good shepherds keep a worthy vision before the church, repeat it often in their shepherd meetings and prayers and return regularly to measure their faithfulness to the vision.
 - a. A church that is wandering has lost its vision, having no end results in mind.
 - b. Renewal and resurging growth begins with a rediscovery of a compelling vision and setting some worthy goals.

C. Imperative Three: Determine to Build the Members Up

Shepherds being mutually determined to build the church by building each member according to the God-given giftedness of each.

1. God has designed each member for specific functions within the body (Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Peter 4:10).
 - a. Every member must discover, develop and employ his God-given, ministry gifts.
 - b. Shepherds must provide the environment of encouragement, development and involvement for each member to grow.
2. Shepherds must avoid micro-managing the flock but, rather, they should involve every individual in ministering and decision making.
3. A work must not be built around a dynamic preacher or a dominant eldership but, rather, on the activities and resources of the gifted members.
4. Shepherds must be patient and tolerant as members make mistakes while they are learning to serve.

NOTE: Good shepherds know that the church is no stronger than the combined strength of individual members who have discovered, developed and employed their God-given gifts of service.

D. Imperative Four: Have a United Approach to Understanding Scriptures

Shepherds being committed to gaining a united approach to the understanding of Scriptures.

Both energy and resources are poorly spent when shepherds are divided in the identity and importance of core beliefs. Unity in their approach to understanding the Scriptures is necessary.

1. All shepherds of a local church must be informed and committed believers in the fundamental truths of Scripture. (1 Peter 1:22-25, 2 Peter 1:19-21, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Thessalonians 2:13).
2. All shepherds must come to a crucial understanding of the essential and supporting truths of the Scriptures.
3. All shepherds must have the maturity to acknowledge the differences between revealed and normative truths and personal preferences and unsupported opinions.
4. All shepherds must value the unity of the church over insisting on views that are poorly supported and questionable in interpretation, with the potential of dividing the flock.
5. All shepherds must be life-style students of the Word and frequently study together.

NOTE: It is important that the shepherds lead with one mind and are similarly submitted to Christ. This essentiality can only be achieved with study that leads to a unity of purpose, a unity of values and a unity of core beliefs (1 Corinthians 1:10).

E. Imperative Five: Manage Conflict Within the Church

Shepherds learning better each year how to manage conflict among themselves and in the flock.

Unmanaged conflicts destroy momentum, waste resources, divide a flock and destroy relationships. It causes the biggest tragedies in the loss of souls, the shame poured on the church before the community and the dishonor to God.

1. Conflict is unavoidable because of the expected differences in the flock.
 - a. Different levels of maturity, different experiences, different ministry gifts, different ministry approaches, different perspectives and, good, but, different purposes.
 - b. Members must be taught how to appreciate the diversities among them.
2. Shepherds must know how to channel conflicts toward creativity, innovation and united efforts.
3. Shepherds must lead the flock toward a unity of vision and purpose and establish a covenant of fraternity that bonds them together.
4. Shepherds must communicate clearly and often, both to the whole flock and to individuals that need extra attention.
5. Shepherds must be wise and willing to go to contentious members to determine the sources of their conflict and deal humbly and candidly with the unmet, felt need.
6. Shepherds must be purposely attentive to the instruction being given to the flock. Sound, comprehensive and balanced instruction is a major builder of unity and is an effective deterrent to conflict.

NOTE: Conflict is an opportunity to bring people together in meaningful and positive initiatives. Loving shepherds, well schooled in the Word and in working with diverse people, can make conflict a moment of growth and fruitfulness.

E. Imperative Five: Know the Importance of Spiritual Formation

Shepherds knowing the central importance of spiritual formation in promoting God-honoring church growth.

Time has confirmed that church growth must be centered in a people who have centered their lives and principles in Christ and have found in Him the answer to their every need.

1. Spiritual formation does not occur in isolation.
 - a. It is experienced through growing Bible knowledge, inspiring worship, sacrificial giving, service to others.
 - b. Shepherds will work hard to provide every member the opportunities for growth.
2. People will only grow in spirituality by focusing on the fundamentals of spiritual living:
 - a. Walking in the way of the cross.
 - b. Living a life-style repentance.
 - c. Being a life-long student of the Word.
 - d. Being a servant believer, learning to forgive, becoming whole in all relations, choosing the pathway of freedom in Christ and living in the hope of eternal life.
3. The spiritually mature people of history have persisted in the Christian disciplines of prayer, giving, meditation and fasting. They will model such disciplines and will urge all members to persist along these avenues of spiritual formation.

F. Imperative Six: Focus on Developing Leaders

Shepherds being tirelessly focused on developing leaders in ministry and shepherding.

Churches cannot do well without a sufficiently, constant number and quality of leaders.

1. Training classes in leadership in the local church should be regularly and continually conducted.
2. Leadership seminars for appointed leaders (deacons, elders) should be annually scheduled in the church calendar.
3. A specific and significant allocation in the annual budget should be given to leadership development.
4. Developing leaders need to be encouraged in attending brotherhood functions designed to promote leadership growth. Financial aid should be considered.
5. Leadership materials need to be provided for growing leaders.

NOTE: The shepherds must be an example of growth and continuing development as an inspiration to all others in the church. Shepherds should be models in being ahead in knowledge, developed skills, technological advances and excitement about growing.

SUPPLEMENTARY CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration One: Develop Principles of Shepherding Meetings

1. One shepherd needs to be made responsible for bringing the meeting agenda together, getting it in the hands of each shepherd and presiding over the meeting.
2. One shepherd needs to be made responsible for recording and distributing the notes on each meeting, regular or special. The internet could be used for e-reports and storing, along with enhancing much of the shepherding communication.
3. While a full consensus on all decisions is desirable and usually worth the fullest of discussion to finalize a matter, an agreement needs to be reached of what constitutes a majority vote.
 - a. There may be some stated matters that would require all of the shepherds to reach a consensus (employment matters, significant financial commitment, disciplinary actions, etc.).
 - b. Without some understanding of how to break an impasse the minority will always determine the direction of the church.
4. The percentage of shepherds that would be required to establish a quorum would need to be agreed upon to determine when a decision can be made.
5. All decisions made by the majority of shepherds become unanimous decisions, as far as any outside of the meeting is concerned.
 - a. No shepherd should speak of the differences outside of the meeting.
 - b. Unless, there are new and valid considerations, no shepherd in the minority should continue to press his views on the decision.
6. All discussions should be conducted with care, candor, courage and with a full commitment to a shepherding covenant of fraternal love and sensitivity.
7. Responsibilities must be designated by name and date of completion in order to assure a decision being implemented and accountability being established
8. All shepherds should have a voice in a discussion but no one voice should rule.

B. Consideration Two: Develop a System of Shepherding Responsibilities

1. One system may be to have each shepherd coordinating several ministries, with each ministry charged to the guidance of a deacon and a group of workers.
2. One system may be to have several shepherds working together in overseeing a ministry, with guidelines, a budget and assigned workers.
3. One system may be to rotate the chairmanship of ministries among the shepherds so each shepherd, in matter of several years, may know both the workers and the nature and value of all of the ministries.
4. One system may start with determining the giftedness of each shepherd and assign him to work in the oversight of a ministry in which his primary giftedness best relates.

C. Consideration Three: Develop Shepherding Assignments Based on Giftedness

1. A shepherd must be careful to work most where he is gifted the greatest.
2. A shepherd should continue learning how he can better use his giftedness.
3. A shepherd needs to mentor those who are gifted in his same areas of giftedness and model before them an effective use of ministry gifts.

D. Consideration Four: Develop Shepherding Friendships

Shepherds need to *pray together*. So should they *play together*. All work and no play can stifle shepherds as it does younger boys. They need to develop a friendship and find joy in leisure time together.

1. Shepherds need to find commonality of interests, both as a group and between others in the group of shepherds.
2. Shepherds need to draw on the full value of sharing a dinner table together, free from talking about the business of the flock.
3. Shepherds need to encourage their wives both to join them in moments of leisure or to share time together as shepherd wives.
4. Shepherds need to look for opportunities to encourage, commend and comfort one another, using all of the tools of communication available.
5. Shepherds, as good friends, need to learn about the lives, accomplishments, defeats, hopes and opportunities of their fellow shepherds.

E. Consideration Five: Develop Plans for Keeping Each Shepherd Strong and Effective

Paul encouraged the Ephesian elders to watch out for each other (Acts 20:28ff). Satan is eager to catch a shepherd of God's flock in an unguarded moment as a wolf attacks a sheep. Fellow shepherds guard the backside of each of the other shepherds.

1. Shepherds dare not forget to pray earnestly and continually for the other shepherds.
2. Shepherds dare not fail to be attentive to beginning trends signaling trouble in the life of another shepherd.
3. Shepherds dare not overlook the need to study together and build up the faith of one another.
4. Shepherds dare not linger in seeking the forgiveness of another shepherd against whom they may have been offensive.
5. Shepherds dare not default in practicing the principle of Matthew 18:15 as it may regard a fellow elder.
6. Shepherds dare not underestimate the regular need for attending seminars or be involved in a growth challenging event.
7. Shepherds dare not wait too long in encouraging a shepherd to take a sabbatical to regain strength or to work through a crippling problem.

F. Consideration Six: Develop an Exit Strategy from Shepherding That Is Wise and Affirming

One of the most delicate and difficult passages is when a shepherd needs to pass on the baton of shepherding to others. Such passage may be necessitated by health, age, ineffectiveness, over commitment or, worse, lapses in morals or doctrine.

1. Some congregations elect shepherds for terms, renewable on confirmation by the flock: first term for two or three years, if confirmed, the next term for three or four years, etc.
2. Some congregations set a terminal age at which time a shepherd automatically yields his shepherding responsibilities.
3. Some congregations expect their shepherds to be candid to one another in gently asking another shepherd to resign.
4. Some congregations expect a shepherd in his maturity and wisdom to remove himself from the role of shepherding, but, they lovingly accept any deficits that result from his continuing in service.

NOTE: The point of this discussion is that what is best for the flock, what is honorable to a faithful shepherd or what makes one's decision the least stressful should be seriously considered by the faithful brethren.

G. Consideration Seven: Develop a Mindset That Honors Shepherds on the Sidelines

1. Out of gratefulness, a flock needs to occasionally honor past shepherds as a living part of the history of the flock, both in public events or smaller group settings.
2. Out of gratefulness, continuing shepherds need to treasure the wisdom of the past shepherds and consult with them in select situations and invite them to be a part of special events.
3. Out of gratefulness, the younger members of the flock need to know what the past shepherds have meant to the well-being of the flock.
4. Out of gratefulness, the past shepherds should be invited to continue in some level of service in which they once excelled and still can make a contribution.
5. Out of gratefulness, for those that are deceased, their widows should be lauded for their heroism and selfless service in the history of the church.

Conclusion

Shepherds that work well together are one of the most promising basis for hope of a healthy and well fed flock. Only by working together can shepherds keep the needs of the sheep front and center of every plan and action. In working together, there is a minimum loss of sheep. There is the optimum use of resources. Threats are early detected and promptly defeated. The best pastures along calming streams are always before the flock. Back in the fold there is safety, warmth and rest. In working together, shepherds can devote their best efforts to making every thought and every initiative count toward achieving unity and peace among shepherds and in the congregation. God is most honored and His will is most accomplished by shepherds who work together.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN

1. In Ezekiel 34 Truman points out 6 responsibilities the shepherds bore toward His flock. List these below.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

2. Write out the seven things charged to the elders in Acts 20:17-38.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____

3. List the six imperative principles that must guide shepherds in working together.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

4. In building and maintaining healthy relationships in the eldership and the church in general, list seven (7) considerations listed in this lesson.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____

5. Give five (5) ways leaders can and should be developed in a continuing fashion so there will be a constant number and quality of leaders.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____

LESSON EIGHT

The Fold of the Sheep

INTRODUCTION

Jn pastoral conversation the fold is the place of safety, the place of renewal and the place of growth. It is a shelter in a storm and a place where greater closeness is felt with the other sheep and with the shepherds. It is the place for the sheep to come back to after a day in the field and after facing dangers. A good shepherd keeps every sheep close to the fold and works to keep the fold a desired home and a place of fond memories.

The fold, the church, is a place where 1) love prevails, 2) a spirit of servanthood is in constant display, 3) an attitude of caring touches every action, 4) a readiness to forgive every hurt is active, 5) a community of peace in which conflict is transformed into reconciliation and 6) a warming welcome awaits every new member of the flock. All of the sheep adore the Chief Shepherd, are obedient to His leadership and find their place in the fold.

LESSON AIM: The nature and quality of relationships in the fold is of utmost importance. It is the shepherds' task and assignment to build and maintain an atmosphere of love and acceptance in the church.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Understand the value the early Christians placed upon the church as seen in their willingness to die for it, even as their Lord had.
 2. See that sheep must be committed to church growth.
 3. Learn ten principles which the elders must instill in the very being of each church member.
 4. Know the responsibility elders bare in teaching members to understand the dynamics of a growing church.
-

PREVIEW:

A. The Sheep Must Understand the Value of the Church

1. The church was so dear to our Lord that he died to give it birth.
2. The church was so dear to the Spirit that he fulfilled his mandate to empower it and direct it by apostolic teachings, spoken and written.
3. The church was so dear to generations of faithful believers across the centuries that they died that it might carry the saving message of Jesus to the nations.
4. The church was so dear to early nineteenth century reformers that they began a continuing struggle to restore the church's nature, its purpose, the

apostolic practices in godly living, in worship, in the message, in the evangelistic fervor and in doing good.

5. That quest must continue so there will be an increased focus on building strong, healthy churches that will be called the “pillar and ground of truth.”

B. The Sheep Must Be Committed To Church Growth

Shepherds can make a difference in the survival and fruitfulness of the church by helping the members to understand what is needed and how to promote church growth. The sheep of God’s fold must be committed to the principles of church growth.

TEN PRINCIPLES THAT SHEPHERDS CAN TEACH THE MEMBERS

A. The Affirmation of Biblical Beliefs

The affirmation of these biblical beliefs will not just happen. The affirmation must be intentional.

1. Shepherds must keep the pulpit faithful, alive and on fire in expositional preaching, with informative, convicting and persuasive proclamation.
2. Shepherds must encourage the study habits of the members to be disciplined, systematic, in-depth and comprehensive, with Bible reading at the core.
3. Shepherds must keep an emphasis on the centrality of the Bible in the didactical life of the church, being constantly demonstrated in every discussion, decision and design.

B. The Infusion of a Hunger for God

Rising to the stature of Jesus and becoming like him in His reflection of God (John 14:7-11, Hebrews 1:1-3) is the very essence of the Christian faith and what it most ardently wants to share with the world.”

1. Shepherds must help members learn how to fast and pray and draw near to God in worship.
2. Shepherds must encourage members to make regular visits to the Book of Psalms and some of the great writings on the Psalms (e.g. Treasures of David by Spurgeon) to stimulate a hunger for God.
3. Shepherds must constantly urge the preachers to present deeper studies into the names of God to help the church explode with understanding of the extraordinary nature of Jehovah God.

C. The Development of Healthy Members

1. Shepherds must lead members in a continual study of the Bible to confront Christ in the Word.
 - a. These daily confrontations demand self-examination, devotion to prayer and mutual confession to one another.
 - b. These reoccurring disciplines ultimately bring members to good health.
2. Shepherds must help members to identify areas of needed growth through effective Christian counseling and personality testing.

D. The Focus on Brotherly Love as a Signature Statement of the Church

With Christ's love serving as the standard, we are to affirm our identity as his disciples with our quality of love for one another (John 13:34-35).

1. Shepherds should instruct members how to find Biblical models for developing healthy mind-sets by which they can build good relations in the body. (Philippians 4:8).
2. Shepherds should lead in a study of the harvest of qualities that members are to lovingly share with their spiritual siblings and so model Christ (Galatians 5:20-21).

E. The Development of an Inspiring Worship

God-centered worship is the prerequisite for growing healthy churches. Growing churches exalt God in their worship assemblies.

1. Shepherds must be, in heart, knowledge and skills, a major catalysis in achieving an inspiring worship service.
2. Shepherds need to lead the church in each of the eight pathways of worship (adoration, praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, commitment and meditation).

F. The Creation of a Passion for Lost Souls

The members must understand how God prepared the Scheme of Redemption through the ages, how He sent his Son to die for their redemption and how He created the church to seek and nurture souls until Christ comes again.

1. Shepherds must teach the priorities of soul winning from the Word.
2. Shepherds must teach all members to long for lost souls, to help train a select number to seek the lost, to model in sowing the Seed and to share in gathering the harvest.

G. The Planned Growth of an Empowering Leadership

Elders know that members must be trained, motivated, involved, empowered and led to fulfilling objectives.

1. Shepherds know the answer to the argument whether good leaders are born or made? The fact is good leaders are not born already made. They have to be trained.
2. Shepherds know that the cycle of leadership training must be pursued from convert, to involved member, to core and active member, to a deacon and on to an elder.
3. Shepherds must understand that the Scriptural agenda for mature development must be held before the congregation at all times (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9).

H. The Involvement of Members According to their Giftedness

God, in His sovereign will, has bestowed His gifts in ministry. Each gift is a kingdom assignment

1. Shepherds are in a good position to help people to believe that each is a gifted person (Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Peter 4:10-11 and 1 Corinthians 12).

2. Shepherds can help the members understand that in their humanity God has gifted them but, by redemption, their gifts become Kingdom assignments.
3. Shepherds can help the members identify their ministry giftedness. The identification can be accelerated by Ministry Gifts profiling (Free at www.Teamministry.com).

I. The Training of Members in Conflict Management

One of the most needed spiritual traits of every member is to learn how to turn the adversity of conflict into positive diversity.

1. Shepherds need to be teachers of conflict management for the good health and progress of the church and to maximize growth resources.
2. Shepherds need to make conflict resolution a theme in preaching, a course in the teaching curriculum, a part of marriage and parenting counseling and a choice, library section at home or church.

J. The Formation of a Unifying Vision

A church must unite on an all-consuming vision.

1. Shepherds need to be sure they have acquired the training to unite the church around this triple growth challenge: vision, purpose and goals.
2. Shepherds need to convict the members that they can do good and lasting things when given a purpose. Aimless ministry and living seldom result in any thing getting done that is consistent with the potential of the church.
3. Shepherds need to keep the vision, purpose and goals vividly before the church by means of sermons, visual materials around the building, the church bulletin masthead, calling cards, telephone advertising, etc.
4. Shepherds, every three-to-five years, need to lead in renewing or revising and reframing a group agreement on the congregational vision, the purpose to pursue and the goals to be reached.

NOTE: A church will be given every opportunity to grow continually and steadily if the ten principles are being taught and modeled by the shepherds.

MEMBERS MUST BE LED TO UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMICS OF A GROWING CHURCH

A. Some Shepherd-driven Characteristics of Healthy, Dynamic Churches, Around the World

1. **Constant solid biblical preaching.** A church must hear evangelistic messages regularly taught from the local pulpit. The church will be as evangelistic as it is challenged to be by the preaching.
2. **Evangelistic Bible study.** The church must spend more time in the Word.
 - a. Reading the Word, but studying the Scriptures more from the vantage point of evangelism.
 - b. The Book of Acts is the classic book on evangelism and church planting.

- c. Jesus was the Evangelist of Galilee and Paul was a World Traveler in search of souls.
- 3. **Led and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.** A church must become more driven and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The church today must not be as ignorant of the Holy Spirit as were those disciples at Ephesus in Acts 19.
- 4. **Training on stewardship.** The church must have more teaching on the stewardship of time and money to combat the materialism that has us in its grip and also to infuse the joy of giving and the excitement of seeing what increased giving can do a body.
- 5. **Educated on setting right priorities.** The church must focus its attention on the big picture, the most pressing priorities and the most essential matters in life and faith.
- 6. **Taught to have a world-wide vision.** The church must stretch its sights, enlarge its vision and lift its horizons to know that it is to be global in its evangelistic outreach. We must be committed to both a local, evangelistic fervor and a global outreach.
- 7. **United leadership.** A church must have leaders who are united in firmly believing in each of the above statements and urge the fellowship of believers to pursue each of these realities.

B. Leaders must Imitate Their Lord in Reaching the Lost World

- 1. Jesus left this earth wanting his disciples to share with Him in a world-wide enterprise dedicated to saving every soul possible, in every nation and in every tribe.
- 2. He sits in glory with the pointed desire that every convert be brought to fullness in Him and every local church be a healthy, thriving and growing people

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT

1. Tell what indicates the value of the church in the following:
 - 1) Our Lord: _____
 - 2) The Spirit: _____
 - 3) Generations of faithful believers; _____

 - 4) Early nineteenth century reformers: _____

2. There are ten (10) principles that shepherds can teach the members in order to perpetuate the church. List these below.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____
 - 9) _____
 - 10) _____
3. The dynamics of a growing church will consist of what seven (7) characteristics?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____

LESSON NINE

Among the Sheep

INTRODUCTION

he more frequent view of the elders of a church is a group of men who make decisions and are seen at most public assemblies hurrying back and forth to make sure their decisions are being understood and implemented. A better example of biblical shepherding is a shepherd who can touch the hurts, day or night, and go to the sheep wherever it is hurt, conveniently reached on or off the pathway.

True shepherding at its best spends most of its time among the sheep. Managing and decision making, as tearing, costly and exhaustive as it often is, seldom goes where the people live, laugh, cry and hurt. Managers and shepherds use different skills, different agendas, different aims – and get different results. All shepherds perform some managing. Few managers perform any or little shepherding. Managers cannot obtain the shepherd's aim of leading the church in love, wholeness and oneness that results in the evangelistic objectives of the upper room vision of Jesus. The following life situations are heaven made to provide shepherds the moments to be at their best.

When one establishes himself as a wise, available, exemplary and competent people helper, many will request his counsel. Guidance by request provides one of the most opportune teaching situations. A need has been recognized, the desire for help has been expressed and trust has been displayed.

All pastor/leaders are counselors by definition. He may be professionally trained or congregationally developed but he will counsel. He has only to decide how effectively he will counsel. Each man determines the effectiveness of his counseling by developing himself as 1) a man of compassion, 2) a man of knowledge and, 3) a skilled man in the use of counseling methods and tools (cf. Romans 15:14).

LESSON AIM: All pastor/leaders are counselors by definition. Being among the sheep requires the expertise to tend to the hurts and pains of the sheep on a daily basis.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Discover that an elder's God given assignments consist of more than the ability to manage.
 2. Learn that to fulfill the assignments given to all elders involves knowledge of Scripture, people and self.
 3. Learn that shepherding can and should be accomplished in several different situations/environments.
-

A COUNSELOR'S HEART

Pastoral guidance at its biblical best must come from a compassionate heart that can hurt with a suffering man and a sorrowful God (cf. Matthew 5:3).

A. Compassion is seen in:

1. Sensitivity, sympathy, understanding and acceptance. It is effected when one can put himself in the place of another, feel what he feels and understands without being judgmental.
2. Belief in human potential. It is looking on a person and seeing what he can become in Christ and relating to him as one with a promising future.
3. Hope for human effort. It is believing that God has gifted every individual who can develop and employ his giftedness to do great things.
4. Love for the person's outcome. It is wanting the best outcomes in the life of another and helping the person reach his highest good.

B. Compassion begins in:

1. Awareness of one's own frailties. A person who has never tasted bitter defeat cannot rightly identify with discouraged people and be a credible helper.
2. Honesty about personal mistakes. A person who covers up mistakes probably has not learned neither to do better or to encourage others to get up after a defeat.
3. A believing self-worth. Self-doubt empties compassion for others of any strength. To feel for others and to pick others up requires inner strength.
4. A confident reliance in God's way. A compassionate heart finds strength that will last in a partnership with God.,

NOTE: The warmth within a man is the best pre-guidance help he can give to one requesting counseling.

A COUNSELOR'S KNOWLEDGE

Counseling is teaching or guiding one to a necessary decision and action. There are three initial dimensions of pastoral knowledge:

A. Knowledge of God in Scripture

1. There is no other fully dimensional, reliable knowledge of helping people as one finds in the words coming from the mind of God, the Creator of the universe.
2. II Timothy 3:16 defines the multi-dimensional applications of the inspired Word.

B. Knowledge of people. Knowing the basic needs of people is imperative both to know where to start and in knowing what to give to make a difference.

C. Knowledge of self

1. Every people helper has limits. There are some kinds of people he can help

- better than he can others. He is forever growing in knowledge.
2. At any given time there are needs beyond his ability to help. He has his own weaknesses that would make helping some people very difficult and unproductive.

A COUNSELOR'S CAPABILITIES

A good, knowledgeable man must become increasingly competent ... capable of making the best expression and use of his compassion and knowledge.

A. He must Be Capable of Using the Best Counseling Method for the Situation

B. He must Be Informed of the Available Counseling Tools

C. He must Be Skilled in Using or Developing Effective Counseling Tools

PASTORAL VISITATION – Shepherding by Discovery

The Pastoral home visit has become all but extinct along with medical house calls, home made biscuits and the dinosaur.

A. Reasons Visiting in the Home Is on the Decline

1. It takes too much time
2. People are too busy
3. It involves risk-confrontations
4. Other pressing demands on limited time
5. Expectations of crisis-prone members

NOTE: Visiting on the "home turf" provides one of the best shepherding opportunities available to God's shepherds.

B. Shepherding by Discovery

1. Getting close to people and enmeshed in their lives opens one's eyes and heart to the real, most pressing needs in a family.
2. The honor of the visit, the "home turf" or small circle security, and the care expressed, opens a person to sharing himself.
3. Fewer defenses are erected in the home than in public and the real person can be more easily seen and the personal needs more quickly understood.

C. A Pastoral "Must"

After being sobered by repeated examples of Christ entering homes and the Apostolic emphasis on visiting, there emerges many practical imperatives:

1. Visiting is searching for those needing spiritual guidance before the need or hurt goes beyond reach, or hope can be diminished or no growth occur.
2. Visiting is at the heart of effective intercession.
3. Visiting may be the major contact a member has with the body and confirmation that God is still in His heavens.

4. Visiting gives insights from which a more effective teaching program can emerge.
5. Visiting makes "church life" more authentic, more personal, more understandable, and more acceptable.
6. Visiting contributes greatly to the growth of the visiting shepherd.

PASTORAL ADMONITION – Shepherding by necessity

We probably would prefer counseling either by request or in an unthreatened discovery. Many times either after such counseling has occurred or, unknown to the elders, problems escalate in a member's life that require warning, counsel, instruction, or reproof. The necessity of the circumstance and the necessity of love demand admonition (*Noutheteo*, I Thessalonians 5:14; Romans 14:15; Colossians 3:16; Galatians 5:26-62).

A. Shepherding by Necessity

No spiritual man enjoys reproving or rebuking. He must be constrained by the necessity of the situation.

1. **Love for God** whose very Person, Word and Spirit are being violated.
2. **Love for the person** whose covenant with God and fellowship with His people are in jeopardy, or his growth in Christ is compromised by sin.
3. **Love for the body of Christ** whose ministry is threatened by a loss of one of its members.
4. **Love for one's own soul** that could be threatened by the neglect to admonish a brother.

B. The Necessity of Admonition

The shepherds that compulsively avoid to admonish or indifferently neglect to admonish, set the local church on a dangerous course.

1. Members who do not have a clear view of the standards to be met sin more frequently and are slow to self-accountability and repentance.
2. Members who are not called to repentance have an unloving confirmation of their unimportance to the body.
3. Members who are left un-warned, go beyond a congregation's reach, beyond consciences, beyond grace.
4. Members who are not admonished stand as dying proof of the shepherd's living failure to respond to necessity.

PASTORAL COMFORT – Shepherding by Shared Pain

When people hurt there can be the greatest need for shepherding. Such crisis provide the greatest opportunity of penetration, hold the greatest number of risks and least margin of error. Crisis counseling requires the best counseling skills.

A. Shepherding by Shared Pain

1. A shepherd must enter the hurting life of others sincerely hurting with them (sympathy/empathy).
2. Very little helpful communication can occur if there is not shared pain.

- a. Shared pain can begin because we share humanity and may have experienced similar pain.
- b. The shared pain most felt by the shepherds is to see a close, deeply loved friend suffering such loss.
- c. Jesus wept more for the loss of others than for His own loss (John 11: 34-35).
- 3. Such a friendship is built by many other moments of guidance, visitation, admonition, modeling, friendship and intercession.

B. Shepherding Through Pain

Serious training is required to identify, treat or refer to others. There are some basic principles undergirding all painful experiences.

- 1. Guard against entry, growth and expression of guilt, resentment, frustration, fear or paralysis.
- 2. Faith in the sovereignty and goodness of God and knowledge of His workings in human tragedy are most in question and need.
- 3. Human warmth and understanding to confirm the value of the person is vital.
- 4. Action must be taken to identify the issue, define the plan and resources for confronting the hurt.
- 5. Building hope on valid evidence is crucial to overcoming any crisis.

PASTORAL INTERCESSION – Shepherding by Prayer

By intercession for another the shepherd calls on God to intervene, to correct, to empower, to cleanse, and to heal.

A. Shepherding by Prayer

The ultimate shepherding skill is the mastery of intercessory prayer. To be effective in intercessory prayer one should:

- 1. Equally master each element of prayer: adoration, praise, thankfulness, confession, petition, intercession, commitment, and meditation.
- 2. Deepen his covenant relationship with God in faithful obedience, and in increasing self-accountability.
- 3. Enter such a meaningful fellowship with others that the closeness gives sincerity, specificity, felt need and urgency to every intercession.
- 4. Shepherding without constant intercessory prayer robs shepherding of one of its more vital parts.

B. The Contents of Intercessory Prayer

What a shepherd intercedes for is a revelation of his own knowledge, value, concern, commitment and hope for the person. An intercessory prayer could include:

- 1. Recognition and praise of the beauty and value of the person—all accomplished works of God.
- 2. An assessment of the current struggle of the individual – declaring that these and deeper insights come from God.

3. A statement of the person's most urgent needs – acknowledging that God has the resources of resolution at His sovereign command.
4. A submission of self to be available for His leadership in serving the other person.
5. An earnest plea to be available for His leadership in serving the other person.
6. An earnest plea that God will choose to intervene to bring yet another blessing to the person – accepting that the higher ways, fairness and goodness of God makes His decision impeachable by man.

PASTORAL MODELING – Shepherding by Example

A shepherd is what every man in the congregation is committed to becoming. Every man (youth/new convert/developing member in each season of life) needs inspiring models. A sermon lived, verbal instruction performed, a problem resolved, a hurt healed, a joy expressed, a victory erupting in praise to God, a need humbly requested – all provide valuable shepherding models. The shepherd is a *proistamai*: one who stands before the congregation with an open life committed to following Christ in every thought and action.

A. Family Modeling

1. Young women need a masculine standard by which to choose a husband and a feminine model, as the shepherd's wife, by which to love her husband, love her children, develop feminine virtues and be a keeper at home (Titus 2:2ff).
2. Young men need a married man by which to develop their marital maturity, values, insights and skills. And a model wife by which to choose a valued life companion and to uplift his young wife to her noble potential.
3. Parents need to know what to give their children at every level of each child's development (Proverbs 22:6).
4. Families need to have a model in problem management, money management, making the home a center of worship, spiritual education and evangelism.

B. Ethical Modeling

1. Future leaders will most willingly and purposefully pay the price of a strong value system when they can see an older man who has lived his ethics with resulting profit, prosperity and well-being.
2. Shepherds who want to do right, rely on God to define what is right in His Word and freely do what they learn is right give truth its rightful place in the life of believers.

C. Vocational Modeling

1. Members need to see that glorifying God, loving the brethren, serving the needy in soul and body are the substance of a shepherd's vocation. His occupation, recreation and rest sustain his vocation.
2. Members must feel the heartbeat of their shepherds and sense their watchful presence: excitement over their spiritual growth and well-being; grief over any sheep being lost or plundered.

D. Growth Modeling

1. The shepherd shows the sheep his commitment to growth and excellence: he is becoming more knowledgeable, competent, whole and committed to his pastoral vocation.
2. He is a shepherd because of pronounced strength. People see him measuring and finding inspiration for his continued growth in his model: The Shepherd of shepherds.

E. Confrontational Modeling

1. Truth must be affirmed, error must be exposed and dismantled. Those in error must be called to the side of truth; those unyielded in error must be marked and isolated.
2. The shepherds or models do not hesitate putting themselves in the path of anyone who would ravage the flock. Both wolves and sheep know where the shepherd stands.

PASTORAL FRIENDSHIP – Shepherding by Shared Leisure

A. In the Life and Teachings of Jesus, Different Levels of Friendship Are Displayed

1. Nurturing a friendship with those who will return friendly acts. (Luke 14:12-14)
2. Encircling oneself with friends who can share joys and sorrows. (Luke 15:1-9; John 13:1-2; Acts 10:24)
3. Extending friendship for the singular, unselfish purpose of serving the need of another to be loved and made to feel special.

B. Sharing Leisure with the Needy Often Is More Timely and Helpful than a Sermon

1. Jesus built a pastoral friendship with his disciples (Luke 12:4; John 15:15).
2. He spent leisure time with many of the lost of Israel so much so He was seen as a "friend of publicans and sinners" (Luke 7:34).
3. Even Paul made friendship a key in his evangelistic ministry, having friends among the officials of Ephesus (Acts 19:31). Shepherding by shared leisure speaks clearly to the recipient:
 - a. A spoken message of love, caring and longing is more easily understood away from pulpit, stained glass and church pew.
 - b. Sharing "private time" is giving to another from one's most valued assets.
 - c. Taking time to enter another's world of leisure builds bridges of mutual understanding and respect.

PASTORAL ENCOUNTER – Shepherding by Chance

A. The Value of Chance Meetings

Sometimes the best pulpits, counseling offices, classrooms or small group

studies are the unscheduled, inadvertent meetings at the mall, garage, restaurant, ball game, hospital, etc.

1. Chance meetings may be the most non-defensive way to begin the revival of a disrupted relationship with a delinquent member.
2. Chance meetings do not obligate or "fence in" a reticent member but can create a favorable opening for more meaningful contact.
3. Chance meetings give insights to the values, interests and needs of members.
4. Chance meetings introduce a shepherd to a member's circle of friends or family.

B. Are-enactment of the parable in Matthew 13:44. – The man not even looking for a treasure but finding it when busy for other reasons

PASTORAL INSTRUCTION – Shepherding by Design

A. The Shepherd, like His Chief Shepherd, Is Pre-eminently a Teacher

Despite varied abilities, every shepherd must be an able spokesman of the Word (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).

1. Wherever: organized classes, small groups, one-on-one, pulpit, home visitation, etc. The shepherd has developed the knowledge to respond to each kind of teaching opportunity (Titus 1:9).
2. However: teach (1 Timothy 3:2), persuade/exhort (Titus 1:9), refute (Titus 1:9-11) and preach (1 Timothy 5:17).

B. Too Often Flocks Have Been Attended by Untrained, Incompetent Shepherds

PASTORAL COMMUNICATION – Shepherding by Involvement

A. Happy, Meaningful, and Productive Involvement Follows Effective Communication

1. The verbal, tonal and corporal vehicles of communication must be mastered.
2. The expressive, responsive, perceptive and reserved areas of communication must be exercised and kept in balance.
3. The comfort zones of communication must be identified and respected.
4. The basic human achievement needs must be carefully followed.
5. The communication framework must be faithfully relied upon.

B. Shepherds Are Effective, Truthful and Inspiring Communicators

Failure at this point often compromises or destroys devoted shepherding at many other points.

Conclusion

Men come to the work of shepherds after years of gaining knowledge and skills through serving in the flock. They continue their service by being near, active and among, the sheep. The sheep welcome their involvement, learn from their service and love them for their work's sake. Shepherds are bridge builders, transforming authority into service. They walk the pathways of the members, lifting their burdens and facilitating their struggles. They make little boys look forward to the day that they too can serve God as shepherds. They make little girls look forward to serving God with shepherd husbands. They delight their Shepherd of shepherds in being like Him in their loving, selfless service to the flock.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE

1. Pastoral guidance coming from a compassionate heart is seen in what four (4) ways?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. A compassionate heart begins in what four (4) areas of knowledge?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

3. What are the three (3) initial dimensions of pastoral knowledge?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

4. Define the following visitation models:

1) Pastoral visitation: _____
2) Pastoral Admonition: _____
3) Pastoral Comfort: _____
4) Pastoral Intercession: _____
5) Pastoral Modeling: _____
6) Pastoral Friendship: _____
7) Pastoral Encounter: _____
8) Pastoral Instruction: _____
9) Pastoral Communication: _____

5. In shepherding by modeling list five (5) modeling areas by shepherds.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____

LESSON TEN

Endangered Sheep

INTRODUCTION

The calmness of the scene of contented sheep in the pasture or the flock of God in uplifting worship do not belie the dangers that threaten well-being and life. Knowledgeable shepherds are constantly aware of impending dangers and are on guard (Acts 20:28-29). Because they know sheep are endangered they are in constant preparedness to identify and repel threats and repair damages in the flock. God's major concern for His ancient flock was of the shepherds themselves who abused, neglected and abandoned the flock (Jeremiah 23:1-4; Jeremiah 50:6; Ezekiel 34:2ff). God's concern was re-echoed of New Testament shepherds (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 5:2ff). In His might, working through His faithful shepherds, God knows He can keep His sheep safe from danger. While an eye must be fixed on the distant hills for the approaching enemy, they can only win when emptiness, sickness and confusion within make the flock vulnerable to attack. Therein lies God's joy or sorrow concerning His shepherds.

LESSON AIM: Will God's shepherds care for the sheep or leave them endangered by every threat? Where do spiritual shepherds focus their attention to protect the sheep and keep them strong and secure?

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will. . .

1. Understand that endangered sheep are kept safe and secure by the watchfulness of vigilant shepherds who demand quality preaching and effective shepherding.
 2. Learn the nine virtues of a whole person and the matching skill required in attaining these virtues.
 3. Be aware of three areas where a shepherd can help sheep whose fulness is severely limited.
-

SHEEP WHOSE NEWNESS IS DEFECTIVE OR FORGOTTEN

A. The Kind and Quality of Preaching Is Critical

Good News preaching affirms that responsive faith in Jesus Christ, as God's Son, frees one from:

1. The practice of sin – Repentance turns one from the practice of sin.
2. The resulting, inevitable guilt – forgiveness resolves the issue of guilt .
3. The inescapable collapse of personal significance – sonship fills one's emptiness and lostness with a valid promise of longing.

NOTE: Faithful shepherds are careful that the message to the world calls every individual to a clear understanding of how freedom from sin, guilt and insignificance is accomplished by repentance, forgiveness and sonship which is centered by faith in the person, message and finished work of Jesus Christ. But they are just as careful that the freed ones do not forget their first love.

B. Quality Preaching and Shepherding must Be Constant

1. Believers must be reminded of their former enslavement to sin and their freedom from sin.
2. They must remember the joy they have in their union with Christ and the need of renewal in repentance, forgiveness and sonship.

C. The Potential status of Endangered sheep

1. They either have not accurately understood the dimensions of their alienation from God (Titus 3:3-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11) or what being freed required (Romans 6:2-14).
2. They may have understood it well, have rejoiced in it for a time, but have become entangled in matters that have distracted them from their daily view of the defeated cross through an empty tomb (Galatians. 1:6-10; 2:16-21).
3. Sheep will be less endangered when shepherds continually resound the theme of newness in Christ.

SHEEP WHOSE WHOLENESS IS NEVER OR SLOWLY EXPERIENCED

Note an overview of some of the virtues of a whole person:

A. The Virtues of a Whole Person

1. FORGIVING: a forgiving person has learned, when hurt, to be healed through forgiving the offender.
2. UNSELFISH: how one interprets their past experiences (memory) and what function is assigned to one's emotions determines how subjective (selfish, thinking first or only of self) he/she is.
3. DISCIPLINE: one's effectiveness in confronting a problem and systematically resolving it is a measure of maturity.
4. FEARLESS: one's freedom to affirm his/her own worth, purpose and beliefs divides productive leaders from passive dependents.
5. HOPEFUL: what one sees in every event, problem or person and how one depends on faithful and effective use of resources.
6. SENSITIVE: the vision that can look beyond a blameable action or circumstance and see an unmet need crying out for fulfillment results in service and healing rather than judgment and condemnation.
7. COMMITTED: the largeness of one's circle of service and the energy available to touch many people or some very deeply reflects a quality of commitment.
8. EXPRESSIVE: how much of oneself is openly shared with another determines the strength and depth of the relationship.
9. SERENITY: effective processing of stressful agitation frees a person for good health, concentrated resources and a productive and inspiring lifestyle.

NOTE: Good shepherds are systematically teaching each member the value, beauty and skill to become whole in each virtue.

What are the skills to be learned?

VIRTUE	SKILL
Forgiving	Anger Management
Unselfish.....	Memory Management
Discipline	Problem Management
Fearless	Assets Management
Hopeful.....	Resource Management
Sensitive	Needs Management
Committed.	People Management
Expressive	Communication
Serenity	Stress Management

B. The Values of a Whole Person

Nothing short of a summary of the whole of God's Word may suffice to present Shepherds the value system they need to help each member build. Perhaps a beginning summary would be the core principles of the new kingdom of Jesus given by Him in the eight beatitudes of Matthew 5:2-10. A whole person has these clearly defined ways of living:

1. Life style: happiness in simplicity
2. Life burdens: happiness in renewal
3. Life commitments: happiness in finishing a job
4. Life directions: happiness in single-mindedness
5. Life agonies: happiness in kindness to others
6. Life view: happiness in purity
7. Life conflicts: happiness in reconciliation
8. Life beliefs: happiness in loyalty

C. The Vocation of a Whole Person

Shepherds must help each member with claiming and living consistently with the vocation of the believer.

SHEEP WHOSE FULLNESS IS SEVERELY LIMITED AND EVEN LESSENING

Fullness grows in one's depth of understanding of God, self and the world: Fullness is seen in one's ability to think and live objectively and spiritually.

A. Understanding God: The shepherd helps a member think about God in some of the following ways:

1. To reach for more and more areas where only God's will is heard.
2. To grow in more intense concern for God's concerns.
3. To increasingly agree with God over personal sin, ministry, and values.
4. To more clearly determine what is good, valuable and beautiful as seen through the eyes of God.

5. To be more deeply engrossed in the beauty of God in worship.
6. To become more dedicated to a greatness that exceeds one's capacity for adoration.
7. To be possessed by an unbroken awareness of the presence and nearness of God.
8. To be so awe-struck by the exalted majesty of God that awareness of sin, longing for cleansing and a pressing readiness for ministry fills one's soul.

B. Understanding Self: The shepherd helps a member think about self in the following ways:

1. To orient one's human inwardness toward the holy.
2. To administer one's whole life in the name of God, the only Autonomous Master.
3. To strive for inner anonymity.
4. To devote oneself to purposes that lead away from the self.
5. To view life as thankfulness (joy over gloom), reverence (peace over grief), adventure (substance over emptiness), giving (return over grasping), hereafter and here now (promise and responsibility).

C. Understanding the World: The shepherd helps the member think about his sojourn in the world in the following ways:

1. Since God is everywhere, at all times, and in possession of all things. Real responsibility and freedom is only found in Him, not in unbridled lust or irresponsible treatment of others.
2. Learning the difference between possession and gift is avoiding loneliness and embracing love.
3. The essential elements of sacrifice are self-dispossession and offering to fill the emptiness of others.
4. Ideals are neither idols or ends in themselves, but thoroughfares to God.
5. Man's destiny is to aid, to serve, not to be served by the more needy.
6. Fullness is an attitude of value and respect to all reality, to God, to self, to persons and to things.
7. Love is not consumption, but affection, friendship, service, sacrifice, and loyalty to others.

Conclusion

What kind of shepherds can lead believers to newness, wholeness, and fullness?

1. Jeremiah 3:15: "*Then will I give you Shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.*"
2. Jeremiah 23:4: "*I will set shepherds over them who care for them and they will fear no more, nor be dismayed neither shall any be missing says the Lord.*"
3. Ezekiel 34:23-24: "*I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd.*"
4. Acts 20:32: "*Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified*

In everything I did, I showed you that by hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words of Jesus, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN

1. List the nine virtues of a whole person with the skill needed to acquire each virtue.

1)	_____	-	_____
2)	_____	-	_____
3)	_____	-	_____
4)	_____	-	_____
5)	_____	-	_____
6)	_____	-	_____
7)	_____	-	_____
8)	_____	-	_____
9)	_____	-	_____

2. List the eight (8) life values contained in the beatitudes.

1)	_____
2)	_____
3)	_____
4)	_____
5)	_____
6)	_____
7)	_____
8)	_____

3. Fullness grows in one's depth of understanding what three things or persons?

1)	_____
2)	_____
3)	_____

LESSON ELEVEN

The Faithful Sheep

INTRODUCTION

he description of a “faithful” member is often discussed and is the subject of many religious articles. The simplest and most frequent response is that a faithful member is one who attends regularly the majority of the worship services and is active in the life of the church. That response might cover most cases but it may not be neither an accurate assessment or deep enough to help shepherds in encouraging the sheep to grow.

Why is it important to know what constitutes “faithfulness” among the sheep? Why should the discussion go beyond regular attendance in the public services and some level of involvement in the work of the church? There would be no need if a shepherd is only interested in what he sees. The question is important because a shepherd’s vision of what a faithful sheep looks like will guide him in working with members to achieve the desired levels of maturity.

LESSON AIM: To determine what constitutes faithfulness and why it is important for shepherds to know whether one is faithful.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will. . .

1. Learn several things which characterize the faithfulness of the members of the church.
 2. See that shepherds have much to do in getting the members in the Book by providing opportunities for reading and study of the Bible.
 3. Determine what can shepherds do to promote and build love for the brothers in the lives of the sheep.
-

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITHFUL SHEEP

The following views of faithful sheep describe the purposes and goals that faithful shepherds need to have in their assigned mission of caring for the sheep.

A. Devoted in worship

Communal worship with fellow believers on a regular basis provides encouragement, inspiration, accountability, shared beliefs and gift sharing. Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV):

“...let us consider how we may spur one another toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

1. The identity of a believer is reinforced in fellowship with others.
2. The growth in Biblical knowledge, understanding of core beliefs and learning the nature and value of consistent practices are shaped in the assemblies of the saints.
3. Learning of the devices of satan and finding models and methods for defeating his schemes frequently are learned in sharing the hours of the week in worship.
4. Awareness of the powerful resources to grow, to serve and to extol the greatness of God is best grasped at the side of those who are bowed together in worship.
5. Some of the most important experiences occur in the moments of corporate worship.
 - a. Awed in the holy presence of God, called to accountability, convicted in sin, rejoicing in salvation and committed in service are God's gifts to the worshipper.
 - b. Most of all, God is glorified, exalted and honored in the worship assembly.
 - c. A "faithful" member is deeply drawn to every opportunity to worship such a holy God with His saints. (cf. Psalms 73:10-17, Isaiah 6:1-8, Acts 2:41-47, 20:7-12, I Corinthians 11:17-34).

B. Fervent in Biblical Studies

A direct meeting with Christ in His Word is among God's greatest gifts to the believer. Shepherds have much to do in getting the members in the Book:

1. There should be much **public reading of Scriptures** by well trained readers.
2. Members should be urged to read daily and be given **reading schedules**.
3. Members should be taught **how to read and to understand the Bible**, with classes and individual instruction.
4. Sermon series should be preached to **teach the content of the books and chapters of the Bible**.
5. Priority attention needs to be given in developing the most **challenging classes and study opportunities taught by capable and devoted Bible students**.
6. **Small group studies** should be encouraged with materials provided or suggested that will deepen the members' Bible knowledge.
7. Money needs to be invested in building **a serviceable church library** focused on inspiring Bible study.
8. Members need to be guided in **building a home library of Bible study materials** and helped in purchasing the most useful books.
 - a. The better versions of the Bible.
 - b. Bible Concordance, Bible Dictionary, Bible Handbook.
 - c. Bible Geography, a Topical Dictionary, Introduction volumes, select commentaries, and Word Study books for the more enterprising, etc.

C. Growing in Life-Wholeness

Studies confirm what shepherds know by painful experience: members who really love the Lord too frequently perform poorly and are prone to be discouraged too easily. A leading reason is that 65% of members in the typical congregation are dysfunctional in two or more areas of maturity. Some are not coping well with stress or processing anxiety. Some are needing to grow in the relationship areas of their lives: reaching out to others, being accessible to others and caring and feeling for others without being judgmental. Some are passive in influencing others for good, lacking in a sense of personal worth, a sense of competency, a sense of belonging or a sense of purpose. Some, when hurt, struggle with healing and forgiveness, but, rather, become defensive and even hostile. Some act impulsively without self-discipline and responsible planning. While their love for Jesus is evident and encouraging they struggle with life, not being able to live abundantly. What can shepherds do?

1. Commit themselves to the goal of Paul relative to fellow-saints: “*We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all of the energy that Christ so powerfully works in me.* (*Colossians 1:28-29-NIV*). ”
2. Avail themselves of various testing tools to measure the maturity of traits. One of the most used is the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis. Shepherds would make a wise investment if they could secure the services of a certified analysis or assist a qualified member in becoming certified.
3. Knowing the areas of trait maturity, shepherds could conduct classes to teach members in gaining the skills to live more abundantly.
4. Counseling may be required to give special help when specific traits are especially deficient and pronounced blockage needs to be removed because of life-style mindsets.
5. Often growth is accelerated by identifying the Biblical resources and learning to make the best use of them: prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship, mentoring, etc.

NOTE: An aggressive program of growth can change a trait profile from being dysfunctional in several areas to be fully free to grow and become what God has designed every member to be.

D. Developing and Employing Giftedness

1. Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:10-12, and I Peter 4:10 speak of the dynamic of gifted members at work in building the church.
2. If only the minister and a few other members are carrying the bulk of the ministries and the majority of the members are spectators of activities the church will not and cannot grow.
 - a. God did not design the church or any living organism to depend on a few to work and others to watch.
 - b. The sad statistic that 10% of the members give 90% of the money and 48%, on any given Sunday, give nothing is also reflective of membership involvement.

- c. Studies indicate that 15% of the members do the work in a typical church and 85% either watch or do not have a clue what is being done.
- 3. No company would survive with such percentage of non-producing workmen. What can shepherds do?
 - a. Begin a teaching program on stewardship and member value to the good health and prosperity of the flock.
 - b. Measure the gifts God has assigned to each member.
 - 1) Each member will likely have three primary, three secondary and three tertiary gifts.
 - 2) One can go to www.teamministry.com and take a personalized test completely free. There will be an immediate scoring and a printout providing explanation of the primary gifts.
 - c. Conduct classes of members having common gifts to develop the skills to be at their best in ministries.
 - d. Plan ministries around the giftedness of the members, with a trained leader in each area (evangelism, mercy showing, service, administration, teaching, etc.).
 - e. Plan the congregational budget around the areas of gifted ministries, being sure to fund each one adequately.
- 4. The possession of a ministry gift is an assignment from the Lord in the Kingdom enterprise.
 - a. Members must serve in the areas assigned to them by God.
 - b. No leader has either the right or the authority to insist on members serving where the Lord has not assigned them.

E. Loving the Saints

- 1. Jesus made fraternal love the benchmark of faithfulness in the family of God (John 13:34).
- 2. Paul scoffed at the value of serving without love (1 Corinthian 13:1ff).
- 3. John made brotherly love a confirming condition of loving God (1 John 4:7-12; 19-21).
- 4. Peter made brotherly love an integral part of spiritual formation (2 Peter 1:5-9).
- 5. Placing anything over loving brethren marks any person as unfaithful at the most crucial point of the faith. What can shepherds do?
 - a. **Modeling Love.** Model a genuine and constant love for the very least and the least deserving member.
 - b. **Know the Sheep.** Learn the name of every member possible, especially the little ones in the family.
 - c. **Honor the Sheep.** Purposefully recognize the achievements of members as an act of wanting the best in their lives (agape love).
 - d. **Admonishing the Sheep.** Kindly but decisively admonish a brother who imposes a hurtful burden on any member.
 - e. **Preaching and teaching love.** Make sure that the pulpit and classes and small groups keep a steady and consistent emphasis on loving each other.

- f. **Making love of the brethren the aim.** Build the concept of loving the brethren into the purpose statement of the church or into its goals as a greatly desired outcome
- g. **Creating a fellowship of love.** Make the fellowship so rich with understanding, caring and affection that losing fraternal love through church discipline becomes a strong deterrent to members to falling into sin.

NOTE: Not to diminish the importance of doctrinal purity, winning souls to Jesus, serving others and offering acceptable worship to God, yet, with Paul in I Corinthians 13, faithfulness begins and ends with loving the brethren.

F. Supporting the Leaders

- 1. Hebrew Christians were told to focus, not on the incidental details of a leader's life, but on the overall results of his life (Hebrews 13:7).
 - a. Focus on what he has done best in the things that are most important.
 - b. They were told to look to their leaders with an intent to believe in and to see the value of their leaders.
 - c. They were urged to make the pathway of leaders as free of obstacles as possible, remembering what leaders are devoted to accomplishing for each member and how hard they work and what heavy accountability they face as shepherds of souls (Hebrews 13:17).
- 2. Christians in Thessalonica were told to build positive relations with their leaders who worked hard in caring for and admonishing them. They were urged to acknowledge their diligent work and to hold them in the highest regard with love because of the value of their work (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). How can shepherds help members to be faithful in their relationships with leaders?
 - a. Leaders need to make membership faithfulness be a joy in supporting the leadership
 - b. Though authority has been vested in leaders to lead (Hebrews 13:17), seeking input from members can be done wisely. The Apostles practiced member participation in the selection of servants in Acts 6.
 - c. Good communication concerning upcoming decisions prepare a membership to pray and consider the ways God can lead the church forward.
 - d. Providing a means by which members can give their ideas, both shows openness and availability and valuing members.
 - e. Being approachable in attitude, open to inquiry and patient and loving in response go a long way in helping the members to faithfully support their leaders.

NOTE: A basic need is to educate the members on their biblical role as relates to working with leaders. It is not a one-way street. Leaders must be mature men of God and wise in their leadership. But, members must know that they are not being faithful neither to the letter or with the spirit of the faith when they are not being supportive of appointed leaders.

G. Building a Strong Home Life

1. What shepherds can teach ensure faithfulness in home commitments?
 - a. Help members keep the promise to honor God in the marriage by building on the foundations in Genesis 1-2 (honoring diversity, mutuality, unity and longevity).
 - b. Help men keep the promise to follow the pattern of marital commitment of God toward Israel in Hosea 2:19-20.
 - c. Help men keep the promise to love one's wife as Christ loved the church in Ephesians 5:25-33 (loving without reservation, more than life itself) – giving masculine affection to their life mate .
 - d. Help men keep the promise to live with a wife with knowledge, with sensitivity and in honoring equality as in I Peter 3:7.
 - e. Help women know how to submit (i.e. voluntarily organize their lives in regard to their husbands, the appointed head of the family) and to applaud and support their husbands–giving feminine acceptance to their life mate.
2. One must also be taught to be faithful in parental commitments:
 - a. Teaching children effectively to honor God, obey His statutes and to honor parents as in Deuteronomy 6:1-10.
 - b. Giving children all they need at every level of their development as directed in Proverbs 22:6 (Ages 1-5: Attitudes; Ages 6-10: Values; Ages 11-15: Models; Ages 16-20: Experimentation).
 - c. Molding children after the model of Jesus in Luke 2:52 (submissive to authority, physical, education, spiritual and social).
 - d. Building a right relationship with children as in Ephesians 6:1-4 (honoring parents, seeing the value of counsel, being reasonable and giving well balanced instruction: verbal and experiential).

NOTE: Faithfulness at home impacts all other aspects of a person's faithfulness in spiritual commitments. Peter cites how husbands are hindered in their prayer life because of neglect of their wives (1 Peter 3:7). History is full of great men who were greatly grieved or were distracted in their leadership and faithfulness in difficulties with their children (e.g. Adam, Abraham, Aaron, Eli, David).

H. Being Balanced in Biblical Understanding

1. Knowing the truth is the beginning of faith and faithfulness (John 8:32, Romans 10:17).
 - a. A faithful member knows how to rightly handle the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16).
 - b. A faithful member knows how to weigh what is essential for salvation and fruitful living and to know what is helpful but not intended to be reproducible.
 - c. A faithful member knows how to distinguish between what is temporal, tied only to culture, and what is applicable for all time and normative for all people.
 - d. A faithful member knows how to draw from the deep wells of mercy

- and justice, law and grace, and face all circumstances with a balanced, compatible and timely application.
- e. A faithful member will be very careful not to impose his hermeneutical interpretations on others so as to threaten the fraternal unity that prevails or to exalt himself as the law giver to others.
 - 2. More faithful members have been discouraged over an ineffective handling of the Scriptures than most other problems in the church.

I. Moral in Life and Values

- 1. What people see in the lives of fellow-saints and especially in spiritual leaders, usually speaks more loudly than all of our sermons and claims (2 Peter 2:11-12).
- 2. How does a shepherd keep vigilance in helping members be moral and have strong, ethical values?
 - a. The pulpit must be a beacon of light in commending virtue and exposing the deeds of darkness.
 - b. The beauty of Jesus must be held high before all members, all of the time.
 - c. Vigilance must be exercised to detect the beginnings of immoral tendencies.
 - d. Spending personal time with members offers opportunity for them to share problems and ask for help.
 - e. Make sure that all shepherds are approachable, seen as caring and concerned and ready to spring to the side of a member slipping away.
 - f. Attention and budget must be present to give assistance to those in the throes of immoral failures—counseling assistance, relocation expenses or material help.
 - g. Loving but decisive discipline must be exercised before the flock so the dangers and consequences of immorality can be emphasized.
- 3. Helping people to think like Jesus, feel like Jesus and act like Jesus is the best prevention against the invasion of immorality (Philippians 4:8).

J. Generosity in Giving and Serving

- 1. Faithfulness has much to do with what spirit and with what intensity of giving and serving characterizes one's life.
 - a. Being a “camp follower” is not faithfulness.
 - b. Being a “dead sea” of receiving but not giving is not faithfulness.
 - c. Being a field, ever receiving the rain but never producing a crop is not faithfulness (Hebrews 6:7-8).
 - d. Being a gifted servant but never discovering, developing or employing the gifts falls short of faithfulness.
- 2. A principle of Scripture is “...unto whom much is given much will be required” (Luke 12:48). What can a shepherd do to help a member be a faithful and giving servant?
 - a. Be certain to teach stewardship of one's possessions and the responsibility of each member to give as they have been prospered (1 Corinthians 16:1).

- b. Be certain that every member knows his/her kingdom assignment according to the giftedness given by the Spirit and has the opportunity to develop the ministry gifts and employ them in the growth of the church.
- c. Plan church programs that give real encouragement and value to generous, even sacrificial giving.
- d. Communicate openly, regularly and purposefully how given monies have been used and with what results.
- e. Commend often the generosity and sacrificial giving of the members.
- f. Be a model of giving and serving with a joyful heart and generous spirit.

NOTE: A leadership that is reluctant to challenge members to invest themselves in the enterprise of the church has not understood Romans 12:1 that calls on members to offer themselves (i.e. all that they are, all that they possess and all that they can do) as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.

K. Being a Responsible Citizen

- 1. Being citizens of another country and being subject to a higher authority only enhance our responsible citizenship in the lands in which we live.
- 2. Giving unto Caesar the things that are his, obeying the laws of appointed authorities and doing good to all men are aspects of God's expectations of faithful servants.
- 3. Faithfulness requires God's servants to pay taxes, observe just laws and to honor lawful leaders in an orderly society.
- 4. How does a shepherd help members be faithful citizens even in difficult circumstances?
 - a. Ethical issues like lying on income taxes, knowingly speeding, misrepresenting products, cheating customers in pricing schemes and false weights and looking the other way in cases of fraud and abuse need to be clearly condemned.
 - b. Dishonoring a government and refusing to comply to stated laws must be openly reprimanded. In a land of law, believers must be model citizens in practice and in attitude.
 - c. A balance of "God and Country" should be sought in the life of the believers.
- 5. If believers are to be salt in the society they must be active and involved in the communities surrounding them.

L. Living in the Hope of the Second Coming

- 1. A faithful member keeps his eyes of faith, on the promised return of Jesus.
- 2. Decisions are made, conduct is framed and priorities are followed based on the intensity of one's expectations of the second coming of Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11) How does a shepherd keep the members alert to the coming of Jesus?
 - a. Frequent sermons, continual singing and public reading of Second

- Coming scriptures should be planned into the worship assemblies.
- b. Talking about the second coming of Jesus with genuine faith and excitement keeps members growing in their expectations of His return.
- c. Focus more on what He has promised He will do at the final advent than on what He won't do, as taught by premillennial advocates (1 Corinthians 15:22-28).
- d. Pray often and clearly, "*Come Lord Jesus*" and "*come quickly*" (Revelation 22:20).
- e. Urge members to live and plan in view of the second coming of Jesus (2 Peter 3:11-14).

Conclusion

Among the more troubling questions Jesus asked was "*Will there be faith upon the earth when the Son of man comes?*" (Luke 18:28). If believers in all ages will express their faithfulness in the ways suggested in this chapter there will be faith here to applaud the precious coming of the Son of Man. God has placed shepherds in the flock to help the sheep be faithful in all of their commitments.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN

1. There are twelve (12) views of the faithful sheep which describe the purposes and goals that faithful shepherds need to have in their assigned mission of caring for the sheep. Write these in the spaces below.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____
8) _____
9) _____
10) _____
11) _____
12) _____

2. List below what you would consider the four most important ways shepherds can help the members be more fervent in Bible study.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

3. What seven (7) things can elders do to promote faithfulness in the area of love?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____

4. In the area of faithfulness in being generous, fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

1) Being a “_____” is not faithfulness.
2) Being a _____ but not giving is not faithfulness.
3) Being a field, _____ but _____ is not faithfulness (Hebrews 6:7-8).
4) Being a gifted servant but _____ falls short of faithfulness.

LESSON TWELVE

The Shepherd's Joy

INTRODUCTION

Too often the stories of leadership are full of talk of blasted dreams, heartless rejection, hurtful, angry opposition, backbiting slander, ungrateful returns, forgotten commitments, sloppy, incompetent efforts and absence of praise and encouragement. Jesus experienced them all, culminating with the ultimate dread of Calvary and apparent failure to win but a few. His sadness fills the questions, "*Where are the other nine,*" and "*When the Son of Man returns, will there be faith on the earth?*" No shepherd will serve without seeing some sheep be ravaged, some become sick and die and some stray and be lost. Every shepherd will face danger, fatigue and heartbreak in guarding the endangered fold. But there is a brightness that drives all shadows away.

LESSON AIM: Observe that every shepherd is involved in events in people's lives that cause heartache and hurt but there is joy when hurt has been soothed and problems have been solved and relationships have been restored.

LESSON OBJECTIVE: You will . . .

Come to an understanding that even in the midst of hurt, misunderstandings, ruptured relationships, anger and all other things that cause sadness and sorrow in the lives of Shepherds, there is also joy in serving a Lord who has experienced all the same things.

PROMISED JOY OF SHEPHERDS

A. Intermingled with Tears and Sorrows Is the Promise of Joy for the Leader

1. Jesus urged the apostolic shepherds to look through their tears and sorrows to certain joy.

John 15:11: "*These things I have spoken to you that my joy remains in you and that your joy may be full.*"

John 16:20-24: "*Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore, you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. And in that day you will ask me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you.*

Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy be full."

2. Hebrews 13:17: "*Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*"
3. 1 Peter 5:4: "...and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."

B. Read Acts and the Epistles and Note the Songs of Joy of Those Who Worked with God

ACCOMPLISHED JOY OF SHEPHERDS

III John 3-4: "*For I rejoice greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*" – an elder's rejoicing!

Hebrews 12:2: "*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despite the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*" – the power of joy!

Revelation 4:4, 10-11: The 24 elders, perhaps representing all of God's faithful leaders across the history of redemption, are seen in the privileged circle around the enthroned God. They are joyfully worshipping Him, "*You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For you created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.*" And that will be glory, joy triumphing over all sorrow!

THERE ARE NO SELF TEST QUESTIONS FOR THIS LESSON

Appendix

Select Shepherd Scripture Readings

The Shepherd God

Psalms 23:

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside the still waters.
He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death
I will fear no evil for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell
in the house of the Lord forever.*

Isaiah 40:11:

*He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lamb in his arms and carries
them close to his heart; He gently leads those that have young.*

Ezekiel 34:1-10:

*The word of the Lord came to me: 'Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds
of Israel; prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe
to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not
shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the
wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You
have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You
have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them
harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and
when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. My sheep
wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered
over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them. Therefore, you
shepherds, hear the word of the lord: As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign
Lord, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has
become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search
for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, therefore, O
shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says: I
am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will
remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed
themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be
food for them.*

God Laments over Shepherds of His Flock

Jeremiah 23:1-4:

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: 'You have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will set shepherds over them who care for them and they will fear no more nor be dismayed; neither shall any be missing says the Lord.

Ezekiel 34:11-16:

For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

The Shepherds of the New Testament

Acts 20:28-29:

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God which he bought with his own blood - I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock...

Ephesians 4:11-13:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so the body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1 Peter 5:1-4:

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's

sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."

The Pastoral Prayer of the Shepherd of Shepherds

John 17:1-26

Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your work. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name - the name you gave me - so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

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Note: One asterisk = 12 lesson course
 Two asterisks = 24 lesson course

Study Guide



Truman Scott

Truman Scott comes from a long line of church leaders, counting to at least five generations. His leadership training, at age thirteen, began in a local church leader training program and was mentored by a careful minister and encouraged by godly parents. The training continued in Freed Hardeman University (A.A.), Harding University (B.A. in Bible and Biblical Languages), Harding Graduate School of Bible and Religion (M.A. in Old Testament), and Bethany Theological Seminary (M.A. and Doctorate of Christian Counseling).

His ensuing, full-time ministry commitments have led him into local evangelism (six years), missionary work in Italy (eleven years), church elder (fifteen years), and an administrator and instructor at Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, TX (twenty-five years). His ministry involvement includes being Director of Teen Bible Camps, author, publisher and co-owner of a publishing house, Director of a national Bible correspondence and advertising program, co-founder of a Christian Academy, and the author and editor of ministry themed books. He currently serves as a graduate instructor and administrative consultant for the Sunset International Bible Institute.



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