

What is Biblical Church Government? Lesson 8 – Duties of Elders

Introduction:

- Jesus described His own leadership and care for the church as _____ the flock.

John 10.11 *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

Psalms 23.1a *The Lord is my Shepherd*

1 Pet 5.4 *And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

- Shepherding is the Biblical analogy for _____ in the church.
- Biblical shepherding defines:
 - How the _____ are to care for the members.
 - How _____ are to care for one another.
- There are four _____ that describe what Biblical shepherding is.

1. _____ the sheep.

John 10.14 *I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,*

A. As our Shepherd, Christ's relationship to us is very _____.

- A church leader must _____ to know the people God has given him to shepherd.

B. In ministry leadership, there are different ways we must shepherd the church:

- Leaders have to minister to the church as a _____, as well as to people _____.
- Leaders have to minister _____ in worship, as well as _____ in homes.

C. Personally knowing the people is the only way to discern what they _____ and how to _____ them.

Acts 20.18–20 “You yourselves know how **I lived among you** the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord [i.e. you] **with all humility and with tears and with trials** that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you **anything that was profitable**, and teaching you in **public** and from **house to house**,

D. Knowing your flock is a skill that must be _____, just like preaching or teaching.

E. _____ your heart toward the people in your church, and they’ll open their heart toward you.

1 Thess 2.8 So, being **affectionately desirous of you**, we were ready to share with you **not only the gospel of God but also our own selves**, because you had become **very dear to us**.

F. You can’t effectively _____ the Word of God to people’s lives if you don’t know what their needs are.

2. _____ the sheep.

John 21.17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “**Feed my sheep**.”

A. As the Chief Shepherd, Jesus says that shepherds must feed God’s people with the _____.

2 Tim 4.2 **preach the word**; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

Matt 4.4 But he answered, “It is written,
“Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by **every word that comes from the mouth of God**.””

B. Godly shepherds feed their own souls by:

- _____ the Bible for themselves,
- _____ for God to give them a right understanding.

1 Pet 2.2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—

C. Godly shepherds feed the sheep by:

- _____ the truths of the Bible,
- _____ the meaning of the Bible,
- _____ the promises and commands of the Bible to the lives of God's people.

1 Tim 4.13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public **reading** of Scripture, to **exhortation**, to **teaching**.

Acts 20.26–27 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you **the whole counsel of God**.

D. Scripture requires that an Elder be able to _____ the Word and refute error.

Titus 1.9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may **be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it**.

3. _____ the sheep.

Acts 20.28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. 29

1 Pet 5.2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising **oversight**, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

A. Godly oversight requires exercising _____ skills.

B. A godly shepherd knows his people well, and can _____ lead them in the truth.

Psa 78.72 With upright heart he shepherded them and **guided them with his skillful hand**.

C. Godly oversight requires exercising _____.

1 Thess 5.12 We ask you, brothers, to respect **those who labor among you** and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,

1 Tim 5.17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially **those who labor in preaching and teaching**.

D. A godly shepherd knows that leading the church sometimes requires you to labor to the point of _____!

4. _____ the sheep.

Acts 20.28–31a Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. 29 I know that after my **departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert,**

A. The Bible requires that an Elder know the Bible well enough to _____ false teachers.

Titus 1.9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may **be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.**

B. Protecting the flock also includes seeking sheep that have gone _____ in order to lead them back to the safety of the flock.

C. A good shepherd _____ for the sheep and is _____ and to defend them.

John 10.11–13 I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and **cares nothing for the sheep.**

Conclusion:

- The idea of shepherding a flock of sheep so helpful that the Bible uses it repeatedly to describe _____ and His loving care for His people.
- Just as Jesus has loved us and known us as His sheep, we must strive to love and know _____ sheep.

- One day we will give an _____ to the Great Shepherd for how we shepherded God's sheep.