

Parental Pastoring

I Thess 2:7-12

⁷ But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. ⁸ So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. ⁹ For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, ¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Introduction

I would like to introduce this passage of Paul's Parental Passion for the church of Thessalonica by giving you a brief but very important theology of the pastorate.

If you have been a christian for some time, then you are probably aware that different churches and denominations have

different perspectives or beliefs about the role of the pastor in the local church.

If you were to try to determine what God intended for the pastor to be and do by looking at these different churches, you would come up with a very long list of things that may be good, but not necessarily biblical.

I have found, that just as the other doctrines found in the Word of God, that if you just look at the Bible and not let Denominational interpretations, or Theological presuppositions determine your understanding of scripture.

Read it, and understand the Bible within its Historical, Grammatical, Linguistic Context.... It is just not that complicated
So with that said
Here it is

The Bible uses 3 words to describe the pastor

1. Elder -presbuteros
2. Bishop- episkopos
3. Pastor,Shepherd- Poimnion

There are a couple of passages that show this

Acts 20:28

I Peter 5:1-5

I Timothy 3 Titus 1 refers to the qualifications of the pastor

In Both Acts and I Peter, the Bible makes it clear that the church is to be ruled by a plurality of Elders, not just one.

Elders, will have different responsibilities, depending on there gifts that God has given them.

Example

I Tim 5:17

¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

¹⁸ For the Scripture says, “*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,*” and, “The laborer is worthy of his wages.” ¹⁹ Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. ²⁰ Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

²¹ I charge *you* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. ²² Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people’s sins; keep yourself pure.

So We have 3 words

1. Elder refers to spiritual maturity
2. Bishop-overseer, refers to his Office as ruler and overseer
3. Pastor- shepherd -refers to his function or duty

Of all the words, nothing communicates the role of the Elder or Bishop better than the word “Pastor-Shepherd”

The Pastors responsibility is to Shepherd the Flock of God

I Peter 5: 1-2

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:
² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you,

Shepherd is the main verb on which everything else depends

Shepherding is the Main Duty of the pastor.

But even that word and get filled up with all kinds of things that are good but not the priority

For instance many believe that these are the most important duties of the pastor

1. Visiting the sick
2. Evangelizing the lost
3. Administration of the church
4. mowing the lawn

nothing wrong with doing any of these. But from the Biblical word itself, you would be hard pressed to see any of that.

Lets look at the word Shepherd

Too many church leaders in our generation have forgotten what the word *pastor* means. It is an exact synonym for *shepherd*, of course. That's the true meaning of the word, and the symbolism of sheep and shepherds is prominent in Scripture from start to finish. You begin to see this theme very early in the Old Testament.

Numbers 27:16-17: "Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep that have no shepherd." And that same theme runs through to the very end.

In [Revelation 7:17](#), Jesus is described as both Lamb and Shepherd: "For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd."

Pastoral imagery—sheep and shepherding— constitute the whole theme of the most famous psalm of all (the 23rd). God's heart *is* the heart of a Shepherd. [Psalm 80:1](#) calls Him the "Shepherd of Israel." [Psalm 100:3](#): "We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

One of Jesus' great claims of deity came in [John 10:11](#), when He said, "I am the good shepherd." Peter echoes that in [1 Peter 2:25](#), when He speaks of Jesus as "the Shepherd and Overseer of [our] souls."

But there are actually men in positions of great influence and leadership in the evangelical movement at the moment who think we need to do away with the imagery of lambs and shepherds— and exchange our role as tenders of the Lord's flock for some nobler kind of leadership. They think we need to be entrepreneurs, rock stars, top-level business managers, CEOs, or whatever. (One well-known church leader who lives not very far from here put the title "Futurist" rather than *pastor* on his business card.) Contemporary church leaders justify that agenda (of course) by an appeal to contextualization and cultural relevance.

There was a famous interview with Andy Stanley in the Spring 2006 issue of *Leadership Magazine* that reflects this way of thinking as clearly as anything I know. (*Christianity Today* also reprinted a major segment of that interview not long ago. You see references to it all the time.) In that interview with a couple of writers from *Leadership* magazine, Andy Stanley said he thinks it's time to retire the idea of shepherding and replace it with the figure of a corporate CEO.

Let me read you some quotations from that article: The interviewers asked, "What is distinctly spiritual about the kind of leadership you do?" Andy Stanley replies: "There's nothing distinctly spiritual. . . . One of the criticisms I get is 'Your church is so corporate.' I read blogs all the time. Bloggers complain, 'The pastor's like a CEO.' And I say, 'OK, you're right. Now, why is that a bad model?'"

So the interviewer asked him, "Should we stop talking about pastors as 'shepherds'?" Andy Stanley says: "Absolutely. That word needs to go away. Jesus talked about shepherds because there was one over there in a pasture he could point to. But to bring in that imagery today and say, 'Pastor, you're the shepherd of the flock,' NO. I've never seen a flock. I've never spent five minutes with a shepherd. It was culturally relevant in the time of Jesus, but it's not culturally relevant any more."

I disagree Andy,

Please give us a little slack here, We are not dumb, I think we can bridge the gap in our mind and understand things that we have not seen before

I think we can understand what a chariot is without the imagery **of a SUV or an Abrams Tank**

We can appreciate and understand the Passover season in Jerusalem without calling it out dated and not culturally relevant

So just because we don't see every community herding sheep down the road or having sheep as pets rather than dogs and cats lets just dispense with the "not culturally relevant" non sense and accept it the way God wrote it.

I actually believe that there was a reason that God chose the specific time in history to be born and live and die ordain the church and have the New Testament written.

It was not an accident. The Timing was exact.

He wanted to do this in a time and a land where sheep and shepherding were prevalent and common for a reason. It is a lot better time than our time of mopeds and Pet Smart.

In Shepherding we learn a great deal about the church and her leadership

Shepherds had to be certain kinds of men, because sheep are a unique kind of animal.

and in this we are able to glean a lot of information of what God intend for his Shepherds to be like.

So to understand better the role of the Shepherd, we need to understand a little more about the sheep.

The sheep, for example, is the only animal in the world that can be totally lost within a few miles of its home. Most animals have been given by God an instinct to find their way back, an uncanny instinct to go home. For the most part, that is an element of animal life. Now within its closed range, the sheep has adequate skills. It knows its own pasture. It knows the place where it was born and suckled by its mother. It will invariably rest in the same shade every day. It will sleep in the same fold in the same place. It will stay in the home range more than any other grazing animal and not go very far.

But if that sheep is taken into unfamiliar territory, it becomes completely lost. It has no sense of direction. It has no sense of orientation. It does not know where it is and it does not know how to get where its supposed to be. It cannot find its way home. In fact, lost sheep will walk around usually in endless circles, baaing continually in confusion and unrest and sometimes even panic. Now sheep are beautiful. Sheep are gentle. Sheep are humble. Sheep are, contrary to popular opinion, quite intelligent. But they are so utterly prone to get lost that if they go astray they are helpless to find food or to find water. There are about a billion plus sheep in the world and all of them would very soon starve to

death or die of thirst if it were not for thousands of caring shepherds who like the shepherd in Scripture goes out after the lost sheep because he knows it could never find its way back. All other animals can track back, not the sheep.

When Jesus saw the disoriented, confused, hungry, thirsty, spiritually lost crowds, He said they were like sheep without a shepherd. They didn't know where they were. They couldn't feed themselves. They couldn't find water. They were totally lost and didn't know the way back and there was no one to lead them to water, to lead them to food and to lead them home. When the prophet Isaiah wanted to describe lost men, he selected sheep and he said, "All we like sheep have...what?...gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way." And now we're all disoriented and we're all lost and we could never find our way to the sheepfold. And we have no shepherd to lead us.

And sheep, by the way, are especially vulnerable when purposely led astray. They are innate followers, very easy to lead them astray. They told us that in New Zealand about 40 million sheep are sent to market and led to slaughter each year. And there is one sheep that leads them to their death. Strangely enough and not so strangely, that sheep in New Zealand is called the "Judas" sheep. That is a specially selected castrated male sheep who leads the unwitting sheep to the killing floor, unaware of what is about to happen, the sheep blindly fall in behind the Judas sheep and they follow him to the killing floor at which point a trap door on the side opens and he exists down to bring the next group. The door closes and they are slaughtered. Sheep went astray are utterly lost and unable to find their way back. And sheep can be so easily led to their death.

Another thing that points us to the need for a shepherd. They not only need to be rescued, but they need to be protected. They need to be guided. They need to be provided for. They need a shepherd who can gather them to a safe place, who can bring them home, who goes after them when they stray, who even carries them when they are hurt. Sheep spend most of their life eating and drinking and they are constantly thirsty and constantly

hungry. And especially if left without a shepherd they are vulnerable. Here's why. They have to have clean water. They have to have pure water. They have to have water that is not stagnant and filled with potential disease. They have to have water that is not too cold or not too hot. They have to have water that is not moving too rapidly. They need to be led, as the psalmist said, beside the still waters...not stagnant but moving so slowly. The water must be very close by so it can be easily found and made easy to drink.

Most animals are able to smell water at a distance. They can smell it on the wind. They can feel the moisture of it. But not sheep. If sheep are allowed to wander too far from their own pasture, they can sense no water hole, though it be near by. And they will die of thirst because they have no capacity to find water. Do you get the feeling God invented sheep just to make a spiritual point? Once they have left their own grazing range even having devoured that range, they're unable to move to any new place on their own. If they eat their own range, they will continue to eat the stubble and they will continue to eat the dirt before they will venture to move somewhere else unless led there. Furthermore, sheep are not discriminate eaters. Some animals are, many animals are. Sheep are not. They don't know the difference between a poisonous plant and a good one. They can not distinguish between oats, hay, alfalfa and deadly weeds. And so you can see they have great need for shepherding...a shepherd who is careful, thoughtful, watchful, knowledgeable, wise, a shepherd who plans, provides, pastures, protects his sheep. Sheep left alone will die and the shepherd is the key to their life. Another element, we imagine sheep to be these little clean soft white wooly things, like a lamb. When we were in New Zealand we were out on the sheep farm and all of our kids got these little wooly lambs and a little bottle and they were all feeding these little wooly lambs and oohing and aahing and cooing about how soft and cuddly the little lambs were. It doesn't take long though for a lamb to become a sheep and sheep, by the way, are rarely white and almost never clean. They are stained. And the reason they

are stained is because within the wool that they produce is an immense amount of oil, lanolin. That oil permeates their hide. They are the greasiest animal you ever put your hand on. They're like somebody who went crazy with hair cream. And because they are so totally greasy and oily, everything in their environment sticks to them...everything--dirt, blowing in the wind or dirt on which they happened to roll, weeds through which they walk, vegetation, seeds being blown about by the wind, anything and everything. And they have absolutely no capacity to clean themselves. They can't do that. They have no physical dexterity to do that. They are dirty until the shepherd shears them.

Furthermore, sheep have to be in a place where the food is good but they can't be in a place where the ground is wet. If the ground is at all wet, they get foot rot. So it has to be fertile ground and productive ground but not moist ground. Furthermore, if they are in feeding on moist wet grass, they get severe diarrhea and because of the wool and the grease all over them that coagulates on their body, stops the normal elimination process and kills the sheep because of the accumulation of that.

You might be interested to know, and then again you might not, I'll leave it to you, that flies kill sheep by laying eggs in them. Sheep can't defend themselves. And when those maggots become flies and hatch, a sheep can be driven literally to death. Periodically the shepherd, and we were in the little barn with the shepherd way in the out back in Australia and the shepherd brought all the sheep in and he took out his shears and he grabbed the sheep and flipped it over and the rear part of the sheep he just sheared a huge area out so that the droppings didn't literally kill the sheep. Later on in the year he would cut the rest of their wool. He alone could clean them. They can't clean each other. They can't clean themselves.

Not only that, no animal in the world is as defenseless as a sheep. Do you know they have absolutely no defense? They can't kick. They can't scratch. They can't bite. They can't jump. And they can't run. They just stand there and die. They have

absolutely no defense mechanism. They're dead meat...or dead wool, if you will. And when they are attacked by a predator, do you know what sheep do? Instead of running away, they run together. They huddle which makes it easy, the predator gets whichever one he wants. You see, without the shepherd they can't survive, they could never survive. Sheep are more vulnerable to injury than any other animal because they are so humble in spirit, their attitude is such a meek attitude that they give up. If you hurt a sheep, he is so easily, or she is so easily broken in spirit, says the shepherd, that they will be completely crushed by the pain and the hurt and they lack a self-preservation instinct, they have no will to fight and they have no struggle to live. So they just give up and die.

They say that a full woolled sheep if it falls on its back is very often not able to roll back up on its feet. It just gives up and dies unless a shepherd comes to pick it up, to turn it over. And when a sheep has been lying on its back and unable to roll back up for a long period of time, when the shepherd comes and picks it up, he has to treat it with care because its circulation has stopped. And if he tries to set it back on its feet it will just fall over again. And he may have to carry it, the shepherds say, for an hour before the circulation will allow him to put it down.

Sheep need constant attention. They get lost. They can't find water. They can't find food. They eat the wrong things. They roll over and die. They get hurt and give up. They can't run, kick, bite, scratch or jump.

So we can see there is a great need for a Shepherd and Shepherding

Cognate: 4165 poimainō – properly, to *shepherd*, **caring for (protecting)** the flock.

4165 /poimainō ("shepherding, pastoring") **is distinct from "feeding" (1006 /bóskō). 4165 (poimainō) focuses on "tending" ("shepherding") (WS, 274), which includes guarding, guiding,** and folding the flock and is only provided (ultimately) by Jesus Christ – *the Shepherd*, who calls under-shepherds (such as elder-overseers) to guard and guide His people by His direction (1 Pet 5:1-5).

1 Peter 5:2. β. to furnish pasturage or food; to nourish: ΕΑΥΤΟΝ, to cherish one's body, to serve the body, **Jude 1:12; to supply the requisites for the soul's needs**

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

to shepherd, rule

From **poimen**; to tend as a shepherd of (figuratively, supervisor) -- feed (cattle), rule.

So we see the word Shepherd means

1. tend
2. care for
3. protect
4. guard
5. guide
6. Feed.

This emphasis is found throughout the N.T.

Example

Acts 20:28

²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to **shepherd** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ **For I know this,** that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch

John 21:15-17

¹⁵ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, 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 all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

2 Timothy 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. (NAS)*

2 Timothy 4:1-5 *I solemnly charge you...preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (NAS)*

1 Timothy 4:11-16 *Prescribe and teach these things. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. (NAS)*

Eph 4:11-

¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with

every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love,

The church must have spiritual food; and that food can come only from the word of God, interpreted by men under the positive influence of the Holy Spirit. Many a congregation is fed with food which can never satisfy the longings of weak, erring souls who hunger to live the life of Christ. Fiction excites the imagination; it stimulates like some poisons; it interests; it fascinates; but it seldom makes Christians.

Too often preachers feed their congregations with stories, many of which are imaginary, and which are neither better nor worse than books of fiction presenting a moral tale. The soul cannot be fed, the spiritual life cannot grow, with such food, regardless of who serves the food. The church cannot be spiritually helped even when such fiction is mingled with or followed by good exhortations.

The problems of life are intensely serious; sin in every form is serious; Sin-smitten men and women do not need stories, but the word of God, which speaks with far greater power than any story can speak "Is not My word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" In this word we have the power of the Holy Ghost speaking, Feeding the Flock of God

I.H. Evans