

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep,
and I myself will make them lie down,
declares the Lord God.
(Ezekiel 34:15 ESV)

SHEPHERDING THE FLOCK OF GOD

CHURCH LEADERSHIP SEMINAR
PRESENTED BY PETER "THE ROCK"



For he is our God, and we are
the people of his pasture, and
the sheep of his hand.
(Psalm 95:7a ESV)

Know that the Lord, he is God!
It is he who made us, and we
are his; we are his people, and
the sheep of his pasture.
(Psalm 100:3 ESV)

SECTION ONE: WHO
THE "WHO" OF GODLY, BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP ...

1. Godly leaders lead: The elders (the mature, male leadership) in a local fellowship are to shepherd the flock of God, 5:1-2a.

- (1 Peter 5:1–2a ESV) So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you.

A. We find a beginning place for an understanding of biblical leadership from Peter's appeal to the elders.

The basics: This statement—“elders ... shepherd the flock of God that is among you”—gives us a ground floor entrance to understanding biblical church leadership.

Explicit Observation: There are leaders in the church who are to lead.

Implicit Observation: If there are leaders, then there must be followers who are to follow.

- (1 Peter 2:25 ESV) For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

B. Peter appeals to the male leadership of the church.

- i. He is speaking to men, not women.
- ii. You can search and successfully find alternative interpretations that allow women to fill the roles of elders, bishops and deacons.
 - (2 Timothy 4:3 ESV) For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.
- iii. The clear instruction of God's word is this—God calls men to lead.
- iv. If you are a woman trying to exercise leadership in the church, then you are running contrary to God's purpose.

- (1 Timothy 2:12–14 ESV) I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.
- v. The Lord calls men as elders to lead his congregation—Old Testament and New Testament.
 - (Numbers 11:16 ESV) Then the LORD said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy **men** of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you.

C. Peter appeals to the male leadership as a fellow elder.

D. Peter appeals to the male leadership as a first-hand witness.

- i. Peter is a first-hand witness to the sufferings of Christ.
- ii. Peter is a first-hand witness as one who has been given the charge to shepherd the flock of God, cf. John 21:15-17.
 - (John 21:15–17 ESV) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, 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 a second time, “Simon, son of John, 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 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.**”

Shepherd my sheep.

- iii. Peter was commissioned by Christ to

feed his sheep and to shepherd his sheep.

- iv. He was to provide protection, nourishment, guidance and direction.
- v. One of the shepherd's main concerns is leading the sheep to pastures that will bring nourishment and growth.

Excerpt–Phillip Keller “A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23.” The greatest single safeguard which a shepherd has in handling his flock is to keep them on the move. That is to say, they dare not be left on the same ground too long. They must be shifted from pasture to pasture periodically. This prevents over-grazing of the forage. It also avoids the rutting of trails and erosion of land from overuse.

E. Peter appeals to the male leadership as one who shares in the anticipation of the glory to come.

F. Peter exhorts the leaders to shepherd the flock of God.

- i. Faithful shepherds know that this is the flock of God of which they have the God-given privilege to feed, tend, keep and rule the sheep.
- ii. Elders are to protect the flock from wolves—both from without and within the flock.
 - (Acts 20:28–31a ESV) 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.

SECTION TWO: HOW THE “HOW” OF GODLY, BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP ...

2. Godly leaders learn: The elders (the mature, male leadership) in a local fellowship are to learn from God how they are to shepherd the flock of God, 5:2-3.

- (1 Peter 5:2–3 ESV) 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; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

A. Shepherds are to be overseers—watching over the flock, 5:2.

- (1 Peter 5:2 NIV) Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve.

Excerpt–Phillip Keller “A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23.” Sheep are notorious creatures of habit. If left to themselves they will follow the same trails until they become ruts; graze the same hills until they turn to desert wastes; pollute their own ground until it is corrupt with disease and parasites. Many of the world's finest sheep ranges have been ruined beyond repair by over-grazing, poor management and indifferent or ignorant sheep owners.

Likewise many fine churches have been ruined because they have been left to themselves ... really people demanding to guide their own way ... as a woman told me once ... pastors come and go but this is our church ...

B. Shepherds are to watch over the flock of God because of a willingness and desire to please God.

C. Shepherds are not to watch over the flock for their own gain.

- (Ezekiel 34:2 ESV) Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel **who have been feeding yourselves!** Should not shepherds feed the sheep?

D. Shepherds are not to be domineering but to be examples to those to whom are under their care.

- (1 Peter 5:3 ESV) Not domineering over those in your charge, but being

examples to the flock.

E. Pastors are shepherds.

- (Ephesians 4:11–12 ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the **shepherds** and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

SECTION THREE: WHY THE "WHY" OF GODLY, BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP ...

3. Godly leaders look ahead: The elders (the mature, male leadership) in a local fellowship serve in view of the appearance of the chief Shepherd and the promised reward for standing in the gap in the care of his flock, 5:4.

- (1 Peter 5:4 ESV) And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- A. The chief Shepherd shepherds his flock by proxy. He gives these men his authority to care for his flock.
- B. Possibly the greatest motivation to wisely and honorably shepherding the sheep of God's pasture is to look ahead to that moment when the sheep are back safely in the care of the great Shepherd.
- C. Those who reject the shepherding of the chief Shepherd's "stand ins" in effect reject his leadership in their lives.
- (Hebrews 13:17 ESV) Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Warren Wiersbe asked over twenty years ago ... If so many people are buying and (we hope) studying expensive and elaborate study Bibles, and using study guides in Bible study groups, **why is it that the**

church today is so divided, disgraced and defeated? What is all of this so-called "Bible study" accomplishing? **It seems that no matter where you go, you find God's people living at a sub-Christian level but still rejoicing that they are "studying" the Word of God.** (Warren Wiersbe, *Beyond Bible Study, Pulpit helps*, August 1993).

Phillip Keller ...

The Lord! But who is the Lord? What is His character? Does He have adequate credentials to be my Shepherd—my manager—my owner?

And if He does—how do I come under His control? In what way do I become the object of His concern and diligent care?

These are penetrating, searching questions and they deserve honest and basic examination.

One of the calamities of Christianity is our tendency to talk in ambiguous generalities.

David, the author of the poem, himself a shepherd, and the son of a shepherd, later to be known as the "Shepherd King" of Israel, stated explicitly, "The Lord is my Shepherd." To whom did he refer?

He referred to Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel. His statement was confirmed by Jesus the Christ. When He was God incarnate amongst men, He declared emphatically, "I am the good Shepherd."

But who was this Christ?

Our view of Him is often too small—too cramped—too provincial—too human. And because it is we feel unwilling to allow Him to have authority or control—much less outright ownership of our lives.

Excerpts From: W. Phillip Keller. "A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23." Apple Books. <https://books.apple.com/us/book/a-shepherd-looks-at-psalm-23/id1444691132>