

God the Best Shepherd 1 Peter 5

Do you see yourself as a Shepherd or a Sheep?

This chapter has words for both shepherd and sheep.

Perhaps at different times God calls us to be both a shepherd and a sheep.

On Being a Shepherd..

Peter knew what is meant to be given the role of a shepherd, looking after the sheep of the chief shepherd.

'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."
John 21:16

Peter uses the same word tend/shepherd/feed in 1 Peter 5:2, 'shepherd the flock of God that is among you'.

At Peter's lowest point, after denying Jesus, Jesus calls him to be a shepherd to his flock.

As Peter passes on this instruction, using this same word, he must have been only too aware of human weakness – and yet he writes 'shepherd the flock'.

Are there people God is calling you to shepherd?

Single cell churches – looking to a single shepherd don't seem to grow. Multi-celled churches with an ever increasing number of shepherds and mini-flocks do seem to grow.

Are you called to shepherd those outside of the church? To nurture people at the very beginnings of their spiritual journey?

The Job Description of a Shepherd (according to Peter) -

Shepherd (feed/tend)

Oversee (willingly and not because you have to)

Set an example

Be aware that -

It is not our flock

God is the chief shepherd.

The Example of the Good Shepherd.

(Jesus only does what he sees his father doing, see John 5:19)

Then Jesus told them this parable: Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?

Luke 15: 3-4

Shepherding those who are ignored.

On Being a Sheep

To whom are you a member of 'the flock'?

The Job Description of a Sheep (according to Peter) -

Obedience

Humility

Casting your anxieties on God – give him those things that worry you.

The Example of the Lamb

John identified Jesus as the 'Lamb of God' before his baptism (see John 1:29).

He suffered for others

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

(Isa 53:6-7)

Jesus was humble and silent, he submitted himself to God and served others.

Palm Sunday

Jesus didn't ride in as a conqueror but humbly on a donkey into Jerusalem knowing that he was putting himself into the hands of his enemies. He did this out of his love for his father and for the whole of humanity.

The Challenge

To whom are we called to be a shepherd, who are our flock?

To whom are we called to be sheep, who is our earthly shepherd?

How should our attitude and behaviour be affected by the answers to these questions?

Small Group Questions

Read 1 Peter 5:1-7 and discuss one or more of the following area.

1. Spend some time reflecting on the words and share any thoughts you have with the others.
2. The Sermon Notes include these words,
'Single cell churches – looking to a single shepherd don't seem to grow. Multi-celled churches with an ever increasing number of shepherds and mini-flocks do seem to grow.'
Do you think this is true?
Are we training up new 'shepherds'?
Are we reaching out and shepherding a flock, either of Christians or non-Christians?
3. Are there people in your life that you look up to as a spiritual shepherd? Obedience and humility are not very popular characteristics in today society. Should we obey our spiritual shepherd?
Should we be humble and listen to spiritual advice and discernment?
Or are these ideas outdated now?
4. Discuss the Challenge at the end of the sermon notes.
To whom are we called to be a shepherd, who are our flock?
To whom are we called to be sheep, who is our earthly shepherd?
How should our attitude and behaviour be affected by the answers to these questions?