

What is a Pastor to Do

Job Description for Pastor - Numbers 27

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INTRODUCTION: The word “pastor” occurs only one time in the NT in Eph 4:11, which states that God has given the church the gift of “pastor”. It is difficult to get a whole lot of instruction about what a pastor is supposed to do from that verse. But God has outlined the job that the pastor is supposed to do.

I. Understanding God’s installation of Spiritual Oversight

DEFINITION: Pastors (keepers of sheep) are people who usually do not own the sheep they oversee, but are stewards for other people, such that they are charged with the welfare of these sheep, but they have some liberty and some restrictions about how they take care of the sheep.

A. Spiritual Watch care (oversight) is biblical

Eze 34:23 *And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.*

Some people refuse to accept that God establishes men of God to rule the flock of God.

Heb 13:7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. **17** Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

i. God has called and placed men to rule over the church

“rule” – 2233 to lead, i.e. command (with official authority), governor, judge; figuratively to deem, i.e. consider, esteem. (esteem somebody such that you obey them).

Any Christian who refuses to place himself under the watch care of pastor is simply disobeying God’s word and God.

ii. Ruling implies authority and responsibility

Heb 13:17 *“for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account”* (“watch” – to be sleepless, i.e. keep awake, watch).

If these pastors must give an account to God for each member of their flock, then they have to have some authority with which to work with so that when they give their accounting to God, they can be responsible. If the pastors are helpless to arrange matters, decide options, and focus the various elements of that church and those Christians lives, then how can he be held accountable? You cannot hold pastors responsible if they have little or no power to make the decisions. Likewise pastors must know the personal lives of their members.

Pr 27:23 *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.*

B. Pastoral leadership is mainly a living example.

Mt 20:25 *But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;*

1Pe 5:3 *Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

“exercise dominion” “being lords over” – 2634 katakurieuo - to lord against, i.e. control, subjugate, overcome

God has set the design in the body of Christ that churches are led by pastors, and these pastors are to have a style of leadership that is based in an impeccable, personal, living example. Leadership is by being and doing what the followers are supposed to be and do. They are not given authority to be a dictator to absolutely control their life, nor to exercise dominion over them, but the pastor points them to a standard, and makes sure that everything possible is being done to make them reach that standard.

Shepherds – A good shepherd does not drive his flock but develops a relationship with them such that he simply walks where he wants them to go and they will follow closely behind him.

Disciple and Master – In ancient days, the concept of disciples and masters was very well defined. The master had such understandings (which he taught) and practices of his life, that those who saw his life as valuable would essentially stop their whole life, drop everything, and go follow that master and live with him until they gained what the Master had to offer them.

VERSES SHOWING FOLLOWING A CONCEPT

2Ti 2:22 *Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

3Jo 1:11 *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God*

VERSES SHOWING FOLLOWING A PERSON

Php 3:12 *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

2Th 3:7 *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; 9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.*

Heb 13:7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (lifestyle, behavior).*

Leadership for a pastor is to make a declaration of what is right and good, denouncing what is bad and wicked, and live that declaration in his life personally. There are no double standards in the house of God. Rules are not “bent” for pastors, but instead pastors are more responsible to live a godly life than any other Christian.

II. Pastoring is mainly about feeding.

A. Overview

God compares churches and pastors to shepherds that keep animals by grazing on rangelands. In this there are similar elements. The wanderings of the shepherd is what allows the sheep to grow and reproduce. But grazing is not without its dangers and pitfalls. Often sheep receive abuse from stickers, sharp rocks in the land they cross, and even weeds that would make them sick or poison them. The shepherd had to make a constant “pastoral visitation” of the sheep whereby he would closely examine each individual sheep and tend to what was necessary in his life. Sometimes predators would kill and devour them. The shepherds had to be ever watchful, and even began using dogs to help them keep watch for predators because of their better ears and eyes.

The shepherd must take care of the sheep, and this is including in the concept of “grazing” or “feeding” the sheep. This is ruling or governing the sheep’s life.

B. Pastoral Goals given to him for his sheep

i. Sheep are to reproduce more sheep

The ultimate goal of any owner of cattle is that these cattle reproduce more cattle. The principle long term function of the people of God is the evangelizing of others. This is the highest priority.

Mr 4:8 *And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.*

Lu 8:14 *And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*

The parable of the Sower – those who are truly saved are the ones who reproduced themselves in some way. Christians witnessing to unsaved so that they become Christians. This is the character of a true Christian, he reproduces himself in others being saved.

ii. Sheep are to produce fruit: wool, and milk.

Besides the long term goal of reproduction, there are some benefits of working with sheep which are short term. Sheep produce fruit, that is wool and milk. These benefit the shepherd in his labors and work.

Joh 15:2 *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

God’s desire and plan is that sheep bear fruit. This can be seen as real faith that produces good works and the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

iii. Sheep are to be healthy.

1. Shepherds are to keep sheep in good pastures where they can graze, grow, and reproduce.

Sheep won't drive water from a stream. They only drink from still waters. Sheep won't always recognize what food is harmful to them and what is not. Sheep won't eat or rest if there are predators around.

This is the word of God. God's word is the only thing that can truly produce these things. The pastor has to believe this fully, and show this belief by exalting the word of God and dwelling in it.

2. Shepherds are to prevent the untimely death of the sheep through driving them or predators.

Gathering - Part of dealing with predators is first to keep the sheep in a flock. Sheep that wander away from the flock are the first ones to fall prey to a predator, therefore gathering the sheep together into the immediate presence of the shepherd is a key element of good sheep herding.

Bravery - Secondly, a shepherd must deal with a predator not by running from it, because in doing that the predator will follow and will kill some of the sheep anyway. The shepherd must interpose himself between the sheep and the predator, and personally fight the predator and defeat it. This means that the shepherd must be brave and valid, and strong enough and skillful enough with his weapons that he will overcome the predator.

Watchfulness - In order to deal with the threat in time, the shepherd must not fight the predator after it is already amongst the sheep because even if it does not touch a single sheep, the fight in their midst is something that will so scare and frighten the sheep that they will not feed correctly for some time.

PASTORS RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR CHURCH – Pastors must keep close tabs on the people under his care, so that they are in church where they are growing. Pastors must bravely face and defeat the false teachings and prophets of our day, and defeat them. Pastors must warn the sheep of these spiritual dangers so that the sheep don't fall prey.

3. Shepherds are to prevent and treat sickness and injuries of sheep.

Doctoring – Shepherds are people who have to deal with cuts, bruises, dehydration, fainting in the heat, broken bones, briars, stickers, and all kinds similar things that happen to the sheep. As such they are experts in knowing what remedy needs to be applied to what ailment.

PASTORAL VISITATION – Pastors must personally and individually examine the spiritual life of each member, and treat the spiritual maladies and weaknesses that the Christian may have. God holds the pastor personally responsible for every believer under his watch care. He must give account to God for the spiritual welfare of that person.

Heb 13:7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. 17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they*

that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

C. Sheep which have no shepherd

- i. Sheep scatter.
- ii. Sheep don't eat well, or not at all.
- iii. Sheep are victims to predators.
- iv. Sheep become terrorized by dangers.
- v. Sheep cease from producing fruit. (no milk, inferior wool).

See 1 Kings 22:17, Eze 34:5, Mat 9:36, Mark 6:34.

Mr 6:34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

1Ki 22:17 And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace. (no master – from rule, sovereign, i.e. controller, master, owner)

God is interested that his people are not directionless and without somebody to assure their path. In God's way and design of things, that means a man of God called to that task.

III. First Example of Spiritual Watch Care

Nu 27:15 And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, **16** Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, **17** Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd. **18** And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; **19** And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. **20** And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. **21** And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. **22** And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: **23** And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

A. God must install the man into the position of oversight.

“set a man over the congregation” – 06485 paqad – to visit, oversee, care for.

Lu 19:44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. “visitation” – from the word for bishop, “bishopruck”.

1984 επισκοπή episkope – (from 1980 episkeptomai to inspect); inspection (for relief); by implication, superintendence; specially, the Christian "episcopate":--the office of a "bishop", bishoprick, visitation.

Although today congregations ask a pastor to come pastor their church, they do not decide who comes. They must seek God's will, and set the God has chosen to be over them. It is not a matter of deciding but recognizing who God already has ready for the responsibility.

B. The pastor must direct their grazing (controls their food).

The shepherd's primary function is to select and control their food consumption. For the church, this means the spiritual food and activities related to their spiritual growth.

Num 27:17 Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

1Ch 11:2 And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed (verb form to "shepherd") my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler (commander, captain, chief, governor, chief ruler) over my people Israel. (parallel verse in 2Sa 5:2)

Jer 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

The truth of God's word is the "fodder" the man of God gives the flock of God.

Jer 17:16 As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee.

Pastors must preach right things, which they themselves learn from their own Bible studies, meditation, and spiritual walk with the Lord.

Jer 23:4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

Sheep become tranquil and docile when they are properly fed. They will be able to handle the affairs of this life without problems. They will continue even in problems to produce spiritual fruit in their life, and reproduce themselves in evangelism.

Ac 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

God charges the man of God to feed the church of God, and that is directly in relationship to his own personal life being an example to the flock.

C. God's hand must be on him, he must be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Nu 27:18 a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him

The pastor must be a man who has the Holy Spirit of God, and he must be full of the Holy Spirit. There are not educational requirements applied by the Lord on those in His service. The requirements are spiritual, **that the man of God must be spiritual**, a leader and example for the flock of God to pattern their lives after.

D. He must be publicly recognized, appointed, and honored by the people of God.

Num 27:19 *And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. 20 And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.*

1Ti 5:17 *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*

Part of the recognition that God has designed into the scheme of things, is that the pastor is to be honored economically for his labor. He is to receive what is worthy of his service.

CONCLUSION: When we see the charge that God gives in calling a man of God into the ministry of pastor, we must realize that he has responsibilities associated with his calling and ministry. Part of that is that the people of God follow his leadership. Part of that is that he is a leader worthy of following (he is an example of the standard of God he preaches and teaches). If he is not, he should step down or the congregation should remove him.

But the plan of God is that every Christian and church has a spiritual care taker. This man is called a pastor. This man is acting in response to commands from God, and according to the directions and guidance of God. He should be respected and honored. This includes even giving to him enough economic gifts so that he can live solely from the ministry he is called to and committed to doing.