

Thought of Week

Take Care of Your Flock...Yes You!

Volume 20180312 By Jim Fannin

The apostle Peter says,

*"... **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; not lording it over those **entrusted** to you, but being examples to the flock."* (1 Peter 5)

Who Is My Flock?

So, you might be tempted to say. "Isn't the Pastor the Shepherd of the flock?"

Well ... yes, he is. But so are we! Conceptually, the whole church is your flock. However in reality, your flock is a much smaller group.

Deacons, Sunday School teachers, and other group leaders who minister to and oversee small groups within the church are effectively "Shepherds" over those they minister to.

Likewise, you are a shepherd to the people with whom you have influence, whether it is simply as a caring friend, or a Worship Leader.

Those you lead, minister to directly, or have influence and relationships with are effectively your flock and you are their "Shepherd."

Taking Care of Your Flock

Consider the following scriptures.

Solomon wrote:

*"Be sure you **know** the condition of your flocks, give **careful attention** to your herds;"* (Proverbs 27:23)

And Paul wrote:

*"Timothy, **guard** what has been **entrusted to your care.**"* (1 Timothy 6:20)

Peter, Solomon and Paul speak of the flock as something “precious,” that has been entrusted to you. Something that requires a great deal of trust on the part of the giver, as if it is of great value, and requires your protection and “careful attention.”

The scripture seems clear that God expects much more from us regarding the care of our flock than just the routine duties of our job, or perfunctory assurance, occasionally hanging out with them, or generalized prayers for them. As Solomon suggested, we need to “Know,” our flock.

Yes, it takes time! Time is that precious commodity that we seldom seem to have enough of. But how important is it that we take time to learn about our flock? Its importance can be determined by what might be one of the most significant admonishments given regarding care of the flock.

In this passage, Jesus asks, and admonishes Peter with these words for a **third** time:

*“Simon, son of John, **do you love me?**” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the **third** time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “**Feed my sheep.**” (John 21:15-17)*

Although there are a lot of important details we could discuss for years in this passage, Jesus drives home the point of what had to be very painful for Peter.

Just as Peter was forced to look deep within himself, so we need to look deep within ourselves this week and determine if we really, “know” our flocks. If not, it is important enough that we pray and seek God’s will, and guidance in helping us find ways to connect with our flocks, and just as a Shepherd does, **care for and protect them.**

And by the way, if you look, ... even as just a lay Christian, you have a flock that looks to you for spiritual leadership. **Take Care of Your Flock!**