

BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

AND THE HEART OF THE SHEPHERD

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CHAPTER 1

The Heart Qualifications of a Godly Leader

1. When the Lord God calls a person into service and ministry, He also prepares their heart for the task.

In the natural body, the heart is perhaps the most important organ other than the brain.

It is for this reason the heart is called ***the seat of all emotions***. The heart is the fountain of our soul and mind. It is the inner life of a person.

2. The heart is mentioned **833 times in the Bible**; It is obviously an important issue to consider.

Paul, the Apostle, said:

1 Corinthians 15:46 - ***However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.***

So, it will help us if we can look at these two realms, the Natural and its Spiritual counterpart.

The Natural Heart	The Spiritual Heart
At the centre of a person's body.	To be the centre of a shepherd's motives.
The heart works properly only when it moves blood around for the body.	The heart of the shepherd will only be good when it works to bless the Body of Christ.
Disease in the physical heart threatens the entire body.	Dis-ease and sin in the shepherd's motives will damage the Body.
The heart beats without thinking; it is automatic in its operation.	A true shepherd's heart will automatically do the correct thing at the right time.
The natural heart needs right food and nutrients to function correctly.	The shepherd's heart needs the food of the Word, Prayer, Fasting and Love.
Blood from the heart cleanses the body.	A good shepherd knows the power of the Blood of Jesus for cleansing.

3. As shepherds, it is important to guard the heart and to make certain it is not exposed to things that will taint it.

Proverbs 4:23 - ***Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it***

spring the issues of life.

Philippians 4:7 - ***...and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***

Matthew 12:34-35 - ***Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.***

4. Our heart is like a storehouse; we must guard it so that only good things come out of it.

We must be sure that we only allow holy and righteous things to enter it. Otherwise, when we minister to others, what we have allowed to go into our hearts will automatically come out!

5. Not only do we need to keep a check on what goes into our heart, but God also keeps His eye on the condition of our heart. The Lord tests our heart and searches it for any hidden sin.

Deuteronomy 8:2 - ***And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.***

Jeremiah 17:10 - ***I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.***

6. The Great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, had a heart that was always submissive to the Heavenly Father's will.

John 10:30 - ***I and My Father are one.***

His heart was also compassionate:

Matthew 9:35-36 - ***Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.***

Because Jesus Christ and His Father were One, we can see what the heart of the Father is like, through His Son.

The Lord Jesus had all the characteristics of the Father:

Compassion for the sick and hurting

Love for the lost

Forgiveness toward the sinner

Willingness to give of Himself

7. A true Shepherd of God needs to have gentleness and tenderness, like a shepherd with his sheep. This is also a picture of our Heavenly Father.

Paul uses this theme of gentleness when he encourages the early Church to follow the example of Jesus Christ, because Paul himself did so.

1 Thessalonians 2:7 - ***But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.***

See also 2 Corinthians 10:1, James 3:17 and Galatians 5:22.

A true Shepherd, and spiritual father in God, needs to cultivate this fruit of the Spirit.

Many people will judge us by this characteristic.

8. Paul, the Apostle, was a great spiritual father to the early Church. We can learn, from him, how to behave as Shepherds to God's flock.

1 Corinthians 4:15-16 - ***For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.***

2 Corinthians 2:4 - ***For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.***

2 Corinthians 6:11 - ***O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open.***

2 Corinthians 6:13 - ***I speak to you as to children.***

See how much love Paul had, as a Shepherd, to the early saints. Even though there were times when he had to correct and discipline the Churches, he still had love and tenderness toward them.

He knew what price had been paid for their salvation!

9. Here, in Paul's life, we can see that a true leader is not just good at "leading" and encouraging, he must have the right heart.

Without a heart that has been tested and proven by God, a leader will fail.

He will abuse the people. Spiritual abuse is a very great sin!

One way to stop this happening is for the Shepherd to serve the sheep. The Lord Jesus was a servant to His Father first, and then to His disciples.

There is danger if the pastor wants to simply serve the people.

We are not called to serve the people, but to please God.

Only when this is done can we truly serve the needs of the sheep.

Be aware of this danger!

10. This is the reason Paul speaks of the "Love Slave."

Romans 1:1 - ***Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.***

The word "*bondservant*" is ***doulos*** in Greek. It means a Love Slave!

A true shepherd will love the Lord first, and out of love for Him, serve His flock with the same sort of self-sacrificial love.

In the New Testament, a man could not be a leader of the church unless he was first a deacon.

The word "*deacon*" simply means "***to serve.***"

This is how God works. Those who promote themselves, or want the best honour, will not be given a high calling by the Lord.

The Lord only promotes those who serve Him.

Matthew 23:11-12 - ***But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.***

11. In order to fulfil our calling, the Biblical condition requires us to first of all serve the Lord, and then serve the brethren.

If you know what your calling is, then begin to cultivate the character of a true shepherd by watching over the condition of your heart.

Jesus fulfilled His earthly calling by spending time with the Father, and by diligently working at being a Love Slave to Him.

All of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry was perfect because He knew what the heart of a true Shepherd should be like.

Look at these texts:

Luke 12:37 - ***Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.***

Luke 22:27 - ***For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.***

Mark 10:43 - ***Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.***

Philippians 2:8 - ***And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.***

CHAPTER 2

The Different Types of Shepherds

1. The Bible uses the image of a shepherd, most often, to explain the role of a Godly leader.

We see this in the following texts:

Numbers 27:15-17 - *Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying: "Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd."*

1 Kings 22:17 - *Then he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.'"*

Ezekiel 34:5-6 - *So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.*

Zechariah 10:2 - *For the idols speak delusion; The diviners envision lies, And tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people went their way like sheep; They are in trouble because there is no shepherd.*

2. God Himself is called a Shepherd. He is the one great shepherd of our souls. (See Psalm 23:1; Ezekiel 34:12; Isaiah 40:11; Psalm 77:20.)

3. The Lord Jesus is our most wonderful example, and, of course, He showed how this can be done as a man. (See John 10:11, 14; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4.)

4. Often in the Bible, this Shepherd-Sheep relationship has other pictures or images of caring.

Note these relationship pictures of leadership:

Shepherd	Sheep
Father	Child
Husband	Wife
Head	Body
Vine	Branches
Potter	Clay
Creator	Creature
Captain	Army
Husbandman	Vineyard

5. Types of Shepherd callings:

a) A shepherd is to be like a **Watchman**.

Hebrews 13:17 - ***Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.***

b) The shepherd is to be a **Protector**.

Psalm 59:16 - ***You have been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.***

c) He is to be like a **Guide**.

Psalm 23:1 - ***The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.***

d) The shepherd must be a **Physician** to the sheep.

Psalm 147:3 - ***He heals the broken-hearted And binds up their wounds.***

6. The different types of Sheep that the shepherd must deal with.

The parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15:3-7 shows us what some sheep (Christians) are like.

- Some sheep **wander** away from the flock.
- Other sheep stay in the flock but **do not contribute**

anything to the life of the flock.

- Some sheep **are foolish** in their attitude.
- Sheep become **scared and fearful**.
- Some sheep **do what the shepherd commands** them to do.
- Other sheep just follow the flock **without thinking** anything through for themselves.

These are all like Christians in the Church today. We need to be sheep that know the shepherd's voice and focus on nothing but Him!

CHAPTER 3

The Character of a Shepherd

1. The shepherd must have good character and be willing to develop this as he grows in the Lord.

In 2 Peter, chapter 1, we find some of this outlined for us.

2 Peter 1:1-11 - ***Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.***

2. This shows how our character must be always developing. Peter warns us not to be slack in this:

2 Peter 1:8 - ***For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*** (See also verses 9-10.)

3. Paul also gives us a very clear understanding of what is to be expected from a leader.

1 Timothy 3:2-7 - ***A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not***

greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Note that this passage has eight basic points to it, and these relate to the Godly character of a shepherd or leader.

1. A man's **spiritual life**.
2. His **personal life**.
3. How his **home environment** is.
4. His **social life**, especially with outsiders.
5. The **disciplines** of his life.
6. How he **ministers to others** and how he treats them.
7. His **married life** and how he treats his wife and children.
8. How he handles **his finances**.

4. A leader of God's people must also show these characteristics:

Titus 1:7-9 - **For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.**

If we practice these things, and are diligent in pursuing them, we can know that the Holy Spirit will work within us to mature us to be faithful and good stewards. A wise man of God will test himself to see if he is in the faith or not.

2 Corinthians 13:5 - **Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?; unless indeed you are disqualified.**

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