

#136 Christian Life no 17 The Role of a Shepherd no 2

- 1** Sunday we began examining the role of a Shepherd, and we found ourselves examining the things Jesus told Peter a Shepherd should do. Number 1 was to feed His Sheep, and number 2 to care for the sheep.
- 2** In Hebrews 5:12-14 6:1-3 we read, "In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so.
- 3** Or as brother Vayle said, Hebrews 6 means to stop fussing about who is right and who is wrong, and move on into maturity.
- 4** So if not milk, then what is the meat of Scripture? It is the training in righteousness so that the sheep can be fully equipped, able to stand in the day of testing.
- 5** 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- 6** Sunday school classes, story time, music programs, and focus on the family type social programs do not feed sheep. Sons of God, "the Sheep of His hand", must feed on the Word of God as it is rightly divided. And it must be the Word for the day in which they live.
- 7** Not only is a shepherd responsible for feeding God's flock they have been assigned by God, but the shepherd is also responsible for watering God's flock.
- 8** Genesis 29:3 When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone away from the well's mouth and water the sheep. Then they would return the stone to its place over the mouth of the well.
- 9** Water, in the Bible, represents the Holy Spirit. And water is also represented in Scripture for washing and cleaning.
- 10** Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,
- 11** A shepherd must make sure his flocks are watered regularly, for without it they will lose their strength.
- 12** Ever present water 61-0723M P:45 Now, we find out that, along this road, after they got like this, they come to a place of Horeb. And H-o-r-e-b, Horeb, then we find out... Let's break that name down. That's where the--the name "Horeb" means, a "dry place" or a "desert." And when we get out of fellowship with one another in the church, and out of fellowship with the Holy Spirit, it brings us to a dry place, a desert, nothing alive, everything got stickers on it. See, a desert, a little piece of cactus with that sticker on it. Did you know what that is? That's a precious little tender leaf that hasn't had no water; it's just wound itself up so tight till it's a sticker. And when you

see somebody like that, maybe it's a precious soul that could be watered right, would've been a tender little leaf or something. But instead of that, it's wound itself up till it's a sticker, just punching at everything, you know, finding fault. Only thing it needs is just water. That's all. It just needs a revival, or a breaking up, a refreshing from the Lord. It'll unfold its little self, if you'll just put it to the water.

13 But the problem is that you can take a horse to water but you can't make him drink. And when that horse gets stubborn you can try to lead it all you want, but it isn't going to go until you put a burr under its saddle or take a whip. And a horse that has been whipped will always remember, and will wait to get the chance to get even. So that has never been the answer. So whatever way you try, if you can get that horse to water and he won't drink, it is because he is a sick horse. And if you try to force him to drink for his own good, you'll get kicked if he doesn't want to drink.

14 So dryness represents a stony and hardened heart, as brother Branham said because you are out of fellowship with the saints and with God. Therefore in Scripture we see that the shepherd would bring the sheep to the well, and roll away that stone, or in the spiritual that stony heart, and offer the washing of water by the Word to the sheep, Because water heals, water cleanses and water refreshes.

15 Now, remember, Jesus also told Peter to care for my sheep. That means the Shepherd is to do everything he can think of to make sure the sheep are healthy and safe. Let's pick up again from 1 Thessalonians again where we left off Sunday, and we will read from chapter 2 this time. And we will see this life and this care that the apostle Paul spoke concerning His Love for Jesus and His Love for His brethren.

16 2 Brothers and sisters, you yourselves know that our coming to you was not a waste of time. Paul knew he wasn't wasting his time but more importantly, the people also knew that he was not there to waste his time, nor theirs. And you people here, just like that first church at Thessalonica, you know we have not wasted our time coming together each Sunday and Wednesday night. Other wise you wouldn't make the effort that you do to be here twice a week like as you have. You know the importance of gathering together and more so as you see the day approach. And so we see Paul acknowledge this attribute of those believers. Because it is so easy to get caught up into the cares of this life, and find yourself missing out on the blessings of God's blessings that come through our gathering together unto Him.

17 Brother Branham made this clear in Christ is the Mystery of God, 45 And now, you've got tapes on that. You've got tapes on what we believe. You got tapes on discipline in the church: how we behave ourselves in the church of God, how we got to come here together and set together in heavenly places. Don't stay home. If God is in your heart, you can't hardly wait for them doors to open out yonder to get in here to fellowship with your brothers. If you don't feel that way, then I tell you, it's time you got to praying, 'cause we're in the last days where the Bible exalted us--exhorted us to much more as we see that day approaching, to love one another with Christian love and Divine love, to assemble ourselves together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and love one another. "This will all men know you're My disciples when you have love one for the other."

18 46 That's right. Stay right together. If the brother, you think he's a little wrong, or the sister, say, "Lord, don't let me ever have the root of bitterness spring up, 'cause it'll affect him, and it'll take the Christ right out of my life." That poison acids of malice, and jealousy, and hatred, that'll just take the Holy Spirit right away from you. It'll run Him from the Tabernacle here. It'll kill the Spirit of God or drive it away from here, hurt your pastor; it'll do everything. See? Don't you do that. You just wax that much closer together. Draw up the... Take the buckle, as the brother testified (a minister here the other night) about having a buckle (seeing it in a vision). Just, that buckles on the whole armor of God; just put it on, tighten up, move right up close to one another. Love one another anyhow. Talk nice about one another. Say nice things about one another, and then God will bless you.

19 So you want to get blessed? Then say nice things about others. That spirit of gossip is nothing but the acid of malice as brother Branham said, and it will take what anointing you have in your life away from you.

20 Look, it is easy to blame our spiritual condition on the pastor, and say I am not getting fed, but you are responsible for your own spiritual condition, not the pastor. All he can do is lay in that Word and feed you what he is feeding on. But if you get together and start the gossip, you have a promise that the Spirit of God will leave you. That is Thus saith the Lord from the lips of a vindicated prophet. Then when you do come to church living in that atmosphere of Gossip, I will guarantee that you will not get fed, and you will find things to be critical about. Why? Because he said when the Holy Ghost leaves you become like a sticker always pricking at this and that.

21 And did not the prophet teach us that you get what you are looking for. Did not he say if you come here to find fault I can guarantee you will find it. and if he said that about himself then what about a lowly five fold minister who does not come with Thus saith the Lord.

22 Is your life worthy 63-0630E P:74 Don't fuss. When the family gets in a fuss, don't fuss with them. Your mother said, "I ain't having you go up there to that old church anymore. What are you... All you're thinking about now, you're letting your hair grow out; you look like some old grandma." Don't fuss with her. Say, "Okay, mother. That's all right, I love you just the same, and I'll be praying for you as long as I live." See? Now, don't fuss. See? Temper breeds temper. First thing you know you grieve the Holy Spirit away from you and you'll be fussing back. Then the Holy Spirit takes Its flight. That's right. Temper breeds temper, and love breeds love. Be full of love. Jesus said, "This will all men know you're My disciples when you have love one for another." That's the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love.

23 Lamb and dove 60-0805 P:47 "I'll dress the way I want to, that's my business." No, it isn't. It's God's business." I'll take care of my family the way I want to. Preacher ain't got no business telling me that." Yes, I have too. You ought to take care of it the way God told you to take care of it. That's right. Stop all this nonsense. But we don't do it. You see what it is? We let down the bars. What happened? The Holy Spirit took Its flight. When you started to acting like that, the Holy Spirit left.

24 Lamb and the dove 56-0917 P:11 The Lamb wasn't a grumbler. The Bible said, "He opened not His mouth. When he was reviled, reviled not again." But oh, that's the reason that the Dove could stay on the Lamb. But us, just let someone do something against us, and we get hot in the collar. What happens? The Lamb... The Dove takes its flight. The Holy Spirit leaves. Many times you wonder why can't we have that peace that we used to have. There's something took the Dove away. That's right.

25 Now, I admit, that has been my weakness, and I ask your prayers for me to overcome. Our normal human reaction to our being attacked is to fight back, and yet Jesus when asked by His Father to die on the cross he surrendered his will to the Fathers will.

26 He didn't want to get crucified, yet he had to died to self first, before he could do what the Father asked him to do. "Not my will but thy will be done". Then when He surrendered His will to the will of His father, he walked willingly to his death. That was God in Him working to Will first and then to do.

27 Can we willingly walk to our death to self. When others attack you, can we say, Father into Thy hands I commit this fuss? And then not fuss back? I know I have defended myself when I should not have done so. I should have died to Brian so that Christ might have lived himself out in me when under attack. Because after all, it's not me being attacked, it's the Words of a vindicated prophet concerning John 14:12 that is under attack.

28 And John 14:12 is not about miracles and supernatural power. Those things are Sovereignly given. Even the Son of God said, "The son can of Himself do nothing." And if he could do nothing then what about you and me. But he said, "Whatsoever the Father shows me to do, Whatsoever the Father does in the vision, that doeth the son likewise". So it all boils down to our motive and objective. Are we dead and our lives are hid in Christ through God? Or is our faith just a mental conception? Is John 14:12 the very nature of Christ living in us a reality? Or is that just a pipe dream.

29 So we need to learn to be more like the lamb of God. When men revile us, we bless them and curse them not.

30 Jesus said, Matthew 5:11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (and Who is He? He is the Word) 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

31 The Apostle Paul also aid in 1 Corinthians 4:12 being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it. In Modern English that means The Message: When they call us names, we say, "God bless you." When they spread rumors about us, we put in a good word for them.

32 Then Paul says in verse 2 You remember how we had just suffered through brutal and insulting attacks in Philippi; but because of God, we boldly stepped into the open to tell you His good news, even though it would likely mean more conflict for us.

33 He said, we were not thinking of ourselves when we made the efforts to come unto you, and neither do you think of only yourselves when you put out so much effort to gather together to hear the Gospel. Because your gathering encourages one another, and it builds up the faith of the others, so you see, each one of you making sacrifice's on your part makes it better for body.

3 For we haven't approached you--or anyone else for that matter--with some error or impure motives or deceitful agenda; 4 but as we have been approved by God and entrusted with the good news, that's how we are telling the world.

34 Paul is expressing here that it is such a good thing when you have a ministry like his or any faithful shepherd who makes the sacrifice to bring the true Word without false motives, error, or deceitful agenda.

35 But to see a real shepherd has but one motive for tending his flock, and that is to care for them as he would care for his own children. He comes with no motive in his heart but to see God's lambs grow in mercy and grace, except that he might see his flock grow in the unity of the Faith and in the knowledge of the son of God. That they might grow up into Him in all things.

36 Paul continues in verse 4, We aren't trying to please everybody, but God, the only One who can truly examine our motives. 5 As you know, we didn't sandwich the truth between cunning compliments--we told it straight--and before the eyes of God, we never conspired to make a single cent off of you. 6 We didn't come seeking respect from people--not from you or anyone else--although we could have leveraged our position as emissaries[a] of the Anointed One, the Liberating King. 7 Instead, we proved to be gentle among you, like a nursing mother caring for her own children. 8 We were so taken by you that we not only eagerly shared with you God's good news, but we also shared with you our own lives. That's how much you've come to mean to us. 9 Don't you remember, my brothers and sisters, how hard we worked and struggled? We worked day and night so that we wouldn't be a burden to any of you and so that we could continue to proclaim to you the good news of God. 10 Both you and God can confirm how well we treated the believers: we were always holy, just, and

blameless. 11-12 As you know, we comforted and consoled each of you as a father soothes his own children, encouraging you to live lives worthy of God--of the One calling you into His own kingdom and into His glory.

37 3 But after all our attempts to come to you were frustrated, we decided it was best for Silvanus[a] and me to stay behind in Athens by ourselves 2 and to send Timothy (our dear brother and servant of God, our partner in the good news of the Anointed One) to strengthen, comfort, and encourage you in your faith 3 so that you won't be shaken by the sufferings and wither under this stress that we know lies ahead. 4 Certainly you remember that when we were with you, we warned you of the suffering we would have to endure; now, as you well know, it has happened. 5 This is why I couldn't stand it anymore and sent Timothy to report on the state of your faith: because I was worried the tempter had tested you and, if so, all of our hard work would have come to nothing.

38 6 You can imagine my relief and joy when Timothy returned to us with such good news about you, about your faith and love for us, about how you have such good memories of us and long to see us as much as we long to see you. 7 Hearing this about your faith, brothers and sisters, brought comfort to us in our stress-filled days of trouble and suffering. 8 For if you are set firmly in the Lord, then we can truly live. 9 What thanks would ever be enough to offer God about you for all the jubilant celebration we'll feel before our God because of you? 10 We remain vigilant in our prayers, night and day praying to once again see your faces and to help complete whatever may be lacking in your faith.

39 You can see Paul's love for Jesus is very obvious here, but it is also very obvious that his love for the brethren is as great. And Chris's Spirit reinforces Paul love in every way. How else is he able to walk away from beating after beating and endure those trials and hardships of the heart and mind? He must constantly been praying for those he could and could not reach. For those he was with and for those he has to leave behind. Paul loves Jesus, and so he cannot help but embrace the brethren as passionately as he did.

40 11 May God Himself, our Father, along with our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One, navigate our way to you. 12 May the Lord flood you with an unending, undying love for one another and for all humanity, like our love for you, 13 so that your hearts will be reinforced with His strength, held blameless and holy before God, our Father, when our Lord Jesus, the Anointed, the Liberating King,] appears along with all His holy ones. Amen.

41 The Good Shepherd, sets such an example with the flock of love and selfless service so in return others will go out and do the same and selflessly minister to others as they have seen the example before them.

42 Now, another thing the Shepherd must do is to at times he must shear the sheep. This is a useful for the sheep, because that long wool in the summer can cause over heating in the sheep, and cause him to loose his good health. For the benefit of all, the sheep must be sheared ... That means they must be disciplined, encouraged and rebuked ... to keep them fit for service to the Lord.

43 2 Timothy 4:2-5 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

44 Hebrews 12:7-11 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems

pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

45 1 Thessalonians 5:14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

46 Titus 2:15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

47 Now, this word despise is not what you think. In the Greek it comes from two words which means to think of you in an excessive way either for or against. So when brother Vayle rebuked those who made too much of his ministry, he was telling them if you do, you are despising me. You are making me anti Christ. Because if you make any ministry above God's chosen way which is through His direct Mouth to Mouth prophets, then you have rejected the voice of God to this generation.

48 When people say, you can take what brother Branham says and make it say two completely opposite things, you are making mockery of God's Voice. God is not the author of confusion, and to say God's voice is confusing and you need the filter of another man who is not vindicated to understand what a vindicated prophet of God is saying, you are calling that prophet, God's own Voice when God has spoken mouth to mouth. You are calling God the author of confusion. And to say you must have a filter over that voice, tells me you think that voice must be muzzled. That attitude is about as close to blaspheming the Holy Ghost as you can get. and with that attitude no wonder they become confused.

49 Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

50 The shepherd at times, if he sees the lambs wandering away, ie: if they have a wandering spirit, running here and running there and running away from the flock, the shepherd would take that lamb and break it's leg and then he would have to carry that lamb wherever he went. And he does that because he loves that lamb, not because he wishes to harm that lamb. The shepherd who broke the leg of the lamb has to carry it everywhere.

51 And no man would do that if he didn't love that sheep?

52 Now, we know that no man can know the things of God unless the Spirit of God is in him. And when the lambs are wandering, that is the same spirit as wondering. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can save and cause a person to be born again. But when a lamb is newly born, the shepherd still has responsibilities.

53 Fellowship through reconciliation 55-0605 P:20 Now, when God had them in His perfect control, they walked with Him and talked with Him in the garden. But as soon as he lost his fellowship with God, he become a wanderer, wondering around, no place to go, tossed about. That's the way a man becomes today. Here it is, now listen. When a man comes out of fellowship with God, he becomes a wanderer, going about joining one church and leaving that one and joining another. They don't satisfy him here; he goes over to the Methodist; from Methodist he goes to Baptist, and to the Pentecostal, to the Pilgrim Holiness, from place to place, wondering about, because he's lost fellowship, fellowship with God. You refuse a church of this and a church of that, maybe it's you. Just find fellowship and anywhere is home sweet home, as long as you have fellowship with the Lord. Amen. That's kind a hard, but that's good. That kinda straighten you up, get...?... There's more vitamins in that, than all the drugs stores there is in the city's got. Amen. Give you joy, peace, understanding, confidence when you have fellowship with the Lord.

54 Greatest battle ever fought 62-0311 P:40 As the Bible speaks, "Wandering stars (over in the book of Jude), foaming out their own shame..." And we don't want to be wandering stars: wonder if this is right, wonder if that's right, wonder if it will happen, wonder if--how it could be. Don't wonder, stay like those stars of the heaven as a real soldier at his post of duty. Stand there believing. Life and death...

55 So you can see when people begin to wonder if this is right and that is right they are out of fellowship with God. And those who listen to tapes of God's Voice every day, are moving on with God and have a love and a peace and with it a rest because they know that what they hear that prophet say, they are hearing from this pulpit each week. By their fruits you shall know them. So if brother Branham said that wandering spirit is a wondering spirit, then watch what they do and you will know what is guiding them.

56 And please do not tell me you have peace with God but you are running here and there to try to prove anything, because Peace brings rest, and rest is based on perfect trust. But if you are wondering you do not have perfect trust or you wouldn't wonder, and thus wander.

57 John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;

58 Now, when the shepherd rolls away the stone for the sheep to drink, he is doing so that they might have refreshing from the presence of the Lord, because water represents the Holy Spirit, and the refreshing that comes from the presence of the Lord.

59 Psalms 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

60 Notice it is the ungodly that are drive away by every wind of doctrine. And ungodly means un-God-Like. They wander here and they wander there. But those Righteous seed, or rightly wise seed, and planted by the water, by the Spirit and by the washing of water by the Word. They are planted. They know where the water is. As Jesus said to Peter, will you go also, and he said, "Lord, where can we go, for thou hast the words of eternal Life." And you know when Jesus asked that question? Right after he hammered them all because of their unbelief and the seventy turned their backs, and said that is a hard saying who can hear it, and they deserted him.

61 Psalms 23:1-6 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

62 Following the lead of the Good Shepherd the five fold shepherds are to lead the sheep to pasture and to pure water. Their duty is to teach them and restore them. To guide them in paths of righteousness. To protect them from wolves and beasts in the world with the rod and staff. The rod and staff are for discipline of the flock and for protection for the flock.

63 Proverbs 23:14 Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

64 1 Samuel 17:40 Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

65 We are to discipline the sheep to be aware of the pitfalls of the world. We are to lead the flock out and teach them to stay together in unity. Sheep automatically have one type of unity, which they are to "keep".

66 Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

67 In closing let me say this. The only way to be a sheep is to be born again. Otherwise if you are in the flock you are either a goat or a wolf who has crept in unawares.

68 Those who are born again have a bond of peace, a unity of the Spirit. But there is another unity that we must build the sheep up into ... the unity of the Faith. And I think most people who believe the Message believe that all the doctrine of the message is taught in that book, right? Then can we say what that book says? In closing let me read a couple paragraphs from the Seven Church Ages Book.

69 Introduction 16. Now remember this. Christ in the True Church is a continuation of the Book of Acts. But the Book of Revelation shows how that the antichrist spirit would come into the church and defile it, making it lukewarm, formal and powerless. It exposes Satan, revealing his works (attempted destruction of God's people and the discrediting of God's word) right down to the time he is cast into the lake of fire. He fights that. He cannot stand it. He knows that if the people get the TRUE REVELATION of the TRUE CHURCH and what she is, what she stands for and that SHE CAN DO THE GREATER WORKS, she will be an invincible army. If they get a true revelation of the two spirits within the framework of the Christian church, and by God's Spirit discern and withstand the antichrist spirit, Satan will be powerless before her. He will be as definitely thwarted today as when Christ withstood his every effort to gain power over Him in the desert. Yes, Satan hates revelation. But we love it. With true revelation in our lives, the gates of hell cannot prevail against us, but we will prevail over them.

70 Church Age Book Chapter 2 - The Patmos Vision P:32 That's the way the church is. The vine has been split and limbs have been grafted in. They have grafted in Baptist limbs, Methodist limbs, Presbyterian limbs, and Pentecostal limbs. And those limbs are bearing Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian fruit. (Denominational seeds from which they produce their fruit.) But if the vine ever brings forth another branch of itself, that branch will be exactly like the vine itself. It will be the same kind of a branch that was brought forth at Pentecost. It will speak in tongues, prophesy, and have the power and signs of the resurrected Jesus Christ in it. Why? Because it's thriving on the natural resources of the vine itself. You see, it wasn't grafted into the vine; it was BORN in the vine. When those other branches were grafted in, all they could do was bear their own fruit for they were not born of that vine. They don't know about that original life and original fruit. They cannot know for they were not born of it. But if they had been born of it, that same life that was in the original stem (Jesus) would have come through them and manifested through them. John 14:12, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father."

71 Let us pray