

A Pastor's Intentional Resolve

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As a man called by God to serve His people as a shepherd, I commit myself to these intentional and essential duties of pastoral ministry. By God's grace and with His help, I will faithfully live out and seek with all my might to obey Scripture in the shepherding of Christ's flock which He purchased with His own blood so that Christ's image may be formed in His people.

1. I WILL faithfully PRAY FOR CHRIST'S CHURCH.

The preeminent duty that Christ has given to me is to serve His people by interceding for them in prayer. Just like the priests in the Old Testament, they offered incense before the Lord which symbolized the prayers of the saints ascending to the Lord. So I must faithfully devote myself to prayer and to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6.4). I commit myself to praying for the growth of God's people, the maturation of His body, the Church. I will also pray for families by name, for the marriages, for the children, and for God to save the lost and for God to grow His people. I will pray for the purity and power of the church, and for the advancement of the gospel. I'll labor in prayer.

2. I WILL faithfully PREACH THE INSPIRED & SUFFICIENT WORD.

No sheep can survive without regular feedings. I commit myself to faithfully studying God's Word so that I can faithfully preach God's Word in humble dependence upon God's Spirit and with clarity as I make the meaning of the text known and the applications and implications of the text understandable. I will not shrink back from declaring anything that will be profitable to the saints. My goal is to feed the sheep, not entertain the goats. I will preach ultimately for the glory of God and for the edification of the saints. I do believe that the primary way that God both saves the lost and sanctifies the saved is through the bold, unadulterated, regular preaching of the Word of God.

3. I WILL faithfully SHEPHERD BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY.

The Apostle Paul cared for God's people both publicly and privately. He taught God's Word in the open squares, in the church assemblies, and privately from house to house. Paul also charged the elders of the Ephesian church to faithfully watch over and guard the flock from error and from false teachers. Perhaps the foremost metaphor that the Scripture employs when referring to the minister of God's Word is that of a shepherd. I must care for God's people by knowing them, by guarding them, by feeding them, by leading them, and by pointing them to the Chief Shepherd -- the Lord Jesus Christ. I resolve to faithfully shepherd publicly from the pulpit and privately as opportunities come up to counsel and admonish one another with God's sufficient and inerrant Word.

4. I WILL faithfully MODEL IN PERSONAL EVANGELISM & URGENT SOUL-WINNING.

Why has God left me on this earth? Why didn't God save me and then take me to glory? As I ponder this biblically, I understand that my duty is to proclaim the excellencies of Christ Jesus. I must follow Christ and speak forth His glory. I must proclaim the unfathomable riches of Christ. Proverbs provides the wisdom that he who wins souls is wise (Prov 11.30). Jesus said that the fields are white for harvest (John 4.35). He has made me to become a fisher of men (Mark 1.17). I will model personal evangelism by urgently, lovingly, boldly, clearly, and faithfully speak forth the gospel and call sinners to repent from sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation (Mark 1.15). All this can be done by God's grace and with His help. Time is short! We must number our days! Compel sinners to come in!

5. I WILL faithfully SERVE THE PEOPLE IN SACRIFICIAL LOVE, WITH CHRIST-CAPTIVATING JOY.

The Lord states that Shepherd-elders lead; and they must lead well. Jesus models true leadership as being that of servant-leadership, self-sacrificing leadership. So I want to faithfully lead in serving Christ's people with sacrificial love and with Christ-captivating glory. Perhaps it may take the form of hospitality, praying for and with the saints, loving those intentionally and sacrificially when a need arises, greeting all the saints, protecting them from harm, and reaching out to those on the fringe and encouraging them to offer themselves as living sacrifices to the Lord!