

The Ministry of the Pastor-Shepherd

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The Bible clearly defines what kind of man should be a pastor, who the man should be in his character, and what he should do. This brief writeup will provide four of the ministry descriptions that the Bible paints of the ministry shepherd.

1. He is a Praying Man.

God calls men into ministry who devote themselves to prayer. God uses men who pray mightily. God does His will through men who wrestle with Him in prayer and who labor incessantly in prayer for himself and others. The man who prays the most is the man trusting in God the most. A godly man is a surrendered man and his surrendering to God finds expression in his constant coming to the throne of God in prayer. He seeks the face of God relentlessly. He takes hold of God in prayer. He seeks God, meets with God, desires God, and pursues God in diligent prayer.

2. He is a Preaching Man.

God uses men who will open their mouths to speak not their own words but His words. God uses men who can say: "Thus says the LORD" and they have not changed, altered, added to, taken away, or manipulated God's message to God's people. The man of God must take the Word of God and stand with the authority of God and preach with a zeal for God the message of God so that God can use His Word in the saving, sanctifying, and hardening of people. This is the man who trusts entirely in God's sovereignty in and through the verbal proclamation of divine truth. This preaching man of God fears no man on earth. His fear is of God and Him alone. He can receive persecution, mocking, rejection, imprisonment, or discouragement for the sake of Christ but he can never shut his mouth and cease from declaring the precious gospel of Christ.

3. He is a Pastoring Man.

God is a shepherd. Jesus Christ proclaimed that he was the good shepherd. A shepherd cares for the sheep in his own flock. A shepherd feeds his sheep. A shepherd nurtures his sheep. A shepherd warns and directs his sheep in the right path. A shepherd protects his sheep from wolves and other dangerous predators. A shepherd helps and bandages those who are wounded and broken. A shepherd carries his sheep when they can't carry themselves. So it is with God's man. He must care for God's flock with the utmost care, diligence, vigilance, strength, watchcare, zeal, and Christlikeness because it is, after all, the sheep that God purchased with His own blood that the earthly pastor-shepherd is called to lead.

4. He is a Preparing Man.

God uses men who desire to prepare others for ministry. God never intended for His work to be done only by one person and him alone. God intends for His church to be guided, governed, and cared for by a plurality of Godly men. This man of God is one who has his heart ambition fixed on the raising up of other men. He wants to prepare them. He hopes that God can use him as an instrument to prepare, fashion, mature, and train other godly men for the greater service of God in their own homes to their own wives and children as well as in the church to the flock of God. The pastor-shepherd commits himself to investing in Godly men who express desires and sacrificially commit to discipleship, preparation, leading, and training. A godly pastor seizes this opportunity to work with other men to mentor them so they can then, in due time, mentor others.

None of these biblical marks of a pastor-shepherd include preferential elements but they are biblical mandates given by the great Shepherd to all of His undershepherds who commit themselves to leading and feeding God's sheep in God's way with God's Word to God's gospel through God's strength.