

WHERE ARE THE SHEEP?

1. Text: Acts 20:27-31
2. This is our second lesson on the new emphasis we will have in the days ahead on assembling together.
3. This study will stress our assembling as it relates to our leaders' responsibility.

I. **The Shepherd And His Position**

1. Church leadership is important.
2. Trouble in understanding terms for leaders in New Testament: First, English translations use different words for same Greek word; secondly, New Testament use is not common use today (see pastor and elder)
3. Three terms refer to same position: Elder equals overseer (Titus 1:5,7); I Peter 5:1-2 Elder equals pastor equals overseer; Acts 20:17, 28 Elder equals overseer equals pastor.
4. Word meanings: Elder (Greek presbyteros, presbyter, older person); Bishop (Greek episkopos, overseer); Pastor (Greek poimen, shepherd)
5. Key one for this lesson: shepherd or one who cares for a flock of sheep.

II. **The Shepherd And His Function**

1. The spiritual leaders of a congregation are compared to shepherds.
2. This has a rich heritage: the firstborn son, Abel, was one (Genesis 4:2); Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his sons were all shepherds; David was one; Our Lord called Himself one (John 10:11); shepherds first heard of the Savior's birth.
3. God Himself used the shepherd to describe Himself: Psalm 23 and Isaiah 40:11.
4. Essentially shepherds had four functions: the first is to lead. Psalm 23:2 He leads me. John 10:3 He leads them out. John 10:27 They follow me. Led, not driven.
5. To protect. Psalm 23 Your rod comforts me. John 10:11 Gives His life for the sheep. The text and savage wolves; keep watch.
6. To feed the flock. Acts 20:28 Shepherd or feed the flock. Ephesians 4:11 pastor teaches. "Apt to teach" Can be delegated.
7. To care for the flock. Concern, interest in, "watchful oversight," attentive assistance. Hebrews 13:17 They watch for your souls. Matthew 18:12-14 Leaves 99 for the one. "Sheep without a shepherd."
8. Ezekiel 34:1-10 Warning to leaders as shepherds
9. Smith's description:

III. **The Shepherd And The Flock**

1. Our times: Individualism, independence, rebellion, yet blame anyone else.
2. Serious spirituality means submission. Ephesians 5:21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.
3. Hebrews 13:17 Obey them who have the rule over you and be submissive (literally, "to yield under") for they watch for your souls.
4. Aim of this lesson: the flock of sheep (congregation) follows its shepherds. But where are the sheep? Our responsibility.
5. Our assembling is the key to the shepherding. Do we scatter, refuse the fold, wander off, reject the feeding process, settle among the wolves.
6. Our cooperation and commitment. Leading means following
7. Assembling together or out of the flock and fold?
8. The path ahead for us:

Conclusion:

**A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings
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