

The Work of Shepherding

As someone who took part in establishing many local churches, the Apostle Paul understood the value of scripturally qualified leadership (Acts 20:28). One of the keys to having a spiritually healthy church is having good shepherds (Titus 1:5)!

We are blessed to have five wonderful shepherds serving the Monte Vista church. These men do more than make decisions. Their primary work is shepherding our souls (1 Peter 5:1-4).

Shepherding involves following in the footsteps of the Chief Shepherd (John 10:1-8).

- Shepherds must know the sheep (John 10:3). They must know them personally and intimately. The sheep must also know them. Shepherds must love, sympathize, and truly care about the spiritual welfare of the flock.
- Shepherds must lead the sheep (John 10:3, 27). This is why God's leaders are also referred to as "pastors" (Ephesians 4:11-12). Pastors tend, feed, and are an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3).
- Shepherds guard the sheep. They defend the flock against those who seek to harm them (John 10:9-13). They know the word of God, trust it, and use it to courageously shut the mouths of false teachers (Acts 20:28-30; Titus 1:9).
- Shepherds search for missing members of the flock (Luke 15:4-5). They want to do their best to ensure every sheep is accounted for and on the right track.
- Shepherds are accountable for the flock. They are stewards over God's sheep and will have to give account for their work on Judgment Day (Hebrews 13:17).

What is the responsibility of the flock?

- We must follow the shepherds. God demands that we obey and submit to their judgment (Hebrews 13:17). We must recognize their authority and avoid rebelling.
- We must highly esteem the shepherds (1 Thessalonians 5:13). This requires having a high regard for their kingdom work. We have to encourage and constantly pray for them.
- We must imitate the shepherds (1 Peter 5:3; Hebrews 13:7). Their faith and conduct are worthy of imitating. The ultimate "result" of this will be eternal life in heaven with the Chief Shepherd!
- We must be cautious with accusations against the shepherds (1 Timothy 5:19-21). God knows that some Christians will bring unfair charges against His leaders. While no shepherd is above God's Law, we must always be careful. We should never want to destroy God's work with unfounded accusations against shepherds.
- We must be patient with shepherds (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Shepherds are men who will sometimes make mistakes. We must never forget they love us and are trying their best to perform a challenging work for God.

Conclusion:

Have you submitted to the Chief Shepherd?

- Shawn Jeffries