

Chapter 1. Shepherds on the Hills of Bible History

1. Since “shepherd” is such an outdated model, why is it important that we spend time on it?

In the modern, fast-paced world there does not seem to be an appropriate parallel metaphor from which to draw that captures the relationality of the shepherd-sheep dynamic. Continuing to foster this model in the mind of the church and to teach its merits helps to maintain an important connection between Jesus' world and ours. Anderson expresses this sentiment when he says “I can't find any figure equivalent to the shepherd idea in our modern, urban world. Besides, if I drop the shepherd and flock idea, I would have to tear about five hundred pages out of my Bible.” (Anderson, 12)

2. Why is relationship so important in the shepherding process? What happens when shepherds try to lead sheep they have no relationship with?

Relationship is a key part of the shepherding model due to the fact that trust is required needs to be given and not demanded. If trust is not present then the relationship degrades to merely rulership (as the gentiles) and ceases to be a true shepherd model. This is especially needful in the modern context where people can easily step out of relationship with little to no social backlash and any authority in the church is given by willing submission and cannot be demanded due to the fact that the church has no real social authority in society.

3. What does the author mean by “A shepherd is someone who has a flock”? What happens when a “leader,” who has no flock, tries to lead?

When a leader has no flock and tries to lead, he or she is missing a key component in the shepherding model, relationship. Without this being built first the leader's authority will solely derive from his or her position and not from the trust and interdependence of relationship.

4. Share an example of a shepherd you know who leads by relationship. Tell of a specific incident.

My pastor from back home in Granite Falls WA leads by relationship and continually will meet with members of his flock over meals. Even after his official pastorship position ended (positively after 25+ years) he continued to be a shepherd to those that he had built relationships with. This relationship has included me as well and even though we are separated by an entire country he continues to shepherd me however he can through encouraging phone calls and meetings when I travel back to WA.

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Anderson Reading Questions
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