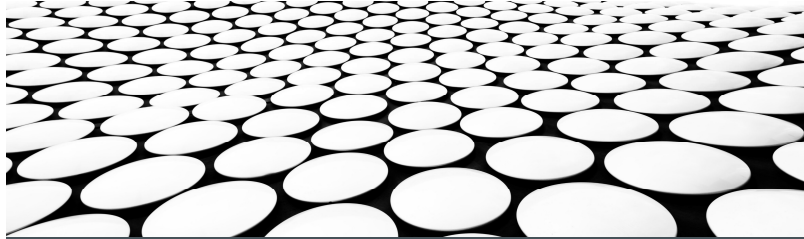


SHEPHERDOLOGY 101

FROM SHEPHERDLESS SHEEP TO FLOURISHING FLOCKS - CORE FUNCTION



We have affirmed that understanding what Jesus says about shepherding is essential.

- I. Fundamental 1: Jesus, Our Lord
- II. Fundamental 2: Jesus' Word, Our Effective Guide
- III. Fundamental 3: Jesus, Our Model Shepherd
- IV. The Need for Shepherds – **The Perfect Gift!**
- V. The Development of Elders – **Who Shepherds?**

REVIEW – WHY STUDY SHEPHERDOLOGY?

- Jesus longs for shepherds who can minister to distressed and dispirited sheep.
 - In all things, including what shepherds do, Jesus knows and decides what must be done.
1. Give a gift to Jesus that is just what He yearns for.
 2. Do what is wise in the present.
 3. Do what Jesus will commend when He returns.

REVIEW – WHY STUDY SHEPHERDOLOGY?

- God's word clearly teaches us what we need to know about shepherds and how God will work accordingly.
 - Jesus is the perfect example of a good shepherd.
4. Access divine power that produces remarkable and enduring results.
 5. Benefit from the greatest shepherding mentor of all time.

REVIEW - WHY STUDY SHEPHERDOLOGY?

- The Father, Son, and Spirit have given the gift of good shepherds to Jesus' church.
 - Shepherds are an essential asset to Jesus' church, when they are good shepherds.
6. Understand how to make the most of this good gift to His church.
 7. Ensure that all the positive benefits of good shepherds are realized by the flock.

VI. THE SHEPHERDS RESOURCE LIBRARY

- The Ten Key Passages that speak at length to NT Shepherds are: Acts 20:17-35; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-16; Hebrews 13:7, 17; James 5:14-15; 1 Peter 5:1-4.
- From these passages we can learn about 6 key topics: Essential Function, Specific Responsibilities, Qualifications, Manner, Response, and Reward

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- From these passages we can learn about 6 key topics: **Essential Function**, Specific Responsibilities, Qualifications, Manner, Response, and Reward

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- The Essential Function of Shepherds/Overseers/Leaders/Elders.
 1. Elder
 2. Oversee/Overseer
 3. Shepherd
 4. Leader
 5. Equip
 6. Manage
 - The first four terms are titles.
 - These are not four distinct individuals but four terms that describe one person.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- The Essential Function of Shepherds/Overseers/Leaders/Elders.
 1. Elder
 2. Oversee/Overseer
 3. Shepherd
 4. Leader
 5. Equip
 6. Manage
 - The last two terms are verbs that describe an activity.
 - These activities are associated with terms 1-3.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- The Essential Function of Shepherds/Overseers/Leaders/Elders (SOLE)
 1. Elder
 2. Oversee/Overseer
 3. Shepherd
 4. Leader
 5. Equip
 6. Manage
 - All six terms are used as summary descriptors.
 - They provide six lenses through which to discern the core function of SOLE.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- In our ten key passages, we encounter four distinct terms that are used as titles for local church leaders: “elder,” “overseer,” “shepherd” and “leader.”
- These are four different terms that all describe a single person or office in the local church.
- These words are used interchangeably.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- In Acts 20:17, Paul calls for the *elders* of the Ephesian church to meet him in Miletus.
- When they come, he reminds them that the Holy Spirit made them *overseers* (Acts 20:28).
- He then charges them to *shepherd* the church of God (Acts 20:28).
- He is using the nouns “elder” and “overseer” and the verb “shepherd” in reference to the same person.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- In 1 Peter 5:1-4, Peter addresses the leaders of numerous churches as *elders* and names himself as a *fellow-elder* (1 Peter 5:1).
- Then, he charges them to *shepherd* the flock and exhorts them to *oversee* the flock in a healthy manner (1 Peter 5:2-3).
- Peter uses the noun “elder” and the verbs “shepherd” and “oversee” in reference to the same individual.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- The verb translated “leader” or “those who led you” serves as a title for local church leaders and is used this way three times in the book of Hebrews.
- In none of these three passages do the words “elder,” “overseer,” or “shepherd” (or cognates) also appear.
- But in Matthew 2:5-6 – “FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A **RULER** / WHO WILL **SHEPHERD** MY PEOPLE ISRAEL” – we find “leader” (same word) and “shepherd” linked.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- “Equipping” is a summary activity connected to “shepherds” in Ephesians 4:11-12.
- “Manage” summarizes the function of local church leaders in 1 Thessalonians 5:12 and in the list of qualifications for an overseer in 1 Timothy 3:4-5.
- “Care for,” used in 1 Timothy 3:4-5, is a synonym for “manage.” These last two terms (“manage” and “care for”) are like a matched set.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

1. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
2. Overseer: One who understands his people and is watching out for them
3. Shepherd: One who feeds, cares for, and protects the flock
4. Leader: One who governs by assessing and identifying what is best

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

5. Equipping: One who trains and outfits others for growth and effective ministry
6. Manage / Care for: One who is attentive to others in order to actively promote what is in their best interests

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - ELDER

- “Elder” renders the Greek adjective *presbuteros* (πρεσβύτερος).
- The root word *presbutēs* (noun) denotes someone advanced in age.
- *Presbuteros* can emphasize one who is elderly (Acts 2:17; 1 Timothy 5:1).
- It can be used in a comparative way to distinguish an older from a younger (Luke 15:25).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - ELDER

- The term is also used to refer to a certain class of Jewish religious leaders.
- It is used in Revelation (4:4 et. al.) to describe a class of angelic beings.
- In the latter half of Acts and the New Testament Epistles, it is most often used to describe local church leaders.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - ELDER

- This word is not a title that denotes a “function” of elders. It does not tell us **what they do**. How 2 Eld?
- It tells us **who they are!** In the biblical culture, an elder would be considered a respected individual, someone who had acquired wisdom for his many years.
- Modern society has trouble with this!
- Job understood this: “Wisdom is with aged men, / *With long life is understanding*” (Job 12:12).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - ELDER

- This term identifies local church leaders as a source of biblical advice and guidance.
- “Elders” demonstrate seasoned character and maturity. They are the kind of men you would seek out when you need wise counsel.
- The cognate πρεσβυτις (*presbutis*, feminine noun) is used of older women (Titus 2:3) who make a truth and wisdom investment in younger women.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - ELDER

- Paul designates wisdom as a vital content element for the twin truth communication tools of teaching and admonition: *We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ* (Colossians 1:28).
- In which case, wisdom acquisition is vital to elder effectiveness.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - ELDER

- **Embrace a life-long pursuit of wisdom:** *So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom* (Psalm 90:12).
- **Draw from this wisdom deposit what speaks to another's situation:** *Like apples of gold in settings of silver / Is a word spoken in right circumstances. Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold / Is a wise reprove to a listening ear* (Proverbs 25:11-12).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

1. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
2. **Overseer: One who understands his people and is watching out for them**

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – OVERSEER

- The term “overseer” is a rendering of the Greek noun *episkopos* (ἐπίσκοπος).
- This noun only appears in the New Testament five times. Four are references to officers in the church (Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7). Once it refers to Christ (1 Peter 2:25).
- The cognate verb (as “go” is to “goner”) is found in Hebrews 12:15.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – OVERSEER

- **See to it** (*episkopeō, ἐπισκοπέω*) that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal (Hebrews 12:15–16).
- Someone who “sees to it” watches out for spiritual threats and is poised to take appropriate steps of action.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – OVERSEER

- Peter says: *Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of **visitation*** (*episkopē, ἐπισκοπή*) (1 Peter 2:12).
- The overseer does not minister by remote control. He is attentive and present with his people, watching over the saints.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – OVERSEER

- Don’t confuse “overseer” with “overlord.” Lordship leadership has no place among God’s people.
- Jesus was very clear about this: *But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant”* (Matthew 20:25–26).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - OVERSEER

- The lordship leader compels others to do what serves his interest.
- The overseer well serves the good of those he leads because he is personally in tune with *their* needs.
- By “their needs,” I mean both felt needs and what Jesus would identify as true needs.
- Proverbs 18:13 comes to mind!

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - OVERSEER

- An effective overseer gathers first-hand evidence about how someone is doing.
- He identifies spiritual threats and opportunities.
- He introduces relevant resources and provides biblical guidance to help another prevail over what he is facing.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

1. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
2. Overseer: One who understands his people and is watching out for them
3. **Shepherd: One who feeds, cares for, and protects the flock**

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SHEPHERD

- The term translated “shepherd” is the Greek noun *poimēn* (ποιμήν).
- This noun appears seventeen times in the New Testament and most often denotes literal shepherds.
- Here’s an example: *In the same region there were some **shepherds** staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night* (Luke 2:8).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SHEPHERD

- So what does a shepherd do? “Feeding” is clearly prominent as a shepherd’s function.
- In John 21:16, Jesus called on Peter to shepherd (*poimainō*, ποιμαίνω) His sheep.
- In the parallel commands that bookend verse 16, Jesus instructed Peter to “tend” (*boskō*, βόσκω) the flock. This term emphasizes **guiding the sheep to and providing suitable grazing**.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SHEPHERD

- A good shepherd feeds, but this is not all.
- *The LORD is my shepherd, / I shall not want. / He makes me lie down in green pastures; / He leads me beside quiet waters. / He restores my soul; / He guides me in the paths of righteousness / For His name’s sake. / Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, / I fear no evil, for You are with me; / Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me (Psalm 23:1-4).*

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SHEPHERD

- A “shepherd” feeds and cares for those in his flock.
- He supplies what they need to be healthy and productive.
- He protects them against spiritual danger.
- He seeks them out and intervenes when they are in trouble.
- All of this, he does without regard for personal cost.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SHEPHERD

- The title, “shepherd” (*poimēn*, ποιμήν), is clearly used to designate officials in the local church.
- Ephesians 4:11: *And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors [poimēn, elsewhere translated “shepherds”] and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12).*

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – SHEPHERD

- The threat of wolves is real.
- *I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them (Acts 20:29–30).*
- Some members of the flock will get sidetracked by a toxic diet of twisted teaching.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – SHEPHERD

- Shepherds should proactively guard the flock against these threats.
- The New Testament recognizes proximity as a regulating factor in the work of shepherding. Peter calls the elders to “shepherd the flock of God **among you**” (1 Peter 5:2).
- Shepherding is something done in the midst of one’s appointed people by walking with them.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

1. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
2. Overseer: One who understands his people and is watching out for them
3. Shepherd: One who feeds, cares for, and protects the flock
4. **Leader: One who governs by assessing and deciding what is best**

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – LEADER

- In Hebrews 13:7, 17, and 24, the verb *hēgeomai* (ἡγέομαι) is used as a participle to denote local church leaders.
- This verb is used twenty-eight times in the New Testament, most often to denote the activity of reckoning, counting, or making an assessment.
- James 1:2: **Consider** *it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials.*

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - LEADER

- This idea of making a judgment call or determination allows a substantive participle (a verb that is used like a noun) of *hēgeomai* (ἡγέομαι) to refer to a leader.
- Such a one makes decisions and issues rulings.
- Jesus used *hēgeomai* to refer to leaders: *“But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant”* (Luke 22:26).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - LEADER

- There are two distinct types of “leaders.” The lordship leader may even have a title like “Benefactor” (Luke 22:25) but he is about self-promotion.
- The servant leader is selfless in the interest of promoting another’s good.
- Don’t assume, however, that such a servant-leader only speaks affirmation. He may use admonition to promote another’s good.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - LEADER

- When the writer of Hebrews speaks of “leaders” using the verb *hēgeomai* (ἡγέομαι) (Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24), he is referring to those who govern, who make assessments and determinations, and who decide what is best and what is to be done.
- Based solely on the term “leader,” it would be very easy to think that governance is the sum of what local church leaders do.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - LEADER

- The local church leader is also called by other titles.
- In a church where “leaders” are deliberating and making decisions, do we also discover in them a respected source of godly counsel and wisdom (“elders”)? Do we see a group of men who are in tune with the spiritual condition of those they lead (“overseers”)? Is this group promoting the good of the flock as shepherds do their sheep (“shepherds”)?

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - LEADER

- Does a “leader” sometimes resort to extreme measures?
- *And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business” (John 2:15–16).*

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - LEADER

- Paul says something similar.
- *What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness? (1 Corinthians 4:21).*
- Wolves warrant extreme measures.
- For sheep, disciplinary measures might be called for – see lessons 7-8. Such will never be ego driven but are focused on the good of the ones disciplined.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- The Essential Function of Shepherds/Overseers/Leaders/Elders.

1. Elder
2. Oversee/Overseer
3. Shepherd
4. Leader
5. Equip
6. Manage

- We have looked at four summary titles.
- These are not four distinct individuals but four terms that describe one person.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

- The Essential Function of Shepherds/Overseers/Leaders/Elders.

1. Elder
2. Oversee/Overseer
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4. Leader
5. Equip
6. Manage

- Now we will look at three verbs that are also used in a summary way to describe what SOLE do.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

1. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
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4. Leader: One who governs by assessing and deciding what is best
5. **Equipper: One who trains and outfits others for growth and effective ministry**

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - EQUIP

- *And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors [poimēn, ποιμήν, also translated “shepherds”] and teachers, for the equipping [katartismos, καταρτισμός] of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12).*
- The term translated “equipping” in Ephesians 4:12 is a New Testament hapax.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - EQUIP

- To better understand the meaning of this noun, we will observe the use of its cognate verb, *katartizō* (καταρτίζω) in two helpful passages.
- *Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them (Matthew 4:21).*
- They are repairing their nets to make them useful.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - EQUIP

- *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness (Galatians 6:1).*
- *Katartizō* is about recovery from sin and assisting someone to move from brokenness to a place of spiritual health.
- To equip is to promote robust spiritual health and usefulness.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - EQUIP

- Based on Ephesians 4:11-12, the congregation members are the ministers.
- They do “the work of ministry.”
- Shepherds equip the saints for this work. They are growth assets and ministry coaches who supply what is needed for the members of the congregation to effectively and fruitfully do the work of ministry.
- What ministry? **GREAT QUESTION!**

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - EQUIP

- God is our ultimate equipper and equipping model!
- *Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, **equip** [katartizō, καταρτίζω] **you in every good thing to do His will**, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20-21).*

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - EQUIP

- To be with equipping shepherds is like coming to a True Value hardware store for saints.
- Here, these equipping pros have all the tools and demonstrate how to use them. They provide hands-on workshops for saints to effectively embrace their calling, the work of ministry.
- Saints receive from them everything they need to accomplish what has true value!

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION

1. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
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3. Shepherd: One who feeds, cares for, and protects the flock
4. Leader: One who governs by assessing and deciding what is best
5. Equipper: One who trains and outfits others for growth and effective ministry
6. **Manager: One who is attentive to others in order to actively promote what is in their best interests**

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – MANAGER

- 1 Timothy 5:17: *The elders who **rule** [proistēmi, προϊότητα] well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.*
- *Proistēmi* seems quite similar in meaning to *hēgeomai* (translated “leaders” or “led” in Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24).
- But *proistēmi* includes a “care component.”

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – MANAGER

- Paul uses the cognate noun *prostatis* (προστάτις) in a commendation of Phoebe.
- *Receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a **helper** of many, and of myself as well* (Romans 16:2).
- Phoebe partnered with Paul and others by supplying valued assistance.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – MANAGER

- Paul uses *proistēmi* (προϊότητα) to describe one qualification of an overseer.
- *He must be one who **manages** [proistēmi, προϊότητα] his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to **manage** [proistēmi, προϊότητα] his own household, how will he **take care of** [epimeleomai, ἐπιμελόμαι] the church of God?)* (1 Timothy 3:4–5).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION – MANAGER

- A well-managed home has children who are not running wild but “under control.” Chaos is not reigning in his home.
- Paul links *proistēmi* and *epimeleomai*.
- *Epimeleomai* is only used elsewhere in the New Testament in the parable of the Good Samaritan, and it describes promoting someone’s good – He “took care of him” (Luke 10:34).

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - MANAGER

- *Proistēmi* also suggests engagement.
- Our people must also learn **to engage** in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful (Titus 3:14).
- The manager of whom *proistēmi* speaks is attentive to what is happening and responding accordingly. He takes the appropriate action to address the issues.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - MANAGER

- First, this quality involves caring for others and doing them good.
- Second, this management responsibility mirrors a father's management of his household.
- Third, *proistēmi* suggests action that results in things being under control as opposed to out of control.
- Fourth, *proistēmi* is about being engaged and proactive as opposed to disengaged.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - MANAGER

- It is striking that calling the shots, dictating the course, and barking orders as they are practiced in business and government are missing from the core responsibility of the elder.
- God's man knows how to manage in a way that communicates care and engenders respect.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SUMMARY

- **The man who is an invaluable asset to God's people can be described by six terms.**
- As an **elder**, he is a man of seasoned character and maturity, a respected source of wise and godly counsel.
- As an **overseer**, he secures a firsthand understanding of his people and sees to it that they are engaged in what matters.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SUMMARY

- As a **shepherd**, he nourishes, cares for, and protects his flock, even at great personal risk.
- As a **leader**, he serves others by assessing the best way for them to follow the Lord and then directs them accordingly.
- As an **equipper**, he facilitates others' growth, trains them for effective ministry, and then mobilizes them to bear fruit for Jesus.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SUMMARY

- As a **manager**, he is attentive to others and what they lack and then proactively provides the necessary resources, support, and guidance.

VII. THE SHEPHERDS CORE FUNCTION - SUMMARY

- I wonder:
- Are we seeing all six facets of healthy leadership demonstrated in Jesus' church?
- What are the stumbling blocks that work against six-facet leadership?
- What would a church be like where all six aspects were robustly expressed by leadership and applied to an entire flock?

SHEPHERDOLOGY 101

FROM SHEPHERDLESS SHEEP TO FLOURISHING FLOCKS - CORE FUNCTION

