

Shepherdology 101 Outline

- 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**
- V. **The Development of Elders**
- VI. **Ten Key Passages**
- VII. **Essential Function**

From ten New Testament passages, we can identify seven terms that help us identify what Shepherds/Overseers/Leaders/Elders do.

- A. Elder: Man of seasoned character and maturity
- B. Overseer: One who understands his people and is watching out for them
- C. Shepherd: One who feeds, cares for, and protects the flock
- D. Leader: One who governs by assessing and identifying what is best
- E. Equipping: One who trains and outfits others for growth and effective ministry
- F. Manage / Care for: One who is attentive to others in order to actively promote what is in their best interests

Let's dig a little deeper to explore what shepherds equip the saints to do. Here is our key passage and a review of what we have already learned:

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).

Katartizō (καταρτίζω) describes restoration from sin (Galatians 6:1) and the mending of fishing nets (Matthew 4:21).

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 (Hebrews 13:20-21).

The Ephesians passage also specifies an objective: *The **equipping** [katartismos, καταρτισμός] of the saints for the **work** [ergon, ἔργον] of **service** [diakonia, διακονία], to the **building up** [oikodomē, οἰκοδομή] of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12).*

Equipping the saints has three facets that come from three terms:

- A. Work (*ergon, ἔργον*)
- B. Upbuilding (*oikodomē, οἰκοδομή*)
- C. Service (*diakonia, διακονία*)

A. Work

1. Works and Salvation

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them (Ephesians 2:8–10).

But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works” (James 2:18).

But [Paul] kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance (Acts 26:20).

Summary: Equipping for work means assisting the saints to produce the fruit of salvation and deeds that declare they have turned to God.

2. The Value of Works

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).

*For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered [*diakoneō*, διακονέω] and in still ministering [*diakoneō*, διακονέω] to the saints (Hebrews 6:10).*

Summary: Equipping for work means teaching brothers and sisters how to work hard by knowing that what they do matters to God.

3. The Basis for Works

*Our people must also learn [*manthanō*, μαθάνω] to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful (Titus 3:14).*

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed (2 Corinthians 9:8).

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped [eksartizō, ἐξαρτιζω] for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors 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).

Summary: Equipping for work means instructing others how to meet pressing needs by relying on grace, truth, and shepherd coaching.

4. The Motive for Works

Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth (1 John 3:18).

Summary: Equipping for work means...

- Assist the saints to produce the fruit of salvation and deeds that declare they have turned to God.
- Teach brothers and sisters how to work hard by knowing that what they do matters to God.
- Instruct others how to meet pressing needs by relying on grace, truth, and shepherd coaching.
- Help sheep use deeds to express love.

God saved you so you can actually do what makes a difference in the lives of others. It will be hard but it will be worth it. I will coach you as you learn how to use grace and truth to maximum effect. I will teach you how to express love (for God and for others) through your actions.

B. Upbuilding

“I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build [future, active of οἰκοδομέω, oikodomeō] My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it” (Matthew 16:18).

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up [oikodomeō, οἰκοδομέω]; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase [plēthunō, πληθύνω] (Acts 9:31).

From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up [oikodomē, οἰκοδομή] of itself in love (Ephesians 4:16).

For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building [oikodomē, οἰκοδομή]. According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder [arxitektōn, ἀρχιτέκτων] I laid a foundation, and another is building on it [epoikodomeō, ἐποικοδομέω]. But each man must be careful how he builds on it [epoikodomeō, ἐποικοδομέω] (1 Corinthians 3:9–10).

Building Up the Church

- Involves
- Opposes
- Requires

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ (Ephesians 4:13–15).

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification [oikodomē, οἰκοδομή] according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear (Ephesians 4:29).

A Striking Similarity: Building the church involves establishing, increasing and growing a people who are like Jesus and who speak the truth in love. Making disciples involves seeking, saving, and growing a people who become like Jesus and promote the true good of others.

Paul does not use MDM terminology in his “building” ministry self-description (1 Corinthians 3:9–10). But Luke does:

After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed (Acts 14:21–23).

Equipping the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ means:

- Work: Helping believers express love for God by what they do and say.
- Building Up: Making disciples who keep Jesus’ commands / Producing body members who are like Christ in every aspect.

When shepherds equip the saints to do the work of ministry, they promote robust spiritual health and ministry effectiveness (equipping), so that saints translate faith/love into action (work), and thereby build the body / make disciples (building up).

C. Service

Diakonia, (διακονία) is a noun that is translated “ministry” (20), “service” (7), “mission” (1), and six other expressions. This term denotes a specific form or act of service. Although “service” is a core concept, this service can be demonstrated in a variety of ways.

And there are varieties of ministries [diakonoia, διακονία], and the same Lord (1 Corinthians 12:5).

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry [diakonia, διακονία] of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry [diakonia, διακονία] which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it” (Colossians 4:17).

But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry [diakonia, διακονία] (2 Timothy 4:5).

And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission [diakonia, διακονία], taking along with them John, who was also called Mark (Acts 12:25).

“But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry [diakonia, διακονία] which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

Not all ministries are identical.

But reconciliation is a core objective.

A ministry may be a specific mission or a life calling.

It is critical for believers to fulfill their ministry calling.

Shepherds who equip the saints for ministry help them embrace and fulfill their specific ministry calling.

Summary – How Shepherds Equip the Saints

- Promote robust spiritual health and ministry effectiveness (equipping)
- So that saints translate faith/love into action (work)
- And build the body/make disciples (building up)
- By embracing their ministry calling. Help each one discern how God wants to use them as disciple-makers/body-builders, then help them do it!

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 [διάκονος], and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served [aorist, passive, infinitive of διακονέω], but to serve [aorist, active, infinitive of διακονέω], and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:25–28).

A Shepherd Story

Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery (1 Timothy 4:14).

For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands (2 Timothy 1:6).

But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry [diakonia, διακονία] (2 Timothy 4:5).

Discussion Guide

Discussion Question: In the lesson, Jim noted that shepherds should teach brothers and sisters how to work hard by knowing that what they do matters to God. Have you ever had someone encourage you that doing something Jesus wants or that is prescribed in His word, something that is difficult, will be worth it. What happened? Have you ever encouraged someone that doing what Jesus wants, even when it is hard, is worth it? What did you say and/or do? Do you know someone who could benefit from hearing such a word of encouragement? What could you say or do?

Discussion Question: According to the passages Jim explored, one aspect of shepherd equipping involves being a ministry coach for disciple-makers. What would this look like for you if you were on the receiving end? In other words, if someone was to help you become more effective as a disciple-maker, what would they do? What would be really helpful for you so that you could become a more effective “body-upbuilder/disciple-maker?”

Discussion Question: According to Ephesians 4:11-12, the saints do the work of ministry and pastors/shepherds/elders equip the saints. The passage doesn’t say that the shepherds do the ministry – they equip the saints who, in turn, do the ministry. Compare and contrast the former and the latter. What would a church look like in which the shepherds are the ones doing the ministry as opposed to one where the saints are doing the ministry? Describe any experiences you have had in churches that were one or the other. What do each look like?

Discussion Question: If shepherds at our church were actively engaged with the members of the flock helping them to discern and be found faithful in doing whatever God is specifically calling them to do, what would that look like? What would it look like for you if you were one such shepherd? What would the “state of the church” look like?

Discussion Question: What is your ministry calling? What do you believe Jesus wants you to do with your life as a response to His grace? What is the ministry calling of those in your circle? If you are not sure, what could you do to find out?

