

SHEPHERDS

All leaders are shepherds to some extent, but pastors and elders particularly are shepherds over the people in their care (Hebrews 13:17). The Lord is so concerned about the welfare of those He died for, that He has appointed His representatives who will also lay down their lives for His flock.

Acts 20:28

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

King David, who was a man after God’s own heart, realized, as a leader, that it wasn’t all about him personally. He knew it was all about God’s people – the reason he was exalted and established as king by God.

2 Samuel 5:12

“And David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.”

In Ezekiel 34, the Lord strongly warns shepherds about abusing and dominating His sheep, and verbally chastened them for not caring for the sheep and their needs.

Ezekiel 34:2-4

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?’

You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat {sheep} without feeding the flock.

Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.”

Note also the job description of the fivefold ministry, which specifically includes pastors:

Ephesians 4:11-12

“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;”

The Greek word *katartismos*, used here for equipping (or perfecting in KJV), means to train, but also to restore/heal.