

Theme: The calling of Christ’s under-shepherds is filled with great challenges, warnings and rewards. The flock under their oversight will be secure and strong, or weak and wandering, as a result of the care they receive, and their own response to it.

Introduction/Background: The consistent picture of “leadership” for the people of God is that of a “shepherd”. Moses (Isaiah 63:11) – David (2 Samuel 5:2) - Jesus (John 10:11)

Acts 20:28 (from last week) picks up that image and calling.

I. The Task of the Shepherd

A. Bad shepherds!

1. The Hireling! (John 10:12,13)

2. Ezekiel 34:2-6

a. Feed themselves

b. Don’t know the sheep – who is weak, who is strong.

c. Keep their distance – don’t get their hands dirty

d. Don’t seek the lost

e. Rule harshly

3. Consequences? (Ezekiel 34:6-8)

B. Good Shepherds??

1. Shepherd the Flock! (1 Peter 5:2)

a. Acts 20:28ff - Instruct – Correct – Protect – Train

b. The other side of Ezekiel 34

1) They Feed themselves – so they are well fit for service

2) *They know the sheep!* – who is weak, who is strong.

3) They are in the middle of the lives of the Sheep!

4) Seeking the lost!!

2. Heart/Demeanor of the Elder? 1 Peter 5:2-3

- Serving Willingly

- As God would have you
- Not for worldly gain/crown/recognition
- In Love
- In sacrifice!

3. Qualifications/Qualities?? (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9)

- a. Skills?
- b. Character?

C. Calling All Shepherds (1 Timothy 3:1)

II. The Task of the Sheep

A. Joyful, grateful submission to:

- authority
- oversight
- direction, instruction

B. Open and Honest

- Not hiding from the shepherds nor hiding “things” from them

C. Respect the office

- Speaking with respect (1 Timothy 5:19)

III. Elders – Now and When

A. Your Elders and Deacons

- Pray for the elders (and other leaders)
- Open your hearts/lives to them

B. Raising up the Elders of the Future

- Aspire to lead/shepherd

IV. The Chief Shepherd’s Promise

- Those who serve well will receive the crown. (1 Peter 5:4)
- The Great Shepherd will *keep* His sheep safe and secure. (John 10:28ff)