

Ephesians: The Purpose and Plan of God

The Importance of Godly Leadership

February 21st & 22nd, 2015

Acts 20:28-35

Paul addresses four key areas of ministry to the elders of Ephesus

1. *“Pay careful attention to yourselves...” Acts 20:28*

- ❖ A personal, close walk with God in obedience to His Word is essential for Godly leadership!

1 Corinthians 11:1 “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”

2 Timothy 3:10-11 “You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.”

- ❖ Personal obedience to God’s Word was required of Israel for the benefit of future generations!

📖 Deuteronomy 6:9; 4:5-9

- ❖ Personal integrity was critical for Timothy, as a leader in Ephesus, to ensure a fruitful ministry!

📖 1 Timothy 4:13-16

2. *“Pay careful attention...to all the flock, ...” Acts 20:28*

- ❖ *“Flock”* ... Jesus referred to His disciples as sheep.

f Sheep need to be fed.

Deuteronomy 8:3 “And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”

Jeremiah 3:15 “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.”

John 21:15 “When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’”

f Sheep need to be led.

Matthew 9:36 “When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

- ♦ Psalm 23

- ♦ God calls and equips shepherds

Ephesians 4:11 “And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, ...”

f Sheep need care.

Isaiah 40:11 “He will tend His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms; He will carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.”

- ♦ Ezekiel 34:1-4

- ♦ God defines the call of elder/shepherds. *1 Peter 5:1-4*

❖ “...the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, ...” Acts 20:28

f The church belongs to God!

Jesus said, “... I will build my church...” Matthew 16:18

“...to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood.” Acts 20:28

f God chooses His leaders and elders!

Ephesians 1:1 “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,”

❖ The church is to follow and pray for its leaders! Hebrews 13:7-8, 17-18

3. Pay careful attention...to false teachers! Acts 20:29-30

❖ False teachers will be like wolves preying on sheep! Matthew 7:15-23

❖ False teachers will speak twisted things! 2 Peter 3:16-18

❖ False teachers will attempt to draw people after them! 2 Peter 2:1-3, 17-22

❖ Paul directs Timothy to address false teachers. 1 Timothy 6:3-6; 2 Timothy 4:1-5

4. Pay careful attention ... to the needs of the poor! Act 20:35

Poor: “Wholly destitute of property, or not having property sufficient for a comfortable subsistence; needy. ...”¹

Deuteronomy 15:11 “For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’”

Proverbs 14:31 “Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors Him.”

Proverbs 21:13 “Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.”

Mark 14:7 “For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have Me.”

Galatians 2:7-10

God’s Word to all of us:

Pay careful attention to the things that are most important to God!

Endnotes:

¹ Webster, Noah. *American Dictionary of the English Language (1828 Facsimile Edition)*. San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1989.

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