

Feed My sheep

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Introduction.

A. Jesus is the good shepherd.

1. The hireling flees when the wolf comes but the shepherd stays.
2. We need to shepherd after the pattern of Jesus

B. Paul expressed his concern for the churches under his care. (2 Corinthians 11:28-29)

C. The parable of the stewards speaks of the faithful and wise stewards that the master will place in charge of his house when he returns. (Luke 12:42-43)

I. Over the years I have observed things about leadership.

A. There is a difference between being given responsibility and taking responsibility.

1. Nehemiah wept over the state of Jerusalem and took responsibility for the problem on his knees alone. (Nehemiah 1)
2. True leadership happens when we take responsibility by faith.
3. Giving responsibility on a human level when the individual does not take the responsibility can result in disaster.
4. I struggled with the idea of taking responsibility for leadership when the Lord ministered to me to serve in this capacity. (Philippians 2:1-15)
5. We are called to pour out our lives as a drink offering in his service.

B. Jesus began commissioning Peter by asking “Do you love me?”

1. Jesus wanted to establish the basis of leadership over others.
2. Jesus asks us today the same question.
3. If we love him we will take responsibility for his sheep.
4. I ask the Lord to help me to love him.

C. How did Peter love Jesus?

1. It was a responsive love, coming out of Peter commitment.
2. It was an impulsive love. (Mark 16:22)

3. It was a self-confident love. (Matthew 26)

4. It is a humbled love. (John 21:17)

D. What is humble love?

1. Peter refused Jesus' offer to wash his feet because he wanted to wash Jesus' feet. (John 13:8)

2. Peter vowed to lay down his life for Jesus, when ironically it was Jesus who was laying down his life for Peter. (John 13:37)

3. Jesus prayed for Simon that his faith fail not in light of the coming persecution.

4. A Navigator staff died in a car crash on her way to her first Navigator conference.

a. During the funeral I tried promising God things in exchange for protection.

b. I realized I cannot keep my promises.

c. Only Jesus can keep his promises to us.

5. Jesus restored Peter after his denial and that conversation is private.

6. Jesus affirmed Peter publicly three times. (John 21)

a. Humbled love is upheld by grace. (Matthew 26:41)

b. Watch and pray that you not enter into temptation.

c. What was going on in Peter's love?

1. Peter was showing his weakness by sleeping.

2. The demands of the situation were overwhelming.

3. Grace was available for the disciples.

d. The only hero in the passion narrative is Jesus.

E. We need to hold on to Jesus in times of trouble.

1. We can't meet God's demands.

2. If we deny our weaknesses we set ourselves up for failure.

3. As a young Christian I used to think I would eventually overcome my weaknesses.

a. As I realized who I am I began to draw back from demands.

b. Now I am relying more on the grace of God.

- c. I can't walk away from the demands to feed Jesus' sheep.
- d. I must live by knowing I want to stand but stand in the reality of who Christ is.
- e. The gap in my life is a grace gap.
- f. I know I will fail at times yet I keep going on because grace is available.
- g. If I don't do this my failures crush me.
- h. When I understand the grace gap in my life and appropriate God's grace on a daily basis I can press on to know the Lord and serve the Lord.

4. By God's grace I will continue, and not pretend to be someone I'm not.

F. If I'm going to appropriate grace for my own life I need to extend grace to others.

1. Christian ministry can almost be reduced to this principle; appropriating grace for myself and extending grace to others.

2. We are all followers of Jesus the giver of grace.

II. Let's close by reading Scripture. (John 21:15-17)

A. Do we love Jesus; if yes then feed his lambs.

B. Do we truly love Jesus; then care for his sheep.

C. Do we love Jesus; then feed his sheep.