



bits from bob....

Where are the Shepherds?

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Here is a challenging question: are your elders serving as shepherds? Is your minister aware of his pastoral role?

Scan church websites and you will see plenty of "leaders." Read the biographies that are available online, and you'll spot some self-described "visionaries," some very capable secular leaders, and probably an oddball "cultural change-agent" who at least knows the church needs to change in order to have an impact on a world that needs to be changed. But what the church needs more than ever is shepherds.

The dominant metaphor in Scripture to describe God's leaders is shepherd. The Lord is my shepherd. The sheep scatter because there is no shepherd (and the modern church certainly has its share of scattered sheep—and by implication, a lack of shepherds). You can modernize the word and describe leaders as pastors, but the word is really just shepherd. I admit that this description of church leadership lacks the sizzle of some modern descriptions, but it expresses the intimate style of watchful, caring pastors as they feed and watch for those who are placed in their care.

The shepherds (elders, overseers) should be shepherds. Evangelism, ministry, and preaching have a pastoral dimension. Church members are called to "pastor" one another—we belong to one another.

What would it mean to the contemporary church if this primary aspect of the church were restored—so that every member of God's flock is lovingly and bravely shepherded.