



***Equipped For The Inevitable  
“Sheep Who Shepherd”***

**1 Peter 5:1-5**

A man by the name of W. Phillip Keller, whose parents were missionaries in Kenya, wrote a book entitled, ***“A Shepherd’s Look at Psalm 23.”*** Keller makes the following comments, ***“It is no accident that God has chosen to call us sheep. Sheep do not just take care of themselves as some might suppose. They require, more than any other class of livestock, endless attention and meticulous care.”***

Sheep are naturally passive and virtually defenseless against predators. When attacked their only resource is to flee in panic. The shepherd who is tasked with the care of these peculiar animals must be constantly on guard to protect them from danger, lead them into a healthy pasture, and clean them regularly to keep them from disease and death.

As Peter is concluding his letter to the churches to remain steadfast and faithful in the midst of persecution, he takes a moment to encourage the pastors and elders of these churches to remain focused on the task to which God has called them: to ***shepherd*** His ***sheep***. For and pastors or elders to be successful in their responsibility to the Lord and His church, the body must fully understand its responsibility to the Lord and His servant.

***The shepherd and his responsibility to the Lord’s sheep. (1 Peter 5:1-4)***

When encouraging the pastors and elders, Peter uses the term ***parakaleo***. This is translated ***exhort*** and literally means, ***“to call alongside.”*** In a general sense it means, ***“to encourage or compel someone in a certain direction.”***

The appeal is to ***the elders***, who are the Lord’s appointed and gifted leaders of the church. There are three New Testament terms used interchangeably to refer to the leaders of the church: ***elder*** (*presbuterio*), ***bishop*** or ***overseer*** (*episkopos*), and ***pastor*** (*poimen*).

***Elder*** emphasizes the man’s spiritual necessary for such ministry, and in many Protestant churches it is the official title chosen for the office. ***Bishop***, or ***overseer***, states the general responsibility of guardianship. ***Pastor*** is the word ***shepherd*** and expresses the priority duty of feeding or teaching the truth of God’s Word.

***The sheep and their responsibility to the Lord’s servant. (1 Peter 5:5)***

Although no one is exempt from Peter's exhortation that everyone is to be submissive to their elders, he targets specifically the younger men. In calling the young to **be subject** to those over them in the Lord, Peter uses the Greek military term which means, "**to line up under.**"

He calls everyone in the church to put aside self-promoting sides in order to willingly and respectfully place themselves under the leadership of their shepherds.

The Scripture can say it best as to the responsibility of both shepherd and sheep.  
***(cf. Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7)***

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