

First Baptist Church of Progress Village
Wednesday Bible Study
“When the Church Harms God’s People”
Introduction and Chapters 3-4
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CHAPTER 3 – WOLVES, SHEEP, AND SHEPHERDING

I. Characteristics of Wolves and Sheep

A. WOLVES

Animal

- o can run up to 40 miles per hour
- o physically powerful
- o higher hunt success when prey in isolation
- o relentless in search of prey
- o insight and ability to plan
- o intent on the kill for self-survival

Individual

- o fast thinker, quick-witted
- o strong, wields authority
- o identifies, separates victims
- o persistent, habitual
- o calculating, strategic
- o selfish, driven by gain

John 10:10 (NASB) "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

B. SHEEP

Animal

- o can run up to 20 miles per hour
- o vulnerable needing protection
- o flock tendency by nature
- o follows the leader instinctually
- o scatter when threatened
- o generally peaceful, content

Individual

- o casual, innocent thinkers
- o require a leader for guidance
- o comfort, needs/seeks belonging
- o conforms to environmental norms
- o withdraws when confronted
- o non-threatening, live and let live

John 10:3-5 (NASB) *"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. "A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."*

Read the Parable of the Good Shepherd, John 10:1-18

C. Jesus is the **Good Shepherd**. In his ascension he left **under**-shepherds to care for His sheep while he is away physically.

John 21:15-17 (KJV) *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the*

third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

D. The only leaders left to feed and care for God's people are those who truly **love** Jesus.

John 7:14-18 (NASB) *But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and began to teach. The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me." "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. "He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.*

E. God sent **pastors** , and church leaders, will only teach **scripture** and promote **ministry** for the cause of **Christ**, not for their **own** gain.

II. **BUMP** Factor: The **why** is always important!

Matthew 15:16-20 (NASB) *Jesus said, "Are you still lacking in understanding also? "Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated? "But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. "These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."*

What is the Bump Factor:

"The force behind the bump to one's cup does not determine the quality of what is spilled. It exposes it. What have the bumps or jarring of others exposed in you?" (p.42)

III. How To Tell The Difference

Acts 1:24 (KJV) *And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,*

A. **Pray** and seek God's guidance and spiritual discernment. Never place yourself in God's position.

Only God knows the hearts of everyone. The church needs spiritual wisdom and guidance in selecting its leaders.

Matthew 7:15-20 (KJV) *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

B. **Pay** attention and **observe**, "The fruit of a good leader is not found in their **words**, but in their **life**." (p. 34)

1 Timothy 5:24-25 (NASB) *The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their sins follow after. Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed.*

Some people's sins are clearly seen; others are able to cover their sins, though their sins chase/haunt them.

1 Timothy 5:22 (KJV) *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

C. Be **PATIENT**. It takes **time** to discover whether a person is ready for spiritual leadership.

CHAPTER 4 – EXAMINING CULTURE IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Our culture shapes our desires and traditions play a large part fueling the hurt people can experience among God's people.

A. A pastor is expected to be an **expert**.

Leadership, driven by cultural and societal expectations, becomes, “a never-ending treadmill of acquiring more skills and more knowledge.” (p. 35)

B. A pastor/leader is also expected to be **charismatic**. Charisma is the compelling attractiveness or **charm** that can inspire devotion in others.

Matthew 7:15 (MSG) *"Be wary of false preachers who smile a lot, dripping with practiced sincerity. Chances are they are out to rip you off some way or other. Don't be impressed with charisma; look for character.*

Acts 2:47 (KJV) *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

A. **Jesus** saves, not people. The gospel and care of God's people must always be the **priority**.

“Shepherds serve the sheep best when they serve the Master first.” (p. 36)

OBJECTIVE IS NOT TO MAKE YOU CYNICAL BUT MINDFUL

Outline of our Study:

11/20/2024	Introduction, Chapters 1-2, Encountering Sickness in the Body of Christ; What the Church is Called to Be.
11/27/2024	NO BIBLE STUDY. THANKSGIVING BREAK
12/04/2024	Chapters 3-4, Wolves, Sheep, and Shepherding; Examining Culture in the Light of Christ.
12/11/2024	Chapters 5-7, Self-Deception; Systemic Deception; Systemic Abuse within Christendom
12/18/2024	Chapters 8-11, Repentance and Forgiveness; Message to Victims; Message to Shepherds; A More Excellent Way

Bible Study Break until January 8th.