



Church Newsletter

First Baptist Church of
Niles

Volume 2/Issue 15

WHAT WE ARE DOING? AND WHAT WE SHOULD DO?

IN THIS ISSUE

WELCOME

Welcome to Volume 2 of the FBCN Newsletter or the “current new normal” editions.

This week’s reading will be Psalm 91 titled, My Refuge and My Fortress

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.² I will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”³ For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence.⁴ He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.⁵ You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.⁸ You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the

wicked.⁹ Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge—¹⁰ no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.¹² On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.¹³ You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.¹⁴ “Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name.¹⁵ When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him.¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”

This Sunday Pastor Brandon Myers will formally candidate as Senior Pastor of Niles Baptist Church.

We invite you to Join us for a virtual prayer meeting on Wednesdays at 7:00pm.

Wednesday Bible Study ([Click Here](#))

Meeting ID: 899 2251 1230

Password: 409807

One tap mobile

+13126266799

Meeting ID: 899 2251 1230

Password: 409807

Make sure you view the updated prayer list. There are so many needs.

Pray for decisions regarding our pastoral candidate, Pastor Brandon Myers. Pray that the LORD will anoint the one selected with wisdom and desire to accomplish His goals for the First Baptist Church of Niles.

"And God can make that wandering the very path to himself."

Harry Lee Poe (PhD, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

"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." Isaiah 40:11

The quote above was the closing sentence in a short piece about C.S. Lewis' early life. It led me to ponder the current and future state of Niles Baptist Church. What triggered it was the idea of wandering on a path and to me that is a perfect picture of where we have been for the past several years. We have been wandering without a pastor. Yes, we have been fed from the Word of God and we have found shelter under the roof of the church building. But we have not been given the full attention and care that only a pastor can provide. I believe that Mark 6:34, illustrates who we are, *"When he, (referring to Jesus), went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things."* We, like the crowd can be compared to sheep. We like sheep need a constant overseer. Other animals can fend for themselves. But not sheep. Sheep need a shepherd whose life work is to care for his sheep. They need someone to protect, defend, lead, guide, and provide for them at all times. And if we take our eyes off the shepherd, we can easily meander toward a more appealing patch of grass and end up far afield.

Noting that sheep are extremely dependent creatures we need to

keep in mind their many characteristics that demand constant attention.

Sheep need wholesome forage. They can manage to survive off almost anything but cannot thrive unless provided with good vegetation. Sheep are incapable of discerning the difference between nutritious plants and just fodder to satisfy their appetites and they have been known to wander away from wholesome forage and feast on inferior feed and sometimes deadly feeding grounds. The Word of God dwells upon this very characteristic to emphasize the folly of man.

"All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." Isaiah 53:6

"But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, ¹³suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, ¹⁴having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; ¹⁵forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;" II Peter 2:12-15

"My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek for them." Ezekial 34:6

Sheep are very insecure. Almost anything unusual is sufficient to agitate and frighten them. In the second verse of Psalm 23 we have the imagery of sheep lying down in green pastures. But sheep will not lie down if they are hungry, thirsty, bothered by parasites, or frightened. In this respect they are most like us. So many believers, as Luke 10:41, points out, *"But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things."*

Note the unexpectedness of our Savior's answer to Martha, how contrary it was to her expectation: she thought that her sister should have been sent away with a check, and herself with thanks, but she is quite mistaken: for all her good cheer that she had provided for Christ, he doesn't hesitate to tell her of her fault: *"Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things."*

This reminds me of the church at Ephesus in Revelation, the church known for having labored hard and not fainted, and separating themselves from the wicked; admonished for having forsaken its first love (2:4). They were busy in doing. The lights of the church were always on. There was always something happening. There were counselling classes happening, activities for the youth, fellowships, gathering food and clothes for the poor. All good things. But they lost their first love, the reason behind what they were doing. Christ had taken second place. He was no longer the reason for their service. They became busy in well doing. The reason why they were doing it was forgotten. It's easy to feel good about doing things for the betterment of mankind. But here's

the bottom line, Americans for all their religiosity, are suspicious of those who seem, as Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. so aptly put it "so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good," since they have traditionally valued consistency, stability and hard work. And yet these values are the first ones to emerge in the book of Revelation, specifically in the message to Ephesus! And because of that many churches today will not have any outreach to the community.

Sheep are extremely vulnerable. They lack natural defenses. The ram is able to butt with his head but seldom able to overcome an enemy. Young sheep are defenseless. Additionally, sheep lack the ability to discern dangerous situations. They frequently walk headlong into danger, falling over a cliff or getting caught in the raging current of a stream. They panic when confronted by a predator and become susceptible to predators smaller than themselves. They are no match for wolves, bears, and wild cats. For this reason they need to stay in the protective company of the shepherd and be watched constantly.

But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I Samuel 17:34

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. Matthew 10:16

Sheep have a capacity for a relationship with their shepherd. The intimate relationship between David and the "flock" serves as a graphic backdrop for some of his Psalms. The Great Shepherd

discourse of John 10 is built upon this characteristic. The integrity of this relationship is absolutely dependent upon the integrity of the shepherd. We now look to the under-shepherd or pastor who has been given the watch care over his flock, the local congregation. A position that can be as taxing as the shepherd in the field.

"shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;³ not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.⁴ And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory." 1 Peter 5:2-4

From this verse it is evident that we need a shepherd to watch over us. To teach us. This shepherd is our pastor. The word *pastor* comes from a Latin word which means "shepherd." The New Testament presents two offices that constitute church leadership—elder/overseer and deacon. Paul lists the qualifications for elder/overseer in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9. Notice that in the 1 Timothy passage, Paul refers to them as overseers (*episcopos* in the Greek), and in Titus he refers to them as elders (*presbuteros* in Greek). From this it can be concluded that there is one office with different designations. The word *elder* refers to the life experience of the office holder, while the word *overseer* emphasizes the responsibility of the office holder to watch over the congregation and meet their spiritual needs.

In Ephesians 4:11, Paul identifies shepherding "pastors" as one function in the Church along with

teaching, missionary work, evangelism, and prophecy. That this role is important is seen by the emphasis that Jesus puts on it in John 21:15–17 where Jesus charges Peter to feed and tend His sheep. How is a pastor/shepherd supposed to feed and tend the flock of God? He does this by being able to teach the flock the word of God (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9) to bring the flock into maturity, and to be resistant to heresy. He is on guard for false teachers and warns those who stray that there are consequences to their belief and behavior.

The New Testament makes it clear that there are those appointed to be leaders in the local church, and they are called by various names, but we think of the pastor as the leader of the local church. The supreme paradigm, or model, for pastoral ministry is seen in the work of Jesus Himself. One of the titles that the New Testament bestows upon Him is that of the Good Shepherd. The metaphor of the shepherd who cares for his flock becomes then the metaphor that defines the work of the local pastor. But what does it mean to be a shepherd over the flock? It is a calling and gift to feed the flock of the Lord Jesus Christ and it absolutely is done in pastoring the sheep and teaching them. They go together and the use of the words Pastor-Teacher to emphasize the position and gift of God. This comes at an appropriate time as we look to new leadership in our own ministry, a new "under shepherd."

The New Testament uses three different words to refer to the office of the pastor. The three words are used interchangeably: "bishop" - overseer, "elder" - dignity, and

“pastor” -shepherd, with each word providing a different emphasis on what contribution the leaders make to the Body of Christ. The three words come together in 1 Peter 5:1–2 where Peter exhorts elders to shepherd the flock of God and serve as overseers, caring for the flock as they wait for the Chief Shepherd. In Hebrews 13:17 we see three aspects of pastoral ministry. They are a ruling ministry, a watching ministry, and an accounting ministry. The integrity of this relationship is dependent upon the integrity of the shepherd.

Integrity originates from the Latin word ‘integer’ which means whole and complete. Integrity requires an inner sense of ‘wholeness’ and consistency of character. When you are ‘whole’ and consistent, there is only one you. You bring that same you wherever you are, regardless of the circumstance. You don’t leave parts of yourself behind. You are YOU all the time. There is steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code.

“Character is nature and nurture. It is nature cultured and disciplined, so that natural tendencies are brought under the sway of the moral motive. His natural individuality marks off a man from his fellows by clear and specific differences. But this individuality may be non-moral. To produce character, it must be brought under discipline, and organized into the structure of a true moral being...” Warren Susman

Character originates from the Old French ‘caractere,’ via Latin from Greek ‘kharaktēr’ meaning ‘a stamping tool’. From the early meaning ‘distinctive mark’ arose ‘token, feature, or trait’ (early 16th century), and from this ‘a description, especially of a person’s

qualities’, giving rise to ‘distinguishing qualities’. Based on this description, it’s easiest to think of character as one’s moral and ethical code. It is a combination of inside traits that determine outward behavior.

“You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?”¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.” Matthew 7:16-17

When you combine character and integrity you have: character, one’s moral and ethical code, and integrity the means that one lives according to that code. Therefore, someone who lives with integrity, lives according to their moral values.

We looked at character in a previous Newsletter we are now going to look at it specifically in respect to a pastor’s life because it is so much more than preaching the Word. Because any man can teach what the Bible says, only a man of character can live what the Bible demands. The pastor whose leadership shows gentleness and humility can say, as Paul said, *“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”* 1 Corinthians 11:1 NIV and *“Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.”* Philippians 3:17.

A pastor is to lead his church by setting direction and making decisions, but first by modeling godliness. Godliness is a matter of character, not accomplishment. The pastor with character will lead like Jesus.

“God values character far ahead of accomplishment. When it comes to pastors, God looks past men of great talent or achievement to call men of character.”

Excerpts Taken from, *Why We Must Emphasize a Pastor’s Character Over His Skill*, By Tim Challies - September 24, 2017

Hopefully, we have a clear idea of the terms sheep and shepherd. Lest we forget like sheep, we are quick to draw conclusions. And a majority of the time our conclusions are formed by our own ignorance. It’s an ignorance that comes from laziness, laziness to search out the scriptures, laziness to sit back on Sunday morning and listen. But we are required to do more. We are required to re-act, to walk-the-walk. This ignorance manifests itself in our fears and worst of all, manifests itself in apathy, a lack of interest or concern. And like the sheep who comes across danger in the field, we freeze. We become paralyzed. We shut down. That’s why we need a shepherd.

“If the shepherd has the heart of God he will conduct his ministry to the people of God, the congregation, so as to meet and minister to their genuine needs in a manner that glorifies God. In this capacity he first and foremost must provide for the sheep.” Leon J. Wood

Remember that the under shepherd, the pastor, must give account to the “Chief Shepherd” for the welfare of the flock and for his conduct as under shepherd. The office of Pastor is a serious position that is answerable to God for the sheep under his watch. On July 1, 1750, Jonathan Edwards preached what is simply known as “A Farewell Sermon.” This is Edwards’ final sermon after having been voted out as pastor of the First Church in

Northampton, MA. The sermon is notable in that there is no apparent bitterness toward his former congregation. Instead, the sermon is marked by concern for the spiritual welfare of the individuals who had been entrusted to his care for twenty-plus years. This sermon strikes a serious note, however, as it warns that: "Ministers and people that are under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal at the day of judgment." Edwards states: "Faithful ministers will then give an account with joy, concerning those who have received them well, and made a good improvement of their ministry; and these will be given them, at that day, as their crown of rejoicing. And, at the same time, they will give an account of the ill treatment of such as have not well received them and their messages from Christ. They will meet these, not as they used to do in this world, to counsel and warn them, but to bear witness against them, as their judges and assessors with Christ, to condemn them. And, on the other hand, the people will at that day rise up in judgment against wicked and unfaithful ministers, who have sought their own temporal interest more than the good of the souls of their flock." What will he give account for?

1. Loving the flock. No congregation will follow a pastor very far until they are convinced that he loves them and that they can trust him. It is one thing to be given the title of pastor but it is quite another thing to be given the trust of the people. Jesus warned against the hireling who did not really care about the sheep. "He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming

and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep." John 10:12-13. He said the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Jesus loves the church and so must the Pastor. You cannot fake real love for the congregation. Either you do or you don't. Some churches have been hurt and disappointed with the actions of former pastors. The first step to lead is to love.

2. Leading the flock. A congregation that is not being led will wander and scatter. It is the responsibility of the pastor to seek and share the plan or vision of God for that church. The writer of Proverbs tells us that "So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us." ¹

Thessalonians 2:8. Poor pastoral leadership will cause a church to demonstrate a modern-day version of wilderness wanderings. A church that has good leadership will be excited about where it is going. The pastor is to take the oversight and lead by example.

3. Keeping the flock together. One of the most challenging functions of a pastor is to keep the flock together. Resolving conflicts and uniting various personalities under one goal consumes a vast amount of energy and time. Facing multiple forms of conflict causes many pastors to want to flee instead of staying and solving the problems. To be a part of a significant work of God one will

have to weather many storms and trials.

4. Tending the flock. The Lord is our Shepherd. His work in our lives as pictured in Psalms 23 is a good example of tending the flock. God is very concerned about the flocks that have been neglected.

"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. ³ Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD." Jeremiah 23:1-4

"The word of the LORD came to me: ² "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? ³ You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. ⁴ The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought

back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. ⁵ So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; ⁶ they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.” Ezekiel 34:1-6.



Tending the flock includes providing general oversight, visiting the sick, counseling those with special needs and performing weddings and funerals. Protecting the flock. A pastor not only deals with sheep, he must deal with wolves. In the book of Acts 20:29 Paul warned the leaders at Ephesus about the wolves that would seek to destroy the flock. A pastor must not only preach the truth, he must expose error. This is why we must reprove and rebuke. Let us, as a congregation, come to God in prayer and supplication as we call a new pastor. The Hebrew and Greek words most often translated “supplication” in the Bible mean literally “a request or petition,” the prayer of supplication is asking God for something. Unlike the prayer of petition, which is praying on behalf of others, the prayer of supplication is generally a request for the person praying. *“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”* Romans 8:26



PRAYER LIST

- ✓ Continuing Prayers for loss: All the families that have lost loved ones this past year. Remember those who continue to lose loved ones due to COVID 19.
- ✓ Continuing Prayers for physical needs: Rita McManus, Maria Hatfield, Gloria-Lynn Fernandez, Betty Matson, Ronaldo Claveria
- ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Ministry Needs: Pastor Brandon Myers, Our Deacons, Financial support.
- ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Sister Ministries: BIEM Ministries, Orchard Church, Pastors Davis, Billow, Eddy, Vitel, Ebi and Esther Perinbaraj, Gaetano and Krista Paolino
- ✓ Continuing Prayers for Spiritual Needs: Leonard Hatfield, Carol Pelfrey's family, Daniel Ruehlman, George Bizadellis
- ✓ Continuing Prayers for: The spread of the Gospel, Our Government, Our Nation, Our Community, Our Neighbors, Our Families, Pray for our members that have lost employment and for those who still have jobs and need to interact with others on a daily basis. Pray for those still working that God will protect. Lift up all our health professionals and their families who are on the front line of this pandemic especially Mylin and Errol Lardizabal and Liza Mitchell. Erwin Lickmann pray for wisdom regarding future living arrangements for Elizabeth and himself.
- Alex Figueroa, (Nephew of Al Nuzikowski) pray for full recovery as he receives treatments for his eye.

If you have prayer requests or updates on your family, we encourage to submit them to the Newsletter email address at the end of this newsletter.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sunday, September 27, 2020**
Pastoral Candidate Brandon Myers will be preaching and will address any questions following the service. Your attendance is important.
- **Sunday, October 4, 2020**
A vote to call Pastor Brandon Myers as Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Niles and approval of Church budget will follow the morning service.
It is important that all members vote. Your attendance is extremely important.

Special provisions are being made for eligible Church Members who have not been able to attend services due to Covid-19. No Touch Absentee Ballot Collection will take place on Sunday, October 4, 2020 in the parking lot between 10:00am and 1:00pm.

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