

Text: 1 Pt 5.4

We come now to 1 Pt 5.4:

^{1 Pt 5.4} And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

We've been talking about pastors in the last few messages, this will cap off that series, but we will focus tonight on the one model and leader for all Christian pastors, the One whom Peter calls here, "the Chief Shepherd."

With that phrase, I want to do a topical memorial of the coming Chief Shepherd, called:

From Good Shepherd to Chief Shepherd

We are well familiar with this metaphor. Tonight I will call up familiar and unfamiliar passages to fill out the topic.

Proposition:**I. The expected shepherd**

The most famous passage using the shepherd metaphor is John 10, the good shepherd. But first, we look to the prophets and their anticipation of the coming shepherd.

A. The anticipated comfort of the expected shepherd

^{Isa 40.11} Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry *them* in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing *ewes*.

1. Isaiah 40 begins describing the time when all the wars of Jerusalem will end, the Lord will comfort his people (1-5)
2. Next, Isaiah describes the frailty of the people (like grass that withers) (6-8)
3. Then, Israel is pointed to hope, God is coming, "like a shepherd" (11), to bring all these blessings about (9-11)

B. The anticipated justice from the expected shepherd

Ezek 34.23 “Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

1. Ezekiel rebukes the shepherds of Israel who act more like wolves than like shepherds (1-10)
2. The Lord promises to come seek out his flock (11-16)
3. And the Lord promises to judge among his flock, between the fat and lean, between the just and unjust (17-24)
4. In this context, the Lord promises to set one shepherd over them, who will take care of his faithful sheep (23)

II. The good shepherd (John 10)

- A. John 10 opens with the metaphor of the sheepfold with the One Door (1-10)
- B. The Lord then mixes metaphors and talks about the good shepherd (11-18)
 1. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (11-13)
 2. The good shepherd knows his own sheep (14-15)
 3. The good shepherd has many folds [Israel and the Gentiles] from which to make one flock (16)
 4. The good shepherd has the father’s love and approval for his mission of laying down his life for the sheep (17-18)
- C. The sheep hear and heed the good Shepherd’s voice (24-30)
 1. Those who are not of the flock do not hear his voice
 2. Those who are of the flock heed his voice, and have eternal life
 3. That life is possible because the Father and the Son are one (30)

The first coming of the Lord was necessary before the second coming: the shepherd had to die for the sheep so that he can lead a regenerated flock when he comes again.

III. The great shepherd

Heb 13.20-21 ¶ Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord,²¹ equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

- A. This is the closing benediction, just before the “signature line” of the book of Hebrews
- B. The look to the past: the Great Shepherd came back from the dead (the work of the Good Shepherd)
- C. The Great Shepherd equips the saints in this present age
 1. To do his will
 2. To reflect what is pleasing in his sight

“In His resurrection life and present work, He is the Great Shepherd working out the divine purpose in all the sheep (Heb. 13:20).”¹

- D. He is also the guardian of our souls

1 Pt 2.25 For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

IV. The chief shepherd

1 Pt 5.4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

- A. The Chief Shepherd is coming
- B. He is chief over all those who served for him in the care of the sheep

Many pastors like to use the term “under-shepherd” to describe this relationship, though it isn’t a Bible term.

¹ D. Edmond Hiebert, *1 Peter* (Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, 1997), 306.

- C. The Chief Shepherd brings a reward (and judgement) along with him
1. The reward is the crown of victory, as mentioned earlier
 - a. “Crown” = *stephanos*, the laurel wreath of victory in battle or at the Olympic games
 - b. Unlike the laurel wreath, this crown is unfading
 - c. It is a “crown of glory” – a crown made up of glory
 2. But the elders Peter writes to are accountable to the chief shepherd, even as Ezekiel warned

Ezek 34.2 “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?”

Conclusion:

No more beautiful pattern for our Lord Jesus or his “under-shepherds” can be found than Psalm 23:

Ps 23.1-6

The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will
fear no evil:
for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine
enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Our message tonight points us to worship the Chief Shepherd and to measure our service against his model.