

1st Thessalonians
Chapter 2:17-20 – Lesson 5
“A Shepherd”

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23)

1. Verses 17-18:

a. As you read **verse 17**, how would you explain Paul's heart for these “*brethren*”?

b. Why do you think Paul was so eager to see them?

c. According to **verse 18**, what hindered Paul from going to them?

- d. Is a shepherding ministry the same as a church (attendance) ministry? Why or why not?

- e. In John 10:14-15, Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd and opens up His ministry to the entire “flock” of believing humanity. We see in both the book of Acts and throughout the epistles the continuance of this type of ministry. Has God raised you up to be a shepherd? To be part of a flock? To be Both?

- f. This type of ministry is so vitally important for the growth of believers in a flock, it cannot be emphasized enough! Be ready to discuss in your small group your role (of preparation) in this type of ministry – whether as a shepherd, a sheep, or both!

**"Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, "who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd."
(Numbers 27:16-17)**