**Pastor Guy Thompson July 21, 2019**

**The Church And The Shepherd**

Matthew 16:18

I. Identity and Ownership:

 A. Whatis the church and Who is the *rightful* owner?

 1. ekklesia: a called-out assembly or congregation;

 the church is not a physical building but

 a called-out people who live by the power of

 the gospel.

II. Authority and Oversight:

 A. Who's in charge and Who authorized it to be so?

 1. This is a matter of legitimateleadership

 and God-given responsibility for the purpose

 of leading andfeeding God's flock.

 B. Elders serving as overseers are charged

 to shepherd or feed the flock of God.

 C. Shepherds are also referred to as pastors.

 1. Peter refers to Christ as the Chief Shepherd.

III. Work and Reward:

 A. What kind of work is involved and is there a

 reward for the labor?

 1. All who believe the gospel are encouraged to

 be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in

 the work of the Lord, because we know our

 labor is not in *vain*.

 2. Paul points out that Christ gave the gifts of

 pastors/shepherds and teachers for

 the perfecting of the saints, for the work of

 the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

 the purpose is spiritual maturity.

 3. Those who shepherd the flock of God will receive

 a crown of glory.

**Food For Thought**

Do you think most people look at the church as something to contribute to, or something that exists to meet their own needs? Why?

Read Ephesians 4:11-13: To whom did the Lord Jesus Christ give these gifts? What do these gifts have in common?

How are the specific gifts in these verses essential to our mission of making disciples?

According to verse 12, what is the purpose of these specific gifts? Does this make them superior to other gifts? Explain.

How does understanding your gifts help you understand how God wants you to serve Him and who He has made you to be?

When you reflect on your spiritual gifts, what impact does it have on your relationship with God?

What can you do to more consistently serve at our church and join in serving our community? How can we as a church intentionally help one another with this effort?