

Harvest Bible Chapel  
Small Group Questions  
May 24, 2009

Solid Foundations of a Growing Church: Foundational Responsibilities  
1Thessalonians 5:12-28

*Note: When contemplating these questions, think of shepherds or pastors more broadly than just "pastoral church staff." Think of those with spiritual leadership and responsibility for others.*

1. Have you ever been around sheep? Name some characteristics of sheep. Why do you think Jesus compared his follower to sheep? Read Matthew 9:36. What happens to sheep without a shepherd? Why do think God calls pastor "shepherds? Read Acts 20:28.
2. What are some synonyms for the word, "esteem"? Those who wore the title "Pastor" were once held in high esteem in the church and social community. Is this still true? Why or why not? How much responsibility lies with the pastors for this? How much responsibility lies with those under his care? What expectations are sometimes placed on pastors that have little to do with his calling from God? Why is this more common today than in times past? Why is esteeming shepherds so essential to growing a healthy church?
3. What four categories of "problem people" are found in every church? How do you discern between them? How is it possible to identify them without being judgmental? Which one do you think does the greatest damage? What are the specific prescriptions for these people? Whose responsibility is it to deal with these people? Who is the most difficult for you to deal with? Who is easiest? (Idle, Fainthearted, Weak, and Offensive.)
4. Do you fall into one of these categories? Which one? How did you get there? Do you feel stuck? Do you welcome admonition, encouragement, help, and forgiveness? Are you reluctant to ask for help? Why or why not?
5. What is your biggest obstacle to obeying these commands?
  - a. Rejoice always.
  - b. Pray without ceasing.
  - c. Give thanks in all circumstances.
  - d. Do not quench the Spirit.
  - e. Do not despise prophecies (the revealed word of God).
  - f. Hold fast to what is good.
  - g. Abstain from every form of evil.
6. What is sanctification? How does knowing that God is in the process of sanctifying your spirit, soul, and body encourage you in your walk with Christ? Name an area where you see God sanctifying you in the last 6 months. What are the odds that you will be completely sanctified?