



No Solo Christians

- 1 John 1:3 says, “that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”
- Acts 2:42, “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”
- Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:13-16:

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Pastoral Watchfulness

Shepherds who Spiritually Care and Nourish the Flock

Shepherds.

- Ephesians 4:11-12, “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”
- 1 Peter 5:1-4 when he wrote,

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: *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; not domineering over those in your charge, but *being examples to the flock*. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory

Who spiritually care for and nourish the flock.

- Psalm 119:103 says this about God’s word, “How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.”
- Psalm 19:10, “More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.”
- A careless shepherd will settle for cheap and easy fast-food he finds lying around.

Who Watch Out for the Wolves and False Teachers

- Acts 20:28-31



Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.

Shepherds have to be vigilant and keep a close eye out for danger.

1. Charge others not to teach false doctrines.
2. Do so graciously.
3. Be ready in season and out of season.

Who Truly Appreciate the Price Paid for the Sheep

- Acts 20:28, "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, *which he obtained with his own blood.*"
- In reminding the Ephesian elders of this very fact, *it impresses upon them the seriousness of their charge, and the preciousness of the ones in their care.*
- Pastoral watchfulness would increase dramatically if this truth alone was impressed upon our hearts in a fresh way each and every day.

Who Joyfully Oversee the Sheep

- Hebrews 13:17, "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. *Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.*"

Mutual Watchfulness

- Galatians 6:1, "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted."
- Hebrews 3:12-13, "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."
- Galatians 6:1
 1. Brothers. Paul addresses the brothers in the church of Galatia. And certainly, this means brothers and sisters as well. He does not single out the pastors.
 2. Look out for those caught in transgression. We look out for those who are actively caught in some sort of pattern of habitual sin.
 3. You who are spiritual. By spiritual, Paul means those who are mature in the faith and walking in step with and bearing the visible fruits of the Holy Spirit.
 4. Restore him. Our aim and our goal is restoration, not condemnation.



5. In a spirit of gentleness. I believe it follows that if your aim is restoration, not retribution, then your manner will be far more gentle.
6. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. You can be tempted with lust just as much as your brother and sister in Christ.

Now lets look at Hebrews 3:12-13 again.

1. Take care, brothers. Again, the author here is addressing brothers and advising care. You could even say he is prescribing watchfulness! This is a church-wide task.
2. Lest there be in any of you an evil unbelieving heart, leading you to fall way from the living God. This is now the reverse of what Paul did in Galatians 6:1. Paul encouraged mutual watchfulness and then careful self-reflection. The author of Hebrews switches it by first prescribing careful self-reflection and then mutual watchfulness.
3. Exhort one another every day, while it is called “today”. The present world we live in is passing away, along with sin and its desires.
4. That none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Our hearts can grow calloused if we’re left by ourselves.

Area of Watchfulness

Conversation.

- How watchful are we over our conversations with our brothers and sisters in Christ? How much of our speech is dominated by sexually charged comments, excessive and mean-spirited sarcasm, or passive aggressive bitterness? Our speech should instead be a means of grace to others.
- Speak regularly of the heavenly blessings we have in Christ Jesus. These blessings are, but not limited to:
 - a. Our redemption from slavery to sin (Romans 8:17-18)
 - b. Our adoption into the family of God (1 John 3:1)
 - c. The indwelling and sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-17)
 - d. The three-fold office of Jesus as High Priest, Prophet, and King on our behalf (Hebrews 4:14-16; Matthew 21:11; Matthew 27:37)
 - e. Our future hope of glory at the return of Christ (Romans 8:18)
 - f. The new heavens and new earth Jesus will establish (Revelation 21)
 - g. The church as the pillar and buttress of truth (1 Timothy 3:15)
 - h. The fragrance of the Gospel being spread to all nations (2 Corinthians 2:14)
 - i. Our regeneration and eternal security from the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5-7)
 - j. The Father choosing the elect, the Son saving the elect, and the Spirit sealing and setting apart the elect (1 Peter 1:1-2; Ephesians 1:3-11).
 - k. Our union with Christ (Colossians 3:1-4; Galatians 2:20)
 - l. The love of Jesus displayed in saving undeserving sinners (Romans 5:6-8)
 - m. The preciousness of God’s written and inspired Word given to us (Psalm 19, 1 Timothy 3:16)
 - n. The future hope of the resurrection at the end of all things (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:12-28)



- Aside from a lack of curse words, would an unbeliever be able to distinguish between our conversations and a group of unbelievers?

Consideration.

- Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.”
- Consideration takes intentional thought, and it takes time.
- When we consider one another for the purpose of stirring up, we’re taking the time to specifically encourage individuals on how to uniquely love and follow God.
- Nine times out of ten we are grateful for such brother and sisters who, in exercising mutual watchfulness, *considered us*.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade on your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.