

# THE CALLING OF A SHEPHERD IN GOVERNMENT

CHURCH AMBASSADOR NETWORK
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# SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP

It is not easy to lead, especially when our own flesh works against us. Our flesh can so quickly be dominated by pride, selfishness, and fear—qualities that have no place in leadership. A good leader recognizes their fleshly struggles and brings them under the authority of Christ.

As Christians, we understand better than anyone the struggles of the flesh and the desperate need for Christ. We understand who He is and what it truly means to lead as a shepherd. This understanding must guide us at the ballot box. America does not merely need to elect another Republican or Democrat; **America must choose shepherds to lead our nation.**

A shepherd leads people to the path of life and protects them from death. When we vote, we are voting for government leaders who will shepherd the institution of government. Where are they leading the people? As we vote, we must discern who best exemplifies the qualities of a true shepherd.

# JESUS' FRAMEWORK FOR SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP: JOHN 10

In John 10, Jesus presents three types of leaders: the thief, the hired hand, and the shepherd. Every leader will embody one or more of these traits. Understanding the differences and their impact on the people is crucial, and it must inform our voting decisions.

## The Thief: Power Without Care

In government, the thief is a tyrant. Their ultimate goal is power and personal recognition. They are motivated by self-interest and use their position for personal gain. They often lord authority over others and will do whatever it takes to maintain power, sometimes through charm, sometimes through force. Under such leadership, the people are harmed, diminished, and ultimately scattered.

## The Hired Hand: Presence Without Responsibility

In government, the hired hand is the politician who seeks approval, safety, and self-preservation. They are dominated by people-pleasing, which is crippling in a context where voters are choosing leaders. They do not lead out of conviction but follow the ever-changing public opinion.

Proverbs says, “There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way to death” (Proverbs 14:12). People often choose what is comfortable and convenient rather than what is best. A true leader recognizes this and challenges people to take the path of life. The hired hand gives in, gives people what they want, and leaves when the cost becomes too high. They almost always take the path of least resistance.

### The Shepherd: Authority With Sacrifice

In government, the shepherd is the statesman. The statesman understands what has been entrusted to them. They protect, guide, and provide. Their primary motive is service, and they are willing to lay down their life for the sheep.

In government, laying down one’s life often means risking re-election. Leading where the people vote is not easy, because natural instincts are not always life-giving. A good shepherd will guide the people through dark valleys if it leads to the path of life. Even when the people vote before seeing the full fruit of the shepherd’s guidance, the shepherd leads them faithfully, because they love the sheep.

A shepherd leads because they too are under authority—grounded in truth, integrity, and ultimately the Lord and His Word. Voting for someone who will lead like a shepherd is not only an act of love for our neighbor—it is a gift.

## GOD’S QUALIFICATIONS FOR SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP: EXODUS 18:21

*“Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.”*

**EXODUS 18:21 (ESV)**

Moses was shepherding the people of Israel, and his father-in-law, Jethro, saw that he was doing too much on his own. Jethro encouraged Moses to raise up other leaders and outlined character traits to look for. These traits serve as an invaluable guide for selecting government leaders today.

### Capable

“Choose men who are capable.” Leaders must have more than character—they must be competent. Shepherding people well requires wisdom, sound judgment, experience, and a history of effective stewardship. True leaders apply knowledge consistently and are not swayed by convenience or public opinion.

## Fears God

"Choose men who fear God." We should not place people in authority who are not under authority themselves. A person who fears God reveres His authority and recognizes ultimate accountability to Him. They know their role is to steward authority, relying on the Lord and His Word. Success is measured by faithfulness and obedience, not applause or recognition.

## Hates Dishonest Gain

"Choose men who hate dishonest gain." Power, wealth, and fame are tempting for leaders. We must elect leaders who are not motivated by earthly rewards but by eternal significance. The way of the thief and hired hand comes with instant gratification. The way of the shepherd pays off in the life to come.

Hebrews 11:24-26 illustrates this principle:

"By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated w*ith the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*"

**HEBREWS 11:24-26 (ESV)**

## Trustworthy

"Choose men who are trustworthy." These are individuals who have proven themselves faithful, not just in words but through enduring trials. They place themselves under authority, confess sin, and welcome accountability. They are consistent at home, at church, and in public. When we vote, we should consider whom the candidate surrounds themselves with and who stands by them—family, church leaders, friends. Do they endorse the candidate? A home life full of integrity naturally overflows into leadership.

# CHOOSING SHEPHERD LEADERS

As Christians, we must apply these biblical principles in our own choices and teach them to others. Scripture provides guidance on what to seek in leaders and how to raise people from our churches to serve in God's institution of government. Government is a form of public service, and God-fearing, capable, honest, and trustworthy individuals are ideally suited to serve for His glory.