

Why do I need to belong to a church?

The Shepherd and Sheep

Introduction:

The 23rd Psalm

Keller Pg. 23

1. **Judges 21:25** – Our present dilemma,
2. **Matthew 9:36-38** -Sheep without a shepherd
3. Today, a pastor or church leader is viewed like a shopkeeper who offers products for us to choose from. Church services and programs are treated as offerings on a buffet in which we can pick and choose what interests us. We only “belong” as far as it suits us... What are we to do? We must re-define our relationship to Christ with a *biblical* understanding of relationship to the church and church leadership
4. **I Peter 2:4-5, 24-25** – Christ is now our Shepherd, Owner, King
5. **I Peter 5:1-4** – The Chief Shepherd has given a stewardship to church leaders (pastors – under-shepherds) to shepherd **His** flock
 - a. **Acts 20:28** - Overseers
 - b. **Hebrews 13:17** - give an account
6. **Matthew 7:21-23** - Have we given over our lives to Christ (is His mark on you?) or simply hanging out with His sheep? Our relationship to the Church reveals the answer...
7. **Summary:** The picture of a shepherd and sheep is a picture of our relationship with God. He chooses us, puts His mark upon us, and then assigns us to a flock with an under-shepherd... (a church) where we become part and grow in Him. A lamb does not just decide to hang with a flock for a while and then join another flock as it sees fit. That is a wild lamb, which is not actually part of the Chief shepherds flock. The Chief Shepherds flock is overseen by under-shepherds, stewards who will one day give an account for how they cared for the flock. Belonging to a church is a necessary, God designed part of becoming a true Christian.