

Be-Longing Relational Reach...

Part 8



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Last week: Belonging to His body,
the Church

“In and not of”

Church = *ekklesia* “A called-out
assembly or congregation”

**The Universal Church
of Christ**

Church in Scripture

The Local Church



1. Belonging Perks:

Church | God's heart and safety –

1 Peter 5 To the Elders and the Flock

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears,



you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. 5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.



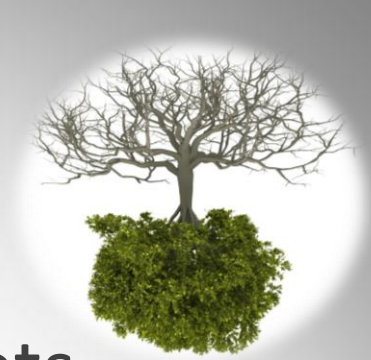
Jesus, Chief Shepherd



2. 'Be-Longing': Shepherd safety:

2.1 Scripture: Psalm 23 | The Good Shepherd

1 The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. 2 He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. 3 He renews my life; He leads me along the right paths for His name's sake. 4 Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD as long as I live.



Jesus, the Good Shepherd



John 10:11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me

Church we have a shepherd!

The Good Shepherd LEADS
LEADS those willing to be lead

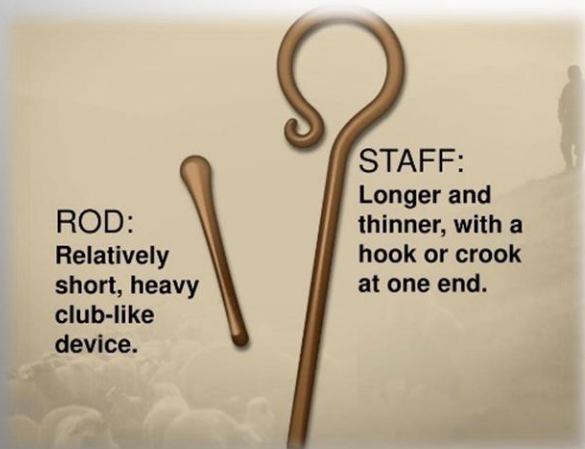
“Your rod and Your staff—they
comfort me.”





Verse 4

Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear
no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and
Your staff—they comfort me.

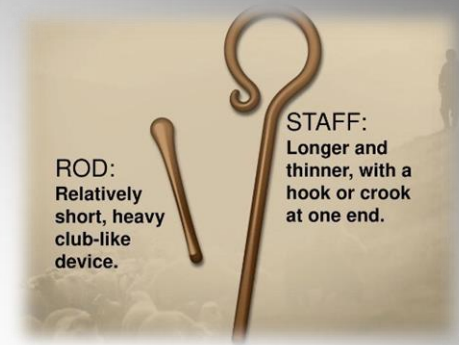


2.2 Rod and the Staff:

Context:

What is the **Rod** and the **Staff**? David bases this description on the practices of shepherds in his day. Shepherds of the time commonly carried a **rod** and staff as essential to their work.

“Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it” 1 Samuel 17:34–35



Context:

The staff was a long, slender stick, often hooked at the tip, used primarily to direct the flock. Sheep are notorious wanderers, and once away from the shepherd's watchful eye, they get into all sorts of trouble. The shepherd used his staff to keep his sheep out of danger and close to himself. If a sheep became trapped in a precarious position, the shepherd would loop the curved end of the staff around the neck of the sheep and retrieve it back to safety.



Spiritual and symbolic truth:
What does this mean for us today?



Staff:

1. Speaks of intimacy | Emmanuel the Comforter, the Holy Spirit | Closeness | Relational closeness

2. Knowing His ways | Know the Truth

3. Connection and His VOICE:

John 10:27-28 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Spiritual Truth:
What does this mean for us today?



Staff:

4. Not abandoned: “I will never [under any circumstances] desert you [nor give you up nor leave you without support, nor will I in any degree leave you helpless], nor will I forsake or let you down or relax My hold on you [assuredly not]!”

Hebrews 13:5 AMP

Comforted!

Rod:



1. **Speaks of His authority** | His command | It's finished
2. **The Word**
3. **Protection** | He is stronger
4. **Redeemer**

Again, we need to BE WITHIN RANGE

John 6:39 This is the will of Him who sent Me: that I should lose none of those He has given Me but should raise them up on the last day.



Romans 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Luke 10:19 “Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.”



Isaiah 54:17 No weapon that is fashioned *[formed]* against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.”

Comforted!

Rod and Staff



Prayer

Even when I go through the darkest valley,
I fear no danger, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff—they comfort
me.



LIFE

See you next week

