

# The Rigors of Shepherding

by A.W. Tozer

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*The shepherd of souls faces unique challenges in balancing encouragement and warning, and must be sensitive to the diverse needs of his congregation.*

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Hebrews 10:24

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Shepherding"

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## Description

A.W. Tozer discusses the complexities of shepherding souls, emphasizing the challenges faced by a pastor who must balance encouragement for the timid with warnings for the self-confident. He highlights the difficulty of addressing a diverse congregation, where individuals are at various stages of spiritual development, from new believers to seasoned Christians. This dynamic can lead to unintended consequences, where encouragement may embolden the careless, while warnings may discourage the fearful. Tozer underscores the need for wisdom and discernment in shepherding, as the pastor navigates these contrasting needs within the church.

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## Transcript

Because we are the kind of persons we are and because we live in a world such as we do, the shepherd of souls is often forced to work at what would appear to be cross purposes with himself. For instance, he must encourage the timid and warn the self-confident; and these may at any given time be present in his congregation in almost equal numbers. His effort to encourage those who need encouragement may actually confirm presumptuous souls in their carelessness.

Conversely, his much needed warnings and reproofs may drive timorous and doubting Christians to the borders of despair.

Another problem he faces is the presence in the normal Christian assembly of believers in every stage of development, from the newly converted who knows almost nothing about the Christian life to the wise and experienced Christian who seems to know almost everything.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/the-rigors-of-shepherding/>

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