

Shepherding vs. Soldiering

Why the Tension?

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The Apparent Tension:

Shepherd vs. Soldier
Mission vs. Pastoring
Task vs. Relationship

- There is a tension and often churches, leaders and followers of Christ see them at odds with one another.

Thesis:

Jesus has called His church both to Soldier (missional) and to Shepherd (pastoral care of people).

Therefore, as leaders and followers of Christ, we are called both to direct people into mission and to relationally care for them. These are biblical emphases in tension, not contradictions.

Relevant passages:

Joshua 1:5-6a	God with Joshua & called on him to be “strong and courageous”
Jeremiah 20:11	God represented as a champion warrior
Psalms 23:1	God represented as a shepherd
Mark 3:14	Jesus appointed them to “be with Him” and to “send them out”
John 15:15-16	Jesus called them “friends” and call on them to “go and bear fruit”
John 21:15	Jesus commission them to “tend the lambs”
Matthew 28:19	Jesus commission them to make disciples of all nations
1 Thessalonians 2:7	Paul nurtured like a mother and challenged/exhorted them like a father
1 Timothy 1:18	Commanded Timothy to fight the good fight
1 Timothy 5:23	Paul was concerned with his well being
2 Timothy 2:3-4	Paul called Timothy to “suffer” as a soldier of Christ
2 Timothy 1:2-5	Paul gave Timothy words of affection and encouragement

Both Shepherding and Soldier are emphasized in scripture

- Not in opposition or contradictory
- Shepherding (pastoral leadership) is necessary to accomplish the mission
- Soldiering (mission leadership) is necessary for effective shepherding

Shepherding is required to accomplish the mission

- God only works through broken people
- We pursue God's purposes God's way
- The overwhelming example and teaching in scripture underscores this

Soldiering (mission) is necessary for effective shepherding

- It is part of our identity in Christ – 2 Corinthians 5
- It is a key purpose for leadership in the Church – Ephesians 4
- Relationships are not “ends” in themselves.
- God's greatest good for all people includes robust participation in His great work.

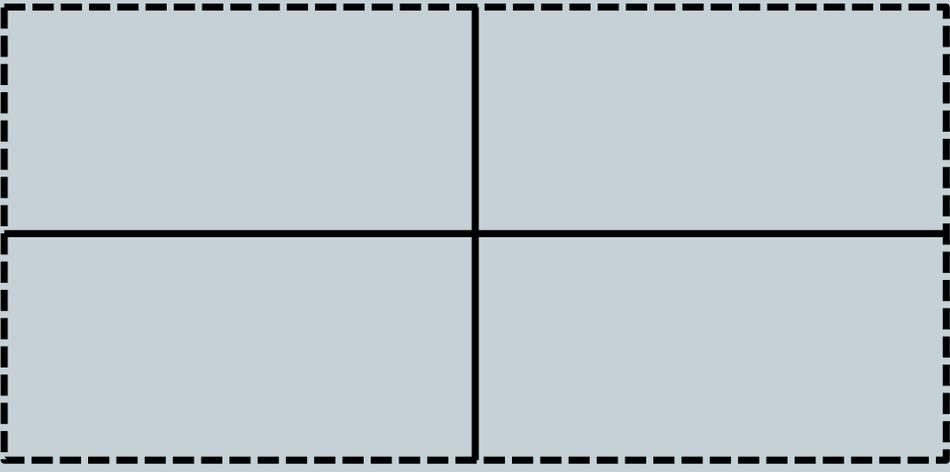
Some diagnostic questions:

- How do you view “stuck” people ?
- How do you view deeply broken people?
- What does “victorious” living look like for people?
- How do you view chronically unwilling people?
- Do you over-look weakness in character in “high-performers”?

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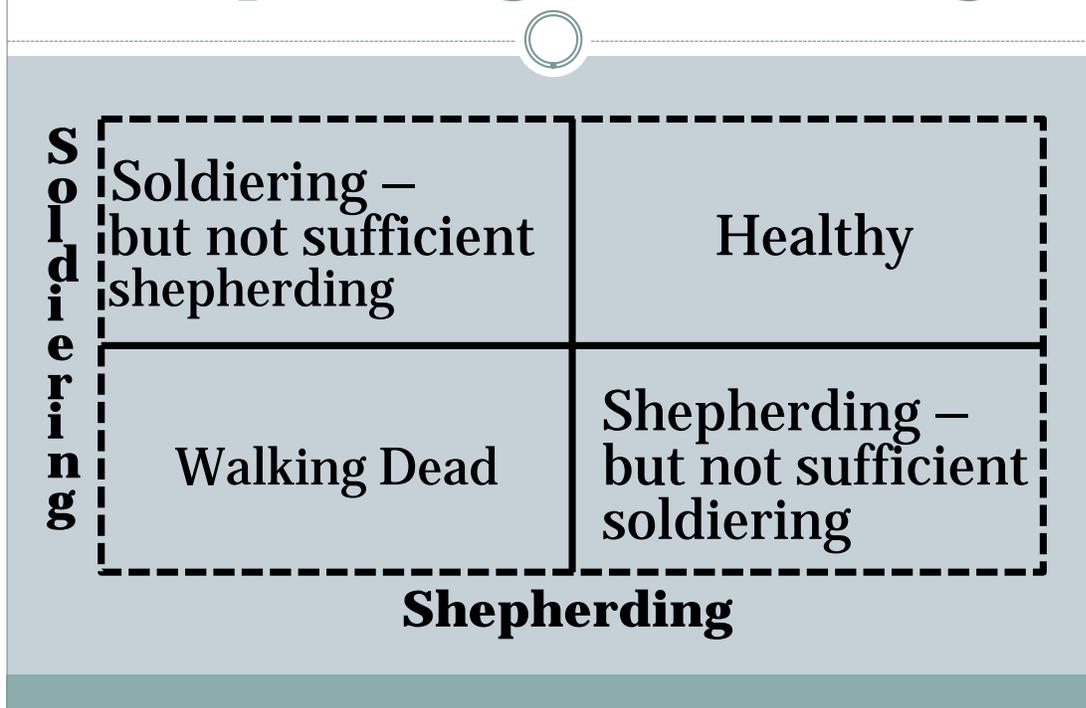


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Shepherding

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Moving Towards Health

- Ask God to reveal the “hurtful way” within you.
- Humbly submit to the full teaching of God
- Reject “either-or” thinking
- Reject “loving – unloving” dichotomies

- Grace
- Both tendencies reveal a weakness of grace

Know your tendency

- Young or new leaders tend toward soldiering/missional
- Older or longer-term leaders tend toward shepherding/pastoral

Shepherding vs. Soldiering

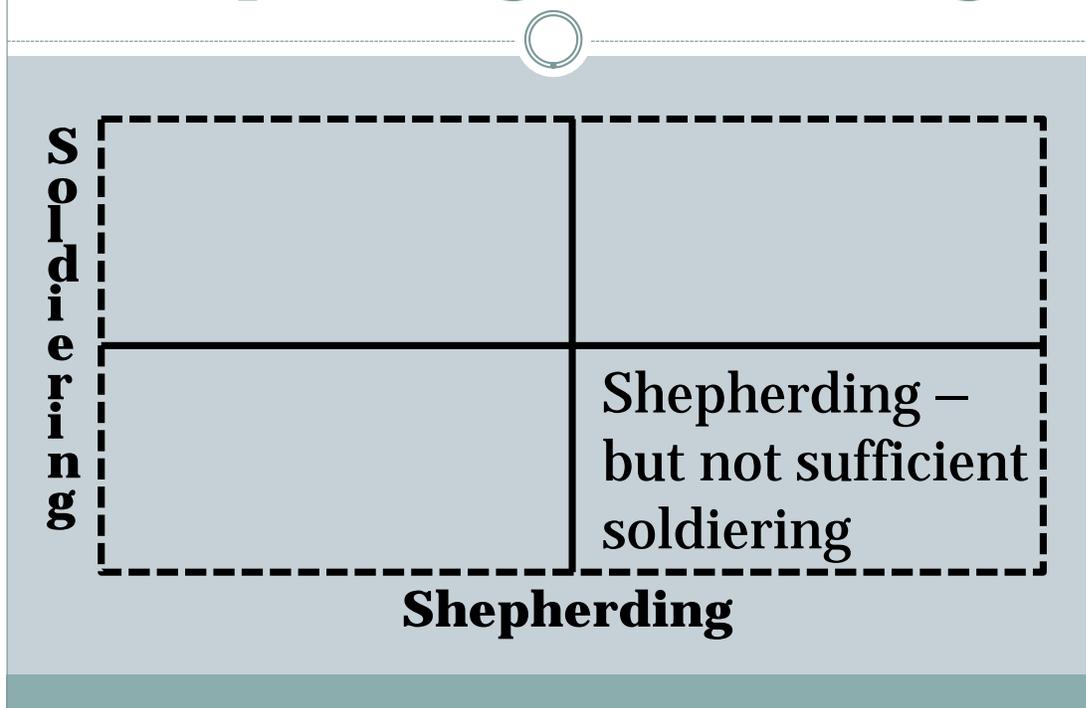


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Soldiering –
but not sufficient
shepherding

Shepherding

Shepherding vs. Soldiering



Moving towards Health – More questions

- Are you reactive or proactive?
- Do you have both Shepherds and Soldiers on your team? Do you listen to each other?
- Esteem both strengths in people
- Get outside input on this (personally or for you team)
- Explore underlying reasons for this imbalance
- “God what is one step you want me (or my team) to take towards health?”