

# The CHRISTIAN SHEPHERD

*"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life"*

## **The Doctrine of God**

Titus speaks of the family order, and of the "*doctrine of God*". Where this doctrine of God is not heeded, the "*word of God*" is caused to be blasphemed. Consider our Lord Jesus. Until He was thirty (3 "tens") He remained, as it were, in the family circle. He gave about one-tenth of His life in what we might call the service of the Lord. But He stayed in that family circle until He could say, "*who is my mother*", or, "*woman what have I to do with thee?*" We learn vitally important principles from our Lord's example.

He honored those natural ties, and the demands that they placed upon Him. As a child he said, "*wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*" Yet, He submitted to His parents' will, and awaited another day to leave that 'family circle'. It may have appeared to others that His family was more important to Him than doing His Father's business, but it was in subjection to the "*doctrine of God*"—that doctrine that puts one in subjection to someone else, (wives to husbands, servants to masters, children to parents). This doctrine must be honored, and learned by experience if there is to be blessing.

This "*doctrine of God*" also has instructions for the husband and father, providing for his own house. All must be learned, and is learned more or less, in the family circle. We tend to want to by-pass this school, prematurely taking up the service and ministry of the assembly, gospel, or whatever else may press itself upon our hearts. To do so, however, may be to our sorrow later in life, when the effects of the neglect of our family in order to carry out our desired service, is seen.

I specially have in mind, as I write this, to encourage us to see the inestimable value of the family, its care, and our 'schooling' learned best in the family sphere. The learning of obedience for us requires the breaking of our own will. This was not so with our Lord. With Him it was simply that He had never been in the place of obedience prior to His becoming a man. "Though He were Son, yet learned He obedience by the things that He suffered" (Heb. 6:5).

Do we not deeply mourn the loss of our children (loss as to their drifting from the path of faith

into a path which takes them into the world)? I cannot help but think it often has to do with the "*doctrine of God*" being neglected in the place of service in the assembly. Assembly care comes later in the journey of life.

*"For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"*

Keep to your Scripturally proper roles as husband and wife, for it is here you learn the truth of Christ and the Church.

Care for our children, as parents, helps us to learn truths relating to the Family of God. Paul's ministry gives us *church truth* in a special way while John's ministry speaks much of the *family of God*. Two wonderful spheres of ministry and service, both learned practically in submitting to "*the doctrine of God*".

H.S. □