

# Know the State of Thy Flocks

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[ 0 : 00 ] All right, with our time remaining, let's memorize a verse together. Proverbs 27, verse 23. We're going to say this verse together. I got all these kids, and I want a vest.

That's a superpower vest. When they have a vest on, they are ready to learn. We need them in all sizes, okay? Proverbs 27, 23. I'm going to say it to you once, then we're going to say it together, and we're going to memorize it.

And with the few minutes we have left, we're just going to look at that one verse. Proverbs 27, 23. I'm going to read first, then I'll ask you to read with me. Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.

Would you read that with me? Proverbs 27, 23 together. Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. One more time together.

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. Close our eyes. Let's see if we can do it, okay? Ready? Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.

[ 1 : 02 ] I cheated. I glimpsed at it. It's really easy when you're not standing up here. The Bible verse is a little bit more. But there's three sections in this. The passage, there's six verses. It came out of a challenge to not be lazy.

And young people, you should know what lazy looks like. You can even be lazy when you're six and seven years old, and you have almost no responsibility. It's easy at a very young age. You can be lazy, which also means you can be a hard worker.

If there's room and an opportunity to be lazy, there's also room for you to be a diligent worker. But in these five verses here from 23 to 27, what we have is we have a portion that tells us to look after the basic matters of life, the simple matters.

And those simple matters will take care of you. They will provide for you in years to come. They will sustain you and the work. And that's what I want us to focus on. First of all, we need to be diligent in knowing the state of thy flocks.

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks. This diligence combines a willingness to work hard with a discerning focus, a sense of urgency, a carefulness, and be faithful.

[ 2 : 13 ] To just do the job really well that you've been given. To not go about faking it. I've shared how my basketball coach, after I had my surgery in high school, I couldn't jump anymore. And so he would, there in practice, I would jump to touch the backboard.

And sometimes when he wasn't around, I would just pretend that I was jumping, you know, but I wouldn't be jumping and touch the backboard. And he would come in there and he would yell and he would say, quality is not an act, it's a habit.

And he would make me say that. So I'd have to jump up and hit the backboard and say, quality is not an act, it's a habit. So you can see it in sports. You can see it when you clean your room. You can see it on Thursday night when you're driving the church and you're focusing on your Bible verses.

The diligence, the opportunity, and everybody said, praise God for Micah, all right? All right, thank you, Micah. And you see the diligence to do it, just to give it your very best. You play the Juana games that Miss Gracie comes up with.

And there's some people that play a little bit. And those are people that just go all at it. And so the Bible tells us to give diligence to a work, which requires wisdom. Now, this is more for the parents here, for you too as well, kids.

[ 3 : 15 ] It's important that you recognize the time and the season in life you're at. In Ephesians, it tells us that we need to redeem the time, we need to take back the time, because the days are evil. And if we're not careful, we'll be unwise.

But we can be wise understanding the will of the Lord. Being diligent requires understanding what time of life you're in. If you're in fifth grade, that is the time that you're supposed to learn fifth grade math.

You're not supposed to learn fifth grade math in sixth grade. You're not supposed to learn fifth grade math when you're 39 years old, all right? Or you're not supposed to be learning middle school English when you're 39, which is what I end up doing a lot of my time.

I'm out of season in some of my learning. I should have given myself diligently to what was in front of me. And so parents, we have the sense of urgency, because you know in redeeming the time, Charlie's never going to be that age again, Matt.

And so the lessons for Charlie at that age have to come at that time. So we've got to be diligent about it, because time lost is not easily regained. So it's important, parents, that we have wisdom, knowing what the will of the Lord is.

[ 4 : 18 ] And then we go on to say, this is the exhortation to be diligent, to know the state of the flock, so that our diligence should be given towards knowing the state of thy flocks, an easy application, an easy matter that we have would have to do with our children, the state of our children.

The finest art of communication is not learning to express your thoughts, which is important. So grateful for many of you that went through the course to teach five minutes, and you did it this week, and you did it a couple weeks ago.

And there's a real lesson to be learned about that. There's a real science to that. And I appreciate you doing that. But the finest art of communication is learning how to draw out the thoughts of another, right?

Listening. It's challenging. It's hard to listen to our kids. But we are not going to be diligent about knowing the state of our flock. We're not going to be diligent about taking care of our little, our responsibilities, if we don't learn to listen.

We cannot be passive about this. We have to give ourselves to it. We have to be students. We have to be students of the things that they're faced with. We have to be students of the time that we're in. We have to be students of them.

[ 5 : 26 ] We have to know what it is that's going on in their life. And we have to listen to them to be able to do that. You can't take care of the things in your life that you ignore. The small matters.

Whether it be academic, you may think that's small. Or it may be financial. Any of you kids know what it's like when you show up to class and you say, I know how to do the work, but I didn't know we were having a quiz today. I could do the work, but I didn't know there was going to be a test.

Mom didn't remind me that I was supposed to be doing a test in the morning, but I didn't know to do this. Well, the diligence comes in that you have that responsibility. All those little details of your life, those are what life is made up of.

You've got to take care of it. Those little conversations that we have in the car with the kids, and they say something that just kind of seems off the cuff, and it doesn't seem to matter, that is them teaching you something. And you have a responsibility to be diligent about knowing them, and we can't be passive about it.

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds, which requires protection of them. Numbers 32, 24, Build you cities for little ones, and fold your sheep, and do that which is proceeded out of your mouth.

[ 6 : 31 ] And this is a passage that lets you know how to take care of sheep. It also gives a passage about how to take care of kids. They were going forth to war. They built a sheepfold. They put the kids in it, because it's always been the responsibility of the strong to take care of the weak, the strong to take care of the vulnerable.

We have a responsibility. We have to be mindful of our calling to protect our kids. Physically, certainly. Spiritually, most certainly as well.

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Proverbs 4, 23, Keep the heart with all diligence for all the issues of life. Parents, we should work at keeping the diligence of our kids and looking after them.

It's the responsibility that we have. I've been reading a book recently about the difference between territory and truth. There's expressions we say about hedge of protection and about binding things in this world.

And sometimes we begin to think that the fight for our kids is territorial. Like if we put them in the right places and do the right things. But the fight for our kids to be diligent has to do with truth. That is the fight that we've been called.

[ 7 : 36 ] The strongholds in this world, they're not places, but they're false teaching that's given to them. So there's a protection. I'm responsible for what comes into the heart of my kids, and I need to protect them from what's being brought in.

But I'm also supposed to supply for them what they need at this season of life, redeeming it. And you know that we're supposed to do that, but I'm just reminding you we're supposed to do that work with all diligence because we're supposed to take care of the flock in which God has given us.

We have an oversight to it. So parents in here, a challenge. Let's be very mindful of what we're doing. A lot of details and attention. One of the great things about Awana, it's an hour and a half program that is detailed down to every minute of what needs to happen to have the most effective time with those kids.

I know we can't schedule our lives like continual Awana. You may not always have a vest system and a button system at your house. Some of you do, and that's very impressive. I'm glad that you're able to do that. But we have to build into our lives those same kind of steps that you would see in Awana.

There has to be some intentionality. We have to be diligent about the work that we're given to do. Parents, let's do it with all diligence in our lives. And then kids, you have responsibilities right now no matter how old you are.

[ 8 : 47 ] In those small things, you're told to take out the trash, it's a big thing. You're told to do this or that, they're big things. There's no small thing in your life when it's given to you because you have an opportunity to do it as unto the Lord.

It's an opportunity to glorify Him. So you need to look after Him. You don't need to always be finding like, I just, I forgot this or I forgot that. Those things that you're forgetting, those small things, God trusted you with it.

It's part of you growing up. You take a small thing and you do it, and then you get the opportunity to have something next handed to you. So whenever a job comes to you in life, you need to take it and say, I'm going to take care of this small thing with diligence as unto the Lord to bring Him honor.