

## **“The Difference between Leading and Pushing”**

**“<sup>3</sup>For our exhortation is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in deception. <sup>4</sup>But even as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup>For neither were we at any time found using words of flattery, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness (God is witness), <sup>6</sup> nor seeking glory from men (neither from you nor from others), when we might have claimed authority as apostles of Christ.”**  
(1 Thess. 2:4-6, WEB)

Most of us today do not like the feeling that someone is pushing us. This is especially applicable in the religious settings in our time. Some have the feeling that their parents or others “pushed” religion on them during their childhood. Some still deeply resent this. Folks have been driven away from church or have rebelled because of these feelings. Regardless of the reality of what folks experience, it is still their feeling. It influences their beliefs and actions.

In regard to spiritual things, this is not easy terrain. Parents have a Biblical responsibility to raise their kids in the faith. However, the same methods don’t always work in every case. We would be wise to recognize this.

The shepherds of old generally led the sheep. The sheep followed their shepherd. They didn’t drive them usually as one would cattle, for instance. I am convinced that different

situations require different strategies at times. However, generally the best method for ministering to others, especially in our time and culture, is by leading. We must trust that the Lord will call His own to follow Him faithfully. If we find ourselves driving the sheep often, we should probably check our motives and methods.

CLOSING WORD: **“<sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and I’m known by my own; <sup>15</sup>even as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. I lay down my life for the sheep.”**  
(John 10:14-15, WEB)

PRAYER: **“<sup>20</sup>Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, our Lord Jesus, <sup>21</sup>make you complete in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”** (Hebrews 13:20-21, WEB).