

## “The Good Shepherd!”

### I. **INTRO:**

- A. We're **continuing the conversation** between **Jesus & the Pharisees** after the healing of the blind man in chapter 9.
1. They claimed to be **spiritual guides** of Israel, **but** have shown themselves to be **thieves & robbers spiritually**, **like** the false prophets/shepherds of the OT.<sup>1</sup>
- B. Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Calvary Chapel - corruption of God's plan sadly happens in all *denominations*, in all *religions*, in all *countries*, in all *times*.
1. **It happens when religion** replaces a **relationship with God**.
  2. **It happens when pride** replaces **gratitude for God's grace**.
  3. **It happens when hunger for power** replaces a **desire to serve**.<sup>2</sup>
- C. Let's roll back to 1st century sheep & shepherds. **At night** flocks were brought to a sheepfold & committed to the care of the **keeper/porter**. **In the morning** the shepherds knocked at the barred door & the porter would open from within (**or**, sometimes the porter would sit in its entrance & become the door itself). Each shepherd would separate his sheep by giving a **call**. When summoned the flock would follow its shepherd.
- D. **Intro Story**: Two men were called on, in a large classroom, to recite the **23rd Psalm**. **One was a published orator** trained in speech technique and drama. He repeated the psalm in a powerful way. **When he finished**, the audience cheered and even asked for an encore that they might hear his wonderful voice again. **Then the other man**, who was much older, repeated the same words - "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want..." **but when he finished**, no sound came from the large class. Instead, people sat in a deep mood of devotion and prayer. **Then** the first man, the orator, stood to his feet. "I have a confession to make, he said. The difference between what you have just heard from **my old friend**, and what you heard **from me** is this: *I know the Psalm, my friend knows the Shepherd.*"

### II. **THE GOOD SHEPHERD!**

- A. **I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD!** (1-6)
- B. God's people are His flock.
1. Ps.100:3 **We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.**

<sup>1</sup> Stibbs; Search The Scriptures; Jn.10:1-21

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Chuck Swindoll.

2. Is.40:11 He will feed **His flock** like a shepherd; He will gather the **lambs** with His arm, & carry them in His bosom, & gently lead those who are **with young**.
3. Ps.95:7 For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And **the sheep** of His hand (or, the sheep *under His care*).

C. Why does He compare us to sheep?

1. We are **prone to wander** (All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way)
2. We need a Shepherd to **guide us** (like sheep do)
3. Sheep **flock together**, so should we (should be no lone wolves!)

D. (3) **Hear** - listen attentively to, & so to obey.

E. (4) **He brings out His own sheep, He goes before them** - a rebuke to the Pharisees who expelled the man born blind.

F. (4b) **For they know his voice** - A man in **Australia** was arrested and charged with stealing a sheep. But he claimed emphatically that it was one of his own that had been missing for many days. When the case went to court, the judge was puzzled, not knowing how to decide the matter. At last he asked that **the sheep** be brought into the courtroom. Then he ordered **the plaintiff** to step outside and call the animal. The sheep made no response except to raise its head and look frightened. The judge then instructed **the defendant** to go to the courtyard and call the sheep. When the accused man began to make his distinctive call, the sheep bounded toward the door. It was obvious that he recognized the familiar voice of his master. Source unknown

G. (6) **Illustration** - allegory, figure of speech. A story that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning.

H. **I AM THE DOOR!** (7-21)

I. (9) Remember the religious leaders last chapter excommunicated the newly healed blind man - *attempting to slam the door of God in his face!*

1. Little did they realize that they'd actually freed him from their **man-made house of hell** to find the **true Door** who opens heaven to us all.

J. **In & out to find green pasture** (or, spiritual nourishment).

1. Shepherds/porters regulate the coming & going of sheep between the sheep pen & the pasture.
  - a) As the door, Jesus decides who enters the family of God.
2. **Saved** - the entire process of **soul-health!** F.B.Meyer [**in** for *fellowship*; **out** for *service!*]
3. It is He who gives **salvation, security, & satisfaction** to **all who enter here!**

K. In **Dante's Divine Comedy** he shares the supposed inscription at the **entrance to Hell**, "Abandon all hope ye who enter here".

1. **Q: Does that sign hang anywhere in your life?** "Abandon all hope ye who enter here"

2. **Q: Any situation in your life that seems hopeless?**
  - a) Does it hang over a bottle/alcohol that seems impossible to walk away from @ night?
  - b) Does it hang over every meal with your eating disorder?
  - c) Does it hang over your unemployment, thinking you'll never find work?
  - d) Does it hang over your marriage that constantly feels "it's over"?
  - e) Where have you abandoned all hope?
3. We can affix a different sign at the entrance to this new door, "**Abandon yourself** ye who enter here"; or, "**Gain all hope** ye who enter here!"
  - a) God tells Hosea I will allure her (Israel/his wife)...I will give her her vineyards...and the Valley of Achor (formerly meant trouble) as a door of hope; She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth. (2:14,15)
  - b) Enjoy all HOPE...those who enter here! (through the *Jesus Door!*)

L. (10) Steal, kill, destroy - Howard Hughes - All he ever really wanted in life was **more**. He wanted **more money**, so he parlayed inherited wealth into a billion-dollar pile of assets. He wanted **more fame**, so he broke into the Hollywood scene and soon became a filmmaker and star. He wanted **more sensual pleasures**, so he paid handsome sums to indulge his every sexual urge. He wanted **more thrills**, so he designed, built, and piloted the fastest aircraft in the world. He wanted **more power**, so he secretly dealt political favors so skillfully that two U.S. presidents became his pawns. All he ever wanted was **more**. He was absolutely convinced that **more** would bring him true satisfaction. Unfortunately, history shows otherwise. This man concluded his life emaciated and colorless; with a sunken chest; fingernails in grotesque, inches-long corkscrews; rotting, black teeth; tumors; and innumerable needle marks from his drug addiction. Howard Hughes died believing the myth of **more**. He died a billionaire junkie, insane by all reasonable standards.<sup>3</sup>

1. Steal, kill, destroy - that's all our enemy his minions are about.

M. (10b) Oh, let us not be content until our life has become *abundant* life! Because our life, cost the Shepherd His life!

N. (13) Beware of thieves(1,10); strangers(5); & hirelings(12)

1. Thieves, robbers, strangers & hirelings - the false Messiahs; false prophets; Pharisees & Scribes; the religious leaders of ch.9 who were more interested in fleecing the sheep than in *guiding, nurturing & guarding* them.

O. (14) The Good Shepherd (gave His life; Ps.22); The Great Shepherd [He.13:20] (Cares for the sheep; Ps.23); The Chief Shepherd [1Pet.5:4] (Will come again in glory; Ps.24)

<sup>3</sup> Bill Hybels; Leadership.

- P. **Good** - John used an unusual term for Good. It means *good, beautiful*. It has the connotation of a winsome, attractive, & virtuous person.<sup>4</sup>
1. We might use it in the sense of **a model of perfection**.
  2. Few portraits of Jesus have **more appeal** than His role of Shepherd.
  3. The “**goodness**” of this Shepherd abides in the fact that *He does not spare Himself* in looking after the sheep.
- Q. (16) **Other sheep I have** - The language is sovereign & prophetic.
1. Gentiles? Yes. - But also family members, co-workers, friends who are not following the Shepherd yet.
  2. **Q: What other sheep does he want to lead to Himself, through you?**
- R. (16b) **2 groups** would become **1 fold**, but only through **1 Shepherd**.
1. Eph.2:11,13,16 **Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth...but now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ...to reconcile both of them to God through the cross.**
- S. (18) In the OT the sheep died for the shepherd; Christ is the Shepherd who dies for the sheep!
- T. The story of the *Good Shepherd* is **not** the tragic story of a **Victim** but the tremendous story of a **Victor**! One who voluntarily laid down His life on our behalf.
1. **Pilate** tried to intimidate Jesus w/the authority to release Him or crucify Him.
  2. **Peter** tried to protect Him w/his sword a Gethsemane.
    - a) But Jesus’ death was voluntary. He told **Peter** “put away your sword, do you think I cannot ask My Father, & He will at once put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels?” & He told **Pilate** “you would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.”
  3. In vs.18 it speaks about both His **death & resurrection!**
- U. (20) **Mixed reactions** - Satanic or Psychotic. The dissension remains unresolved as the curtain abruptly falls on this scene.
1. Vs.22-42 carry’s the same theme(Shepherd) but is 2/3 months later.
- V. **How do you recognize if you’re following the True Shepherd?** You hear His voice(relationship - He speaks to you); He calls you by name(intimacy); He leads you.
1. **Do you know His voice?**

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<sup>4</sup> Shepherds Notes; pg.53

- W. If you are a shepherd of God's people, how does your leadership stack up w/the characteristics communicated in these passages? In light of Christ's self-sacrificing model? **What would you like to change?**
- X. (Ps.23 *Message Bible*) God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing. You have bedded me down in lush meadows, you find me quiet pools to drink from. True to your word, you let me catch my breath and send me in the right direction. Even when the way goes through Death Valley, I'm not afraid when you walk at my side. Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure. You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies. You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing. Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life. I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life.

### Y. **The 23rd Psalm Explained!**

#### Z. **The Lord is my Shepherd - That's Relationship!**

I shall not want - **That's Supply!**

He makes me to lie down in green pastures - **That's Rest!**

He leads me beside the still waters - **That's Refreshment!**

He restores my soul - **That's Healing!**

He leads me in the paths of righteousness - **That's Guidance!**

For His name sake - **That's Purpose!**

Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death - **That's Testing!**

I will fear no evil - **That's Protection!**

For Thou art with me - **That's Faithfulness!**

Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me - **That's Discipline!**

Thou prepares a table before me in the presence of mine enemies - **That's Hope!**

Thou anoints my head with oil - **That's Consecration!**

My cup runs over - **That's Abundance!**

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life - **That's Blessing!**

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord - **That's Security!**

Forever - **That's Eternity!**

#### 1. **So, do you know the Psalm, or do you know the Shepherd?**

AA. Jesus **did not** become entrapped in some sticky political web from which he could not extricate Himself. **Rather**, He spun a story of selfless sacrifice so enticing, so enchanting, that it would attract people to Him for millennia to come.<sup>5</sup>

1. Yes, it's a 2000 year old story. *The story of a Shepherd **so supremely good that nothing stood in the way of His love for His sheep. Not even His own life!***
2. **Q: Do you hear the voice of this Shepherd, calling you this morning?**
3. **Q: Are you ready to follow this Shepherd?**

<sup>5</sup> Chuck Swindoll; John; pg.54.