

## "THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP"

### I. SOME OF THE THINGS ILLUSTRATED IN THIS METAPHOR OF THE CHURCH

A. This metaphor illustrates first of all how the Lord Jesus loves and cares for His own.

1. As the good Shepherd He came to provide life and much more for the sheep (Jn.10:10). Notice this is a different purpose for which a thief would come and this speaks of the religious leaders of Israel (Jn.10:8,10; Matt 23:13-33).
2. As the good Shepherd He gave His life for the sheep in order that they might live (Jn.10:11). Notice this is different from what a hireling would do (Jn.10:12,13). A hireling doesn't really care for the sheep because they are not his own. A hireling cares only for his wages and therefore when he and the lives of the sheep are in jeopardy he will leave them because he lacks love and concern for them. Here is the essential difference between a pastor and a preacher.

B. The Second thing illustrated in this metaphor is the waywardness of man and the need that we all have for spiritual guidance.

1. Just like sheep apart from a shepherd will go astray, so all men apart from the Lord will go astray and turn to their own sinful ways (Isa.53:6; I Pet. 2:25; Luke 15).
2. Just like sheep need a shepherd to lead them and care for their needs so do all men need the Lord's provision to meet their needs or otherwise they will be sadly lacking (Matt 9:36).
3. Just like sheep are led so undiscerningly to the slaughter and are therefore vulnerable to those who lead them, so are men led many times to their own hurt and destruction (Isa. 53:7; Acts 20:28-30).

### II. SOME OF THE THINGS INVOLVED IN THIS RELATIONSHIP AS BELIEVERS

A. This relationship involves first of all a recognition

of who the Shepherd and His sheep are.

1. The good Shepherd is clearly identified by His loving example.

a. The Lord Jesus is the One that entered in by the door or by God's appointed way (Jn. 10:1,2).

b. The Lord Jesus is the One that led His sheep out of the barren grounds of Judaism into plentiful pastures of grace (Jn.10:3).

c. The Lord Jesus gave His life for the sheep so that they might live (Jn 10:11).

d. The Lord Jesus has become the door or the appointed way for life and those who believe on Him are given eternal life (Jn.10:9; 27- 29).

2. The sheep of the Good Shepherd are comprised of both Jews and Gentiles which form one flock in the Church.

a. The believers out of Judaism are the ones being led out (Jn 10:3).

b. The Gentile believers are the ones referred to in Jn.10:16 as the "other sheep" which would make up one flock (Not fold).

B. This relationship involves ownership and security (Jn. 10:27-29; 21:16; Acts 20:23; I Pet, 5:2). Every believer then is blood-bought and belongs to the Good Shepherd.

C. This relationship involves provision for every believer. This begins with eternal life (Jn. 10:28) the moment we believe and we are spiritually nourished and sustained thereafter through the ministry of the Word of God. Notice this is something the Lord has committed to under-shepherds or pastors to provide for His own (II Tim. 3:16,17; Acts 20: 23; I Pet. 5:2; Eph 4:11,12).

D. This relationship involves protection (Jn.10:4; Psa. 23:4). The One who gave His life for us is certainly going to take care of His own (Rom.

5:10; 8:32; Heb. 7:25). Notice the faithful ministry of God's under-shepherds is part of the Lord's protection for His own (Acts 20:26,27,29,30).

III. SOME OF THE THINGS IMPLIED FOR US TO DO BASED UPON THIS RELATIONSHIP.

- A. We should follow the leadership of the Lord as it is revealed to us through His Word as it is faithfully ministered.
- B. We should depend upon the Lord to meet our every need (Psa. 23).
- C. We should rest in the Lord's provision for us (I Pet. 2:23,24).