



# Grace Bible Chapel

Lord's Day, December 20, 2020

Pastor Ken's Biblical Nuggets

## Shepherds Foreshadowed The Good Shepherd

### Shepherds In The Bible:

Indeed, the good news was not to be a respecter of persons. Simple shepherds, like the later fisherman and farmers among the disciples of Jesus, would be both the recipients and purveyors of the good news of the gospel. Shepherds were the poorest of the poor. There were ceremonially unclean so they were isolated from the rest of society. While shepherds were once held in high esteem among God's people, they had become left out, unwanted, and pushed aside. They smell like sheep. They slept on the ground. They didn't live in major cities. Their jobs made them little money. They came from the lower rung of the economic ladder. Even while in Egypt, "... every shepherd was an abomination unto the Egyptians" (Genesis 48:34). Even sheep were considered very low class and dirty. Also sheep have historically been a very controversial livestock choice because they require lots of attention, including a 24 hour look-out for predators.

### Sheep Predators:

A sheep's only defense against predators is to run. About a quarter million sheep and lambs are killed by predators in the United States each year, resulting in an annual financial loss to farmers of about \$21 million dollars. Sheep predators are a major concern to anyone raising sheep. For wolves, jumping into a pen full of unguarded sheep is like showing up at Costco and finding out New York steaks are free. You'd load up! Wolves and sheep; these happen to be two of the most diametrically opposed creatures that you can find. Yet the Lord Jesus uses this complete contrast in nature to breach the subject of false prophets. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing" (Mt. 7:15). The best way to spot a wolf in sheep's clothing is to be saturated in the Truth of God's Word. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly..." (Col. 3:16).

### Detecting Sheep Predators:

One way federal agents are trained to detect counterfeit money is by learning how to spot what is fake by understanding first what is real. They study real money, for hours, every part of it. They know it so well when the counterfeit is set before them, they immediately know that it's false. Because they know the real thing. And so it is with us. As "we study to show ourselves approved of God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The one thing the false prophet finds impossible to duplicate is the fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23). **It's not how he sounds in the pulpit, but at the Lord's Table.**

## **The Lord Jesus Christ Alone Qualifies As The 3-Fold Shepherd:**

### **The Good Shepherd: (John 10:11)**

**“I Am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”**

No shepherd gives his life for sheep. Sheep give their lives for shepherds. If the shepherd is hungry, he kills the sheep to feed his family. If the shepherd is in need of clothing, he skins or kills the sheep and clothes his family. If the shepherd is in need of money, he sells the sheep. But, no shepherd ever said: “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (John 10:11). The emphasis of the hireling is: money; numbers; contemporary music (strange-music), drama, plays, politics, social-gospel (another gospel). The Lord Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd because He is God.

### **The Chief Shepherd: (Hebrews 13:20)**

**“The great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”**

Alfred Edersheim, a Biblical scholar who lived between 1825-1889, believed that God had a divine purpose announcing Christ's coming to shepherds first. Edersheim says the shepherd's job description offers us a clue: These men who watched the sheep meant for the slaughter received a divine message about the ultimate Lamb who would take away the sins of the world through His death and resurrection. Only the Lord Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd could provide an everlasting salvation for all who place their trust in His shed blood, burial, and bodily resurrection. “By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities” (Isa. 53:11).

### **The Great Shepherd: (1 Peter 5:4)**

**“And when the Great Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory...”**

“The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, ... Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as lords over God's heritage, but be ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.” The apostle Peter's appeal was based upon the fact that he was a fellow elder and eye witness of Christ's passion. The term elders refers to the office of pastoral leaders in the assemblies. Elders appears to be used interchangeable with shepherds/pastors. He commanded them to be shepherds of God's flock. They are to nurture, lead, protect God's people without lording over them. Elders serving faithfully would “receive a crown of glory” in that day. The shepherd's job is to guide the sheep to good pastures of food and slow-moving waters. If fed grass of poor quality, the sheep would be malnourished. If the waters moved too quickly, the sheep would be afraid to drink it. “He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters” (Ps. 23:2). Heretical food mixed with swift waters inside a highly charged church environment leaves the flock vulnerable for ravenous slick talking wolves.

**A Merry Christ-Centered Christmas**