

## THE PRIEST AND THE SHEPHERD

23/4/23

*The bulk of God's complaints about the priests, related to their indifference and unscriptural behavior towards the weak, the poor and the sinners. God often directs us to observe the actions of a good shepherd, who often has a completely different mindset than the priest. All animals are important to the shepherd. He will make real efforts to save every lamb... particularly the sick and weak. The good shepherd also refuses to accept the loss of a lamb; he will look till he finds it. The role of the priest should be the same as the shepherd.*

*The role of the priest and shepherd should have identical qualities about them. This is a wonderful guide as it identifies our duty of care as leaders and family.*

**Jesus identifies as the good shepherd.** **JOH 10:11** I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. **12** But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf (any situation the person fears... emotional, spiritual, loss of control) coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. **13** The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep (the way the Lord would care). **14** I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. This is how we identify with God's church; shepherds offer loyalty and take ownership.

**1JOH 2:10** He that loveth (serves in a Godly manner) his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him... not abusing others.

**God will judge the shepherds who muddy the waters.** **EZE 34:17** And as for you, **O my flock**, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. **18** Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? **19** And **as for my flock**, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. These failings indicate ignorance of God's purposes in leadership... too soft, too hard... mistaken goals.

**20** Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. **21** Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad (people frustrated and driven from the church by ignorant carers ... usually the weaker ones. As with the priests, sacrifices were made for us so we can be free to go about the Lord's business... we need to offer the same); **22** Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. **23** And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

*David ruled 300 years before Ezekiel... they knew of the 'sure mercies of David. We have many scriptures expressing these truths and we need to know them well.*

**We are administrators and shepherds of the new law... we need to know how it works or we will risk being no more effective than the Pharisees.** **ROM 8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. **2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. **3** For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: **4** That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Even though we walk in the spirit, sins still occur. **1JOH 1:8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. To live without sin, is based on forgiveness, not on self-control alone.

*Mistreating repentant people is no better than the failings already listed. Consider Paul after he came to the church... would you accept him in today's climate?*

**We all have a duty of care... we are all shepherds.** **LUK 17:1** Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! **2** It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. A powerful and simplified procedure is revealed. **3 Take heed to yourselves:** If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. **4** And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. To forgive is to restore.

*Warning... MAT18:35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*

**The watchman is also a shepherd of the people.** **EZE 33:2** Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coats, and set him for their watchman (shepherd): **3** If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; **4** Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. **5** He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. **6** But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. Those who don't understand and preach God's values will be accountable.

*The priest is a shepherd before all else... we can learn a lot from this understanding.*

**1PET 4:8** And above all things (above every other consideration) have fervent charity (Godly [priestly] service) among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Covering and recovering from sins is the role of the priest... our role.