

A Shepherd's Heart

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having shepherds with God's heart, who care for the flock, feed them with knowledge and understanding, and protect them from harm. It highlights the crisis of false shepherds who scatter the sheep and the need for true shepherds who diligently care for the flock. The message calls for prayer for the raising up of shepherds according to God's heart in churches worldwide.

Scripture: Jeremiah 3:15, Ezekiel 34:12, Proverbs 27:23, Isaiah 40:11, John 10:11, Zechariah 11:17, Jeremiah 23:1, Psalm 23:1, 1 Peter 5:2

Topics: "Godly Leadership", "Protection of the Flock"

Description

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Transcript

I want you here to turn with me to the book of Jeremiah, again Jeremiah chapter 3, sorry Jeremiah chapter 23, I do want you to go to Jeremiah 3 as well, and to an awful lot of other scriptures. But there's one scripture we're going to read in Jeremiah 3, very important this morning, but I want to read a few verses from Jeremiah 23, you'll remember last week we dealt with a heart to know God, that was Jeremiah 24, I'm bringing you back one chapter to the same message by the same prophet, and I want to give you the message here this morning, we've dealt on these several messages on the heart that God searches for, the heart that God looks to, the heart that God takes note of, the heart that God is searching the church for, and nations for, and cities for, there's a certain kind of heart, and we're looking at the different aspects of it, but it's one heart, it's the heart of the new covenant, it is the heart of the redeemed believer, and when you're born again, I believe you receive by grace through faith this heart, then the flesh rises up, and circumstances and experiences, and if you're not careful you lose that, you still have it by grace, but now you've got to fight for it, now you realise you've got to guard that, that which you began with, you suddenly realise you have to fight very hard to maintain, and that's why you have believers in the church who once had this as an act of God's grace, a humble heart, a broken heart, a contrite heart, a pure heart, all of these things were given at the beginning, a heart to fear God, God gave it to you, and yet we can so affect that and let this world affect it, that we begin to lose the reality and the power of that, and so God down through history has said, I'm searching for such a heart, I am looking for such a heart, reading here, and

this is my message this morning, a shepherd's heart, reading from Jeremiah chapter 23, Jeremiah 23 verse 1 through to verse 4, Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord, therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, against the pastors that feed my people, ye have scattered my flock and driven them away, and have not visited them, behold I will visit upon you the evil of your doing, saith the Lord, and I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries, whether I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds, and they shall be fruitful and increase, notice this verse 4, and I will set up shepherds over them, which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord, will you pray with me here, Father we thank you that in this dark and gloomy day, this hour of judgment, this hour of confusion, nor God this hour when there is no shepherds yet, there is too many shepherds, there are many shepherds that have forgotten your word, turned away from your sheep, they have got caught up in ministry and games and gimmicks, and they no longer lead your sheep with your heart, Father we pray even right now, be gracious O God, be very gracious in this hour to turn again towards your church, to regather your church right across the nations, nor God and set over them, or raise up O God shepherds with your heart within them, we ask it O God that you be very gracious, that you multiply shepherds on the hillside, that you multiply the shepherds in the cities, for your name's sake, we need it desperately in this hour in Jesus name, Amen. My message is we're dealing with this heart, you see the previous aspects of this heart are for all of us, now I want to narrow it down in this message, this isn't essentially for you all, all of you will not have this heart because you're not meant to have this aspect of the heart, but you've got to understand it, you as a people in this church, you desperately want this heart to be in this church, it is vital for your well-being, that this heart of a shepherd is actually here, listen to what it says in Jeremiah 3 and verse 15, a very important fundamental scripture to this message, this is the key scripture of this entire message and we'll come back to it, Jeremiah chapter 3 and verse 15, and this is the Lord speaking through Jeremiah, and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and with understanding, then as we already said in Jeremiah 23 and 4 it says, I will set up shepherds over you which shall feed you, so notice here that this shepherd's heart is something that God gives, I will give you pastors according to my heart, do you realize in a dark and an evil generation and an hour in the church like we live in, that this is a remarkable vital promise, God is actually saying I can raise up shepherds with my heart within them, not their own heart, not the heart of a denomination, not the heart taught in a Bible school, but I literally can put a heart within them that is my heart for the sheep, you want to pray that this man has that heart, you want to be pleading before God, because you know what, it's for your good and your blessing that God would say I will give you pastors according to my heart, do you realize that is a great blessing, if God ever removes pastors with his heart, it is a curse, it is a judgment, it is a terrible thing, when you can search a city and you cannot find pastors with the heart of God, it is a tragedy, when you walk in churches and you cannot find that pastor's heart or more correctly the heart of God in a pastor, it is because judgment has come, you see don't think that the loss of real pastors is an accident, it's not, and do not think that having a pastor with God's heart is just a circumstance, if you actually and talking to the ones online as well, if you have a church where there's a real shepherd with a real shepherd's heart or the heart of God, you are very rare in this hour, you see we've traveled before we started this church, we traveled constantly every other weekend, and I want to tell you it is very hard to find a real pastor or a real shepherd, they are as rare as hen's teeth, there is no other ministry more popular than pastor so and so, I'm a pastor, they're the pastor, we have a pastor, every church has a pastor and yet I can hardly find a pastor, so this ministry title and position is more dominant than any other ministry and yet I can hardly find what I read in this scripture, I will give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you knowledge and understanding or I will set up, raise up, rouse, stir or lift up individuals to be shepherds over you, you know it's a supernatural work

for God to raise up shepherds who really care for the flock, they're not moved by money and they're not moved by ministry and they're not moved by influence and they're not moved by notoriety and they're not moved by all of those things, but they actually have the heart of the shepherd, if you're blessed with that, you are very rare and if you ever take it for granted, you will get in serious trouble, I've been in the church a long time and I've seen a lot and I want to tell you that those that take for granted a shepherd's heart, lose it and they cry a lot of tears over it, they spend decades and it's crisis in their family and their own life and their circumstance as a result, but they despised it when they had it, woe unto you in this church if you take it for granted because it's not natural, if God doesn't give it, you cannot create it, you can't get it in a Bible school, you can't get it from years of experience, God has to give it, it's an act of His will, you know that this is a heart God has always sought for, for the good and the blessing and the endurance of His church, in 1 Samuel 13 and verse 14, and there's the Lord speaking through Samuel, but now thy kingdom shall not continue, speaking of Saul, the Lord has sought him a man after his own heart, do you realize David was such a man? He was not only a shepherd of a handful of sheep, he was a king raised up of God with the shepherd's heart for an entire nation, do you know King David is the marker in the Bible of a true shepherd, he is even used as an example of the coming Messiah who will be the only shepherd during the millennium, I'm so glad I won't be a shepherd in the millennium, there's only going to be one shepherd in the millennium when Jesus comes back and David is used as an example to show us what it's going to be like when Christ reigns as a shepherd over the entire earth, you know what Samuel said here, the Lord sought him a man after his own heart, he was looking for a man and he found him a 17 year old boy in a sheepfold on a hillside playing his harp, singing his songs, writing his songs, guarding the sheep and he said that's my man for the entire nation, you little realize what's going on in this church, you little realize online or anywhere else what God could be doing as you sit under this message, you little realize that God has sought himself in this generation for shepherds to put over his sheep, you don't realize that right now God is looking for what he's going to do in the days ahead, he is looking for men and he's looking for women and he looks for a certain heart, I wonder what sort of heart God finds with you because he's looking, he's searching and he will find himself shepherds, when he found David he rejected Saul, a man anointed of God, mighty in battle, high in stature, beautiful in looks, majestic in his step, a mighty warrior that could lead the armies against the enemy and yet God says you're rejected, you can keep your position, you can keep your title, you can keep the armies, you can continue for 48 years but you know what you don't have, you don't have a shepherd's heart, you do not have a heart that I have been searching for but instead this little shepherd neglected by his father, mocked by his seven brothers, obscure on the hillside, nobody noticing him, I'm going to tell you God noticed him, God noticed him, you see I don't care whether men notice me or not, does God notice me, I don't care what we look like here this morning, do we draw the attention of God in this meeting or does God bypass us? It says in Jeremiah chapter 3, in the context of this verse, I will give you pastors a cord in my heart, there is a context concerning it, it says in Jeremiah 3 and verse 3, just the previous to that verse, it says therefore the showers have been withholden and there's been no latter rain, notice this carefully, God gives the promise, I will give you shepherds at an hour where you couldn't find any shepherds, you couldn't find any real flocks, where judgment had covered the land, where there were thousands of shepherds in name only, all across Israel, judgment had come, compromise, sin, games of religion, titles, making money, it was all across Israel and God says therefore the showers have been withholden, you know what the showers are? That's revival, that's the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in Jeremiah chapter 3 when he turns to speak about his desire to raise up shepherds or pastors with his heart, he's actually talking in an hour where you can't find them, where it's impossible to find a real flock, it's impossible to find a shepherd on the hillside with the real heart of God functioning in him, it is utterly impossible and so God says this is an

hour, I have withheld the rain, do you realize there's no revival in this hour, there's no revival in America, there's no revival in Britain, no revival in Europe, there's a dearth in the land, you can have revival in your personal life, church could have revival personally in its midst, but what we see is God has withholden the rain, you know what I want to know, why is withholding the rain? There's no revival, everyone's praying about revival, everyone's prophesying about revival, but if God withholds the rain, you can't make him give that, and it says, and there's been no latter rain, and thou hast a whore's forehead, thou refusest to be ashamed, in Jeremiah chapter 3 the whole context is rebellion in the house of God, your need for repentance, your sin against God, and he calls them a harlot, he called Israel a harlot, he called Judah a harlot, and he says you're like two unfaithful women, both of you have committed adultery and I had to divorce you, you're hard hearted, you're rebellious, you love your sin, you're playing games with religion, and he says you know I had to divorce you, and yet later he says to Judah, yet I'm married to the backslider, speaking of an entire nation which is meant to represent him, you know in this hour the very best of what we call the church in the western world, I think it's like Judah, he's saying I had to divorce you and yet you're married to me, you are the real remnant, but I'm going to have to do something with you, it's in the context of speaking about withholding the latter ring that he then says, what's going to be the answer, I will give you pastors according to my heart, do you know how it got like this, do you know how across entire nations, I mean entire continents, where you're going, what is wrong with the church, what is wrong is the loss of a local shepherd and pastor, I don't care if he only has 10 sheep or 50 or 100 or 200, I don't care, but the loss of this shepherd, God says you know why I'm withholding the ring and why it's in such a state, there's no shepherds with my heart, if I had shepherds in every town, every community with my heart, it wouldn't be like this, we'd be experiencing rain, the former and the latter rain, the latter rain speaks of the last days before Jesus comes back, listen again in Zechariah chapter 10, Zechariah 10 and chapter 11, two chapters are about shepherds, real shepherds and false shepherds, but listen how Zechariah chapter 10, 1 begins in speaking about real and false shepherds, it says, ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds and give them showers of rain to everyone grass in the field, I do not think it's an accident that we have in Jeremiah 3 and Zechariah 10, this issue of real shepherds being given in order to bring us to the former and the latter rain, I read some years ago and it impacted me, a history of Scotland, a spiritual history, when John Knox rules up ministry at the beginning, we are told that Scotland was saturated by dark superstitious Catholicism, they worshipped bits of wood which they said was from the cross, they weren't allowed to read the Bible, there was no local education, it was in a terrible spiritual condition, the entire nation was on its way to hell, yet in 40 days of preaching through this man called John Knox who wanted to become a Catholic priest, through preaching the word of God the entire nation was changed, in that old church history book I read that it seemed like all over Scotland in every village and every town and every city, God suddenly out of nowhere raised up shepherds with his heart in every single local community, they said it had to be a work of God, it wasn't natural that all over, all of a sudden the shepherds arose and the flocks began to gather, many were converted, there was outpourings of the Holy Spirit, I believe there's an hour coming, saints of God, we are in the time of the latter rain, it should have rained, no rain has come, you ought to be asking for rain, where are the shepherds, look at the mess of the church and you say what are we going to do, we just batten down and say, oh Sarah, Sarah, no we begin to pray, Lord give us shepherds after your heart again, Lord make us ready for the latter rain again, I've got three points here I want to give to you, number one concerning a shepherd's heart and this is my first point, a gift from God, you've got to understand this, it's so essential, you may not be called to be a shepherd, you may not be called to lead and to preach and to teach and to care for people's lives, but what you do need to understand is a real gifted shepherd or a real gifted pastor, it's a gift from God, it is a gift from God, what does it say here, I will give you, when the

Bible speaks, I will give you, it's a thing of grace, it's not a thing of reward, he's not rewarding you, it's an act of God's grace to give you a pastor according to my heart, it's not natural to find a pastor, I've met many pastors, I have met thousands of preachers, I have met so many in ministry that I'm sick to death with it, some 15-20 years ago I went, I am tired, give me the old granny at the back of the church, give me the young kids, but I said I don't want to go near a preacher, I'd seen the games and I'd been burnt and I'd seen what goes on in ministry and I'd said Lord just give me those that aren't caught up in that, they just want the Lord Jesus Christ, that is all that they desire, do you know over in Ephesians chapter 4, we are told about the ministries the Lord gives to the church, listen carefully, Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11, and he, that is Christ, risen from the dead, he gave some, all of yous aren't in this, he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, five distinct different ministries, not three, not four, there's five unique different ministries, the fourth one mentioned here is pastors, now this word pastor is a unique gifted ministry from God, not everyone in the church has it, there are very few in my reckoning, there are many who call themselves pastor, I'm pastor Jim, really pastor Jim, so you're a pastor, yes, how do you know you're a pastor, well I've got a church and I went to Bible school and they give me my ordination certificate and everyone in the church calls me pastor, do you have the heart of a pastor, do you have the gifting of a pastor, do you have a supernatural work that made you a pastor, this word pastor is the Greek word, it is the word for shepherd, it is shepherd, what is a pastor, you tell me what the word pastor means, what does it mean in English, you can't even tell me, you know the word pastor is a Latin word, I do not like Latin words when it changes scripture, this is a place where a Latin word was used in the English to go, they're a pastor, actually the Greek word means shepherd, that direct translation for appointment, this Greek word is used 17 times in our New Testament, only once in the entire New Testament is it translated pastor, the other 16 times the exact same Greek word is used, it's translated shepherd, so why in Ephesians 4.11 did they translate it pastor instead of shepherd, I believe through this we have lost something, it doesn't sound as good to say shepherd Jimmy, does it, doesn't have the ring of pastor, pastor's a title, to call someone a shepherd, do you know what that means, that means work and responsibility and effort, probably a broken heart, a few headaches, a few sleepless nights, if you're a shepherd, but when we use pastor, we are talking about a title, a position, I think we've lost something, see before this verse talking about God gave, notice what a pastor or a shepherd is, it is a ministry put in the church, God gave it or more correctly Christ gave it, listen to what it says in Ephesians 4.8, wherefore he says having ascended up on high, he has led captivity captive and he has given gifts to men, he then goes on to explain what these gifts are, one of these gifts is the shepherd, a shepherd is a gift that God gives to the church to edify the church, to bring it to maturity, without these five gifts you wouldn't have a church come into maturity, there'd be an awful lot of immaturity, that shows me that if we have a lot of people called pastors, fulfilling titles, doing ministry, but they don't have the gifted ministry, they don't have the heart of the shepherd, we're going to have a lot of immaturity, in fact rather like we have today, a lot of immaturity, a lot of rebellion, a lot of disobedience, a lot of confusion, a lot of strain and yet we've got multitudes of men called pastors, what's gone wrong? Jesus ascended on high and he led captivity captive and has given gifts to men, this is a quote from psalm 68 verse 18 and it says there he received gifts for men or it could mean among men, so among men he received out certain men to be gifts that he gives back again, that's what it literally means, he took captivity captive, you know what the picture here is of a great Roman general who's gone off to war and in fighting the enemy, he has triumphed over the Germanic nations, sorry and the Frankish nations and has even invaded Britain and when the general returns to Rome again, as he marches into the city, do you know what they used to do? They'd set a date and a time and they'd send information to the city, now tomorrow at nine o'clock we're going to march back triumphant into the city, make sure the whole city's ready for us and after being away for two years or

three years they march back and do you know what they have? As they begin to roll in and the general is there on his chariot with all his horsemen, do you know that they would have taken captivity captive and they would have a prince from Britain and a Germanic prince and a Frankish prince and they would be chained coming along on the chariot wheels as he rode back into the city of Rome, you see he had taken captivity captive and as the general come back in, you would see the greatness of this general and then do you know what he would do with this prince from Britain? He would say I'm going to keep him in the city of Rome and I'm going to give him to this rich family and he is a gift into that family to show our victory and power.

Do you know that happened in the body of Christ? When you look at Jesus Christ coming in triumph, I see a Peter, a fisherman who was taken captive by the Lord Jesus Christ and you know what happened? He was given as a gift to the body of Christ or better still what about Paul the apostle that was persecuting the church and fighting the church and he hated the name of Jesus. Captivity was taken captive and you know what? Then Paul is given as a gifted Bible teacher, an apostle to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and so we see that Christ gives gifts out of his plunder of men. He saves men and women and then out of them, out of his plunder of hell, he gives them as gifts back to his church.

These gifts are men, gifted men or men given as gifts to the body of Christ. We call them the fivefold ministry or the ascension gifts or the post-resurrection gifts. That's what we call them and one of them is shepherd.

In other words, out of all those that Christ has saved out of the world, he rescued men, he delivered the worst, he saves the drug addict and the prostitute, he saves the rebel and the criminal and the atheist and the catholic and the muslim. You know all through the years I've found I've met shepherds, real shepherds and say I used to do drugs and get high on heroin and I lived for years and then God saved me and then God called me and then God made me a preacher and God sent me back into the same prisons that I got saved out of. Do you know what that is? That is Christ taking captivity captive and giving gifts back onto the church.

He takes out some of the most unlikely men. He'll take Matthew the tax collector and he'll make him an apostle to preach on the high street. He used to try and get all your money.

Now he's trying to give you something free that's better than money. It's a remarkable thing. Saints of God, this is the first thing I want you to see here is that a shepherd is a gift from God.

It is a gifted ministry. I will give you. You can't make yourself a shepherd.

Do you know you can't decide to be one of these ministries? You can't decide to be a preacher. You can't make yourself a preacher. I've met them.

I've met them from young guys straight through to old timers and they're a curse on the church. They're an absolute problem in the church. They may be eloquent.

They may be knowledgeable but I assure you they're carnal and they bring a curse on the church. They don't know what pastoring is. They don't know what it is to be a shepherd.

When you go to the Bible you begin to see that some of God's greatest gifts to the church and to Israel were actually shepherds. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Moses in the Old Testament were all shepherds. God trained them in the sheepfold and you know what that means? That means if you hang around sheep

there's something about sheep that typifies a real Christian more than any animal.

All their traits, all their character. If you can be a shepherd, I mean a real shepherd with real sheep and look at them. If you can do that you can pastor any church in the entire country.

If you really understood what it meant to look after a flock of sheep you would have all the characteristics. To birth a nation God chose a shepherd whose name was Abraham. To establish the 12 tribes of Israel he chose a shepherd called Jacob.

To preserve his people in Egypt he chose a shepherd called Joseph. To deliver the nation from Egyptian bondage he chose a shepherd called Moses. And to rule over the nation in kingly authority he chose another shepherd.

His name was called David. Do you think that's accidental that as we look at the Old Testament get me a shepherd with my heart? If I can put my heart and a man in the little sheepfold do you know God could raise up mighty ministries out of this church? He is searching. He is working.

If you're wasting your time here, you're very foolish doing that. Do you realize God is here? God is speaking here in a unique way. God is actually working in our midst.

If you don't see that you're going to miss God. You need eyes to see that God is actually a God who is giving gifts to his body. And if God is going to do an extraordinary thing very shortly and send a real revival, you know what he's going to do? He's going to give real gifted ministry.

Where do you think he's going to find that? You know what I believe? I believe drunken on the side of the street here this morning or lying at home high on drugs are some of those gifts that haven't even got plundered yet and saved out of sin. I believe there's evangelists out here and I believe there's pastors out here and there could be apostles out here and there could be prophets out here that are going to be used as voices to the church and yet they're fast held in sin and someone has to share the gospel with them. My second point, false shepherds.

So I believe in these verses, this is what it means. If God says, I will give you pastors according to my own heart, that means there's an awful lot of pastors who are not according to his heart. If you find a pastor and he's not in line with God's heart, God did not give him.

If he doesn't speak like the great shepherd, if he doesn't minister like the great shepherd, if he doesn't feel like the great shepherd, if he doesn't think about sin and think about backsliding and think about the young, then he wasn't given by God. It says in Jeremiah 23 and 1, listen to this instruction concerning the false shepherds. So we see that a shepherd is a gift from God, but secondly, there are false shepherds.

Woe unto the pastors or the shepherds, it's the same word. Woe unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture. Do you think God notices that? Do you think God takes good note of those that are false shepherds? Do you think he sees the sheep that are getting scattered because of abuse in ministry and because pastors aren't right and leaders aren't right and the sheep are scattered? Do you know over this two years, we've heard thousands from thousands of genuine Christian sheep all around the world who can't find a church.

And they're not just saying that. You're talking about people who love the Lord Jesus Christ. They're searching cities.

You know some of them. They're searching nations and their community and their area. And they say, I'm not looking for much.

I just want a real church where there's no flashing lights, no gimmicks, no games, and that they simply preach the word of God. But it's so hard to find. He says, woe to those pastors who are scattering the flock, saith the Lord.

Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I am against the pastors that feed my people. These shepherds are there everywhere all through Israel. They are feeding the sheep and yet God says, I'm against you.

You're feeding, you're speaking, you're casting out your prepared food, and yet you're scattering the people. You're destroying what you should never touch. And can I warn you, don't you dare go into ministry if God hasn't called you.

If that doesn't make you tremble, then nothing will. If you dare to touch ministry, we have a very high view of ministry. I don't care about ministry.

You know that in one sense. I just love people. I care about you.

But we have a very high view of ministry. You don't put yourself in there. It's God called.

You will curse the church. You would damage this church. I don't want you leading youth.

I don't want you with an instrument. I don't want you involved in anything unless God has called you to it. You've scattered the flock, driven them away, and have not visited them.

Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doing, saith the Lord. Notice he says all of this about the full shepherds. Then in verse 4 he says, I will set up shepherds.

It's going to be out of all this confusion that God intervenes, says, I'm going to gather you. I'm going to raise up real shepherds. I'm going to stir up certain individuals.

I'm going to stir them with the call of God. All through Jeremiah speaks about this problem. Remember, he was the prophet chosen when the entire people were carried off into captivity in Babylon.

He had to preach. It's going to happen. You're going to get carried off.

God's judgment is coming. God has raised up Nebuchadnezzar. They thought he was a false prophet.

They wanted to kill the man. They said, you're a liar. You're making this up.

You're working for Nebuchadnezzar. How else could you preach such a negative message to us? Can't you be happy? Can't you preach all blessing and prosperity? Listen to what else he says. Jeremiah 10.21, for the pastors are become brutish like animals and have not sought the Lord.

Do you realize shepherds that do not seek the Lord are a curse to the church? It would be better not to have a pastor than to have a pastor, a preacher that does not seek the Lord. Do you realize how dangerous it would be to sit under my ministry if I was not someone who hadn't sought the Lord through the years? Do you know how dangerous that would be? Therefore they shall not prosper and all the flock shall be scattered. Or what about Jeremiah 12 and 10? Many pastors, it shows there's many, many

pastors have destroyed my vineyard.

They have trodden my portion underfoot. They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. Or what about Jeremiah 15 and 6? My people have been lost sheep.

Their shepherds have caused them to go astray. They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill.

They have forgotten their resting place. You know when I find sheep that forget their resting place, that have no flock, that aren't together, I don't blame them. I blame the shepherds.

See the fact that I can hear from so many in Canada and America and Australia and New Zealand and South Africa and England and many other nations. I'm hearing it constantly. Do you realize where the problem is? It's not them.

There's lots of churches in Nisar. There are lots of pastors in Nisar, but they have scattered the flock. That means that God is against the shepherds and now we have sheep everywhere who forget what it's like to function in a church.

They forget what it's like to have a resting place on the hillsides. Or listen to Ezekiel 24, which probably has the most clear definition of false shepherds. You see they can have the title.

They could even abide in a town and a village and a church that used to have great shepherds and faithful shepherds and real shepherds, but now in Nisar they're unfaithful shepherds. They are silly shepherds. They are brutish shepherds.

Listen to what Ezekiel says and this is the same time. Remember Jeremiah's in Jerusalem prophesying. Ezekiel is in Babylon prophesying.

So you've got two prophets, one in captivity, one at home, and they're both prophesying at the same time to the same generation about the same problem. You know why we're in captivity? Do you know why the temple's getting burnt down? Do you know why the walls are ruined? Do you know why the enemies triumph? Because of your shepherds. You shepherds are to blame.

I can't even tell you the disaster of the loss of real shepherds. When God says, I'll give you real shepherds, you better know that's unique. That is powerful.

That is supernatural. That is needed. Because when you get left with people with titles and ministries and they begin to talk about their buildings rather than the people, you really have a problem.

Listen to Ezekiel 34 and 1. And the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say unto them. Would you want to carry this message in this hour? You know, some people say, I don't like you mentioning names and I don't like you being negative.

And do you really need to talk about what's going on in the church? Yes, I do. I was commanded by God to do that. Prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy unto them.

Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds, Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves, should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, and ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have you not strengthened. And it's told spiritually

here, we believe in healing, but this is talking spiritually.

The diseased have you not strengthened. Neither have you healed them that were sick. Neither have you bound up them which are broken.

Neither have you wrought again that which was driven away. Neither have you sought that which is lost. But with force and with cruelty have you ruled them.

And they were scattered because there is no shepherd. And they became meat to all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill, ye, my flock was scattered upon all of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

Therefore ye shepherds hear the word of the Lord. As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock. But the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock.

Therefore ye shepherds hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock. Neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore, for I will deliver my flock from their mouth.

We have come through an hour of no rain, no revival, no gifted shepherds. Nobody can tell me that eloquence and professionalism is the heart of a shepherd. That is not the heart of a shepherd.

It absolutely isn't. I have looked at ministry closely firsthand. Do you know you could be a shepherd preaching the truth, the word of God, the real word of God.

You could preach exactly what I preach every week, and yet you live hypocritically. You're a false shepherd. And yet everything you could say could be evangelical, Pentecostal, biblical, and yet you're hypocritical.

You've destroyed that people, because you know what those little kids are looking to say? He's a joker. He's a game player. He doesn't believe this.

You could live morally right, keep all the commands, be very nice, be very kind, but you could teach error, and you'll destroy the sheep. Oh, you could have a big congregation, but you're destroying them. You're scattering them.

Do you know in this hour, there are many shepherds which are trying to take the sheep back to the old covenant. When you read Ezekiel and Jeremiah, you know what they keep saying? It's not the old covenant. We're bringing you into the new covenant.

This heart of the shepherd is in the new covenant, the covenant of grace. It's not the old covenant. You see, there's many that take the law of God, the ten commandments, and they twist it.

Remember Paul in the New Testament, he says, you don't even know what you're doing with the law. The law is not for the righteous or the saved. The law is for the worker of iniquity who disobeys him.

You're trying to tell us we're going to keep the Mosaic law, the ten commandments. We need to go back to the the Levitical order. Where do you get that in the Bible? Do you know those leading us back to keeping the ten commandments to be the church are twisting the word of God? There's many in the church, they

add man-made traditions and ritual to the church.

Pastors, do you think a pastor who doesn't feed the sheep and guard the sheep and protect the sheep, but he makes man-made traditions? What about those that have dreams and visions and prophecies and they don't preach the word of God? God, help them. There's others who don't preach the old covenant, they preach the new covenant, but they twist grace. Grace covers everything.

Don't point anything wrong. There's no condemnation, there's no guilt, there's no failure. Don't worry how you live.

Do you know what they're doing? They're damaging and scattering the sheep as well. They refuse to preach repentance. They refuse to deal with sin.

They won't deal with issues in the church. I don't know how a man does this, is not deal with issues in the church. I just do not understand why a pastor, he can be preaching, have a gifted ministry, do much and he won't deal with blatant issues.

Do you know what? He doesn't love the sheep. He doesn't care about the sheep and he doesn't have the heart of the shepherd. It says in Isaiah 56 and 11, shepherds that cannot understand.

This is the problem. Shepherds, they are in a position, they have a title, but they do not understand the things of God. I don't understand it.

Jeremiah 2 and 8, the pastors also who have transgressed against me. This is another problem. Shepherds in a position preaching, but they transgress against God.

The thing they try to deal with you about is in their own heart and life. They'll try to take you to task, tell you what God says and it could even be right and yet they transgress and it's all covered by grace. Zechariah 11 and 5, it says their own shepherds pity them not.

How did we ever get to a stage where there's shepherds who do not pity them? There's another place that talks about false prophets in Zechariah chapter 10 and 11. Listen carefully before I move to my third point. Zechariah 10 and 2, it says there was no shepherd.

No shepherd. That's a pretty strong statement. There were no shepherds.

Then verse 3 immediately says, my anger was kindled against the shepherds. Do you know when there's the wrong kind of shepherds in the church, God actually says there's no shepherds. Oh, there's many of them and my anger is kindled against them.

Do you know God gets angry? Oh, that's old covenant brother. We're in the new covenant. Utter confusion.

It says in Zechariah 11 verse 17, woe to the idle shepherd that leaveth the flock. The idle shepherd is the lazy, and listen to Strong's concordance. I love the Hebrew translation of this word, idle shepherd.

It's profound. Mr. Strong says, good for nothing, worse than useless. It says that this idle shepherd leaveth the flock.

In other words, he has a title, a position, a ministry, and yet he actually doesn't take care of the sheep. He doesn't see your hurts and your problems and your disasters. You can't call him up.

He's not watching over your soul. I don't need to slapper over you and be in your house every week. I don't need that, but I'm watching every one of you.

You know why I'm a shepherd. I'm not criticizing you. It's not to judge you.

It's not to catch you out. Do you know what? I've got to know Candace's weaknesses as well as her strengths because then I can work. I know her weaknesses and I'll never tell you what they are, so don't bother coming to me.

This is called love. I tell her what her faults are, but do you know what? I need to know her weaknesses. Weaknesses are not necessarily sin.

If I know her weakness, I can cover it and help her, encourage her. If I know her strengths, I'm going to go, I'm going to steal all her wisdom and you'll think it's my wisdom. You go, boy, where does this guy get all of his wisdom and insight and his little stories? I steal them off her.

Do you know what I learned many years ago? 22 years old, I learned in a church to find the strengths of each individual and all I would do is draw on them. I was trained this in the army. The leader is not the one who knows how to do everything.

He's just got to know who has all the giftedness and abilities and who knows how to talk to who. I'm not God. I don't know how to do it and I want to show you, but I try my best.

I do know the strengths and individuals in this room I do not have. That's what I'm meant to do. Listen, it's talking about the idle shepherd who leaveth the flock.

He neglects it. Then in verse 20 or verse 15, speaking of the same man, and the Lord said unto me, take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. Notice a foolish shepherd, a layabout, an idle good for nothing shepherd has instruments.

The word instruments means to be prepared, ready for a set task. These foolish shepherds have actually gone to a lot of work preparing instruments to care for the sheep and yet they're called foolish shepherds or the instruments of a foolish shepherd. These shepherds are all armed up to care for the sheep, but their instruments are actually foolish.

That's what they are. Listen, let me apply this to our day and generation. You see, there are shepherds have taken a lot of time, a lot of thought, a lot of effort, and a lot of money to provide instruments to care for the sheep and yet the Bible calls them foolish instruments of a shepherd.

What are they? Psychology, dream interpretation, flashing lights in the church. Assemblies of God just had their conference in Britain this past week and someone put up on Facebook a beautiful picture of all the flashing lights. It was worse than any disco I ever seen.

I just started to read all the comments and then I had to stop because I would cry. Praise God, can't wait to be there. This is glorious.

That's what you've got in this hour. It is everywhere. You have the instruments of foolish shepherd is all of his theories on breaking curses.

There's this curse and this curse and this curse. I used to know ladies who would walk about and in their Bible they had this long list of demons to cast out of you that they stole from pigs in the parlor. It's instruments of a foolish shepherd and they'd sit down and say, now do you feel discouraged? That's this demon, this demon, this demon, this demon and we're going to cast it out.

These are all the instruments, the social gospel. We know how to make the gospel palatable. Ecumenism, joining with Catholics, join all the churches together, the drunken reverend as well as father of Flackerdy.

We are all in this together. We love each other. You're a foolish shepherd and yet they've spent much time on all this.

The prosperity gospel, contemporary worship. Look at the mess of hell songs at the minute. I have worn for 20, 30 years and it's an utter disarray.

All of their top pastors, listen to me, their top pastor in New York, he committed adultery, went off with his floozy. Their pastor in Australia has gone. They wouldn't deal with homosexuals.

They wouldn't call it sin. They wouldn't deal with little girls that were attacked by other pastors who went and tried to report it. Charisma magazine says, what do we learn from all this? I didn't read the articles.

I didn't want to, because you know what? The church never learns. The problem wasn't what's happened now. The problem is what was happening 30 years ago.

If you have the heart of God, you would see and understand that all the time, energy, money that's gone into this. They never fed the sheep or preached the word of God. These are false shepherds.

Do you want a heart? Do you want that supernatural gifted heart of a real shepherd? We needed saints of God. I could take you to John 10 and what Jesus talks about, the harling coming in in place of the shepherd. How do you recognize a harling? He is a paid worker.

And it says when a wolf arises on the scene that he leaveth the sheep and he fleeth and the wolf catches them and scatters his sheep and the harling fleeth because he is a harling. You say, why is there all these problems? They're harlings. That's a paid worker who's not responsible, who's got no commitment, who preserves himself, who never sees he should lay down his life.

All these people, let's say in America, most of them, they have burned out within five years of pastoral ministry. The average lifespan of a pastor is three to five years. And then they get out and say, I didn't know people wouldn't like me.

And people grumbled and people would send me emails and I got worn out. I'm not going to take that. You're not a shepherd.

Someone, some man put you in ministry. Third and lastly, true shepherds. Let me finish with this.

It says in Jeremiah 3, verse 15, and I will give you pastors according to my heart. I will. Does it look like a mess at this moment in Germany? Hard to find in Berlin, hard to find a simple real church in Ireland, in Dublin, in London, in Birmingham, all across our world.

And yet it's right in the time like this that God actually speaks through his prophet. And he said, I'm against you pastors. I'm against you shepherds.

I'm going to judge you. You think you've done this to hold on to ministry? I'm going to take it off you in the end. You'll lose it all.

Absolutely all. It is in such an hour that God is speaking and saying, I'll give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. The great mark of a shepherd is he'll feed you with the knowledge of God.

I'm going to give you the character of God. I'm going to give you facts about the atonement. I have to preach the cross.

I've got to preach the cross. I've got to tell you about the blood. I've got to speak of holiness and righteousness.

It says in Ezekiel 34 and 12, it speaks there. I will deliver you. You the sheep that have been scattered.

I'm going to seek you out. I'm going to find you. You that have been hurting because of this.

I see you. I see you scattered sheep. And you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to find you in all the places where you've been scattered in the cloudy and the dark day.

It's been a terribly cloudy and dark day. And all the time they're prophesying revival. Where is this great revival that they said would change America and change Europe? How many times I had a prophecy, it's going to happen in 92.

It's going to happen in 94. It's going to happen in 95. And they've had all of their false revival from Toronto to Florida.

Sure the nation's not affected. Listen to what an actual shepherd is. It says in Proverbs 27, 23.

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks and look well to thy herds. You may be surprised that as a shepherd, if God has given me a shepherd's heart, I may know more about you than you think. That's not nosiness.

That is not judgment. That is a shepherd's heart. It is a certain kind of heart.

I am meant to know the condition of the sheep, the state of the flock. A real shepherd will actually know things. And I'm not being spooky.

I'm just saying it's general care and welfare. And look well to thy herds. A shepherd who does not care about your spiritual condition.

I care if you're struggling. I really care about that. I care if you've fallen flat in your face.

I care. I'm not stupid. I wasn't born yesterday.

I know what we all go through. And there's not judgment in that. I go, oh God, help them by the grace and the mercy of God.

You remember when David went out and he saw Goliath on the field? And he said, who's this big guy? Who's this uncircumcised Philistine? Remember what his brother said? Do you remember? He says, what are you doing here? You're proud so-and-so. Listen, with whom has thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? That tells me that a shepherd with a few sheep in the wilderness could be one of the greatest vessels of the hour that God is preparing to do certain things in revival. He's just about to kill Goliath.

You know what his brother says? He says, all you've got is a few sheep. You know, when we started this church, we had a conference. And I don't know whether it was Ian or Soph, and they swung that camera around.

And sure, half of you weren't there. You didn't turn up that morning. And then we're so few in number anyway.

I said, don't be putting that out. I think Soph missed the email or something. And it went out.

It was this guy was always on to me and always Brother Keith, Brother Keith in another country. Brother Keith, he watched that video and never sent me another email. Used to send me books and all.

I said, sure, you've only got a few sheep. I thought, boy, your heart's revealed. Do you realise, and I'm just going to close here.

We've ministered in shepherds before. And I'll do an awful lot of ministry in shepherds in the future. But you need to realise what a real shepherd is.

He's the opposite. He doesn't care if his life is in danger. He doesn't care if they're few.

Look at David. Few sheep. And yet, do you know what he is? He is faithful.

Absolutely faithful. You know what? His life was in danger with a lion and a bear. And he went out and slew the lamb.

And he went out and slew the bear. Would you would die to save a few sheep? Yes. Would you would suffer and have your heart broken and cry and be frustrated for a few sheep? Yes.

You're mad. I know it. But do you know what it really is? I actually have the heart of a shepherd.

That's what actually does it. Many years ago, I moved to Scotland when I was 21. I come out of deception, false ministry, false prophets, false manifestations, inner healing, counselling, deliverance, breaking the curses.

It was all there. All there. God, by his grace, rescued me.

And I spent one year feeding on the word of God incessantly. That year changed my entire life. That one year moulded everything I've preached ever since.

That singular year reading the Bible. So you could read the Bible and not be affected. It's got to do with your heart.

If you can read this book and not be affected, the problem isn't the book or what you're doing. The problem is how you're reading. And so I went through a year like that.

I was 22 years old. We were part of a small evangelistic team reaching out into a new area. And as we reached out, we're evangelising constantly.

This spirit of prayer suddenly came on me for about three weeks incessantly. I mean, all the way up to midnight, all the way from about five in the morning. I could only pray.

I couldn't pray for sinners. I went, what's wrong with me? Have I backslidden? I can't pray for souls. I can't pray for sinners.

And for those weeks incessantly, all I could pray is raise up a church, raise up shepherds. Lord, raise up a real flock for the sheep for three weeks. And I thought, what is wrong with me? Then the pastor of the church that sent us out, he met with me, said, so what's happening with you? And I started to explain.

He smiled and looked at his wife. And I went, that means something. And he looked and he said, we have been praying for this, that God raises up a shepherd for the church here that we're about to begin.

You are that man. What confirmation of what God was doing. It was remarkable how God changed my heart.

I received a shepherd's heart during those three weeks of prayer. I didn't have it three weeks before. I didn't see things or feel things or understand things.

But at that very point, all of a sudden my entire heart was changed. I had received from God, I will give you shepherds. I will give you pastors.

It's my heart in you. That's what it actually is. A few weeks after this, I started to get worried.

I started to go, I don't know how to preach sermons. I don't know how to put a sermon together. I don't know how to lead.

I don't know how to all the technology of ministry. I can't do this. And I said, do you know what? I know what I'm going to do.

I'm going back to that pastor. See, it didn't begin with that pastor. That was my mistake.

And I said, I'm going to go back and talk to the pastor next Monday. I'm going to see him. He's coming down to us and I'm going to talk to him.

And I know all the arguments he'll use and all the scriptures. And I'll say, you know what? I'm the wrong person for this. And you've need to get someone much older with experience and with ability and put them in here.

I'm the wrong person. And I had it all worked out. I went through.

I was pretty proud of what I was going to say. And I got to Sunday night, if it wasn't for that Sunday night. And I drove up to Edinburgh and there was a Bible teacher from Singapore teaching that night from an obscure verse.

I've only heard it taught on once in my entire life, on the three trees, on the great forest, the parable of the three trees. You know what, don't you? In the book of judges. And he opened up and began to preach.

And one tree, they say, come and rule over us. No, come and rule over us. No, come and rule over us.

And the third tree said, I'll rule over you. Okay. And he abused them.

And sitting in that service, God spoke to me, 22 years old, it's clear as day. And he says, if you do not do what I've called you to do, I will personally hold you responsible for anything that happens to one of those sheep. And I literally sat in my chair trembling.

And I said, Lord, I will not be having that conversation. I'll preach and cry my tears. I'll struggle and wrestle.

But you know what, what God calls me to do, I'm going to do. The instruments of a wise shepherd. What are they? A harp.

You didn't expect that. You expected me to say a sling. And that is true.

His staff and his rod, one to protect the sheep and one to fight against the enemies with. Oil. Every shepherd has oil because there's all these things eat into the head of the shepherd and they'll go crazy and mad.

But the good shepherd has his oil. And Jeremiah 43 verse 12 says, a shepherd put a thorn his garments. Do you know one of the essentials of being a shepherd? Is to have your garment on.

I heard a story about a man who went out to the Middle East and saw the last remnants of real shepherds in the Middle East. And he said that as he come out, he's looking at the flock and he was getting closer then up. He hadn't noticed him before because he looked like a sheep.

All of a sudden, this man rose up with his coat on. And you know what he'd done because of the cold and the weather and the elements and being out there in the wilderness. You know the shepherds permanently wear this coat that's almost like a sleeping bag.

And all they do is hunker down. Just down the ground, just wait. As soon as the sheep stop, they just hunker down.

They sleep with them. They live with them. They move with them.

They walk with them. And that garment of a shepherd's very vital to stay warm and protected. And if you approach a flock, you won't even see the shepherd initially until if you're an unknown entity, that shepherd will rise up and say, who are you? But that garment keeps him hidden.

I'd like to say so much on a real shepherd. He's to feed you. He's to guide you.

He's to protect you. We'll do that again. I'm talking about a real shepherd's heart.

And church, we are in a crisis right across our world and every nation. There are people going to watch this video and they know they can testify. All across this world, they are in desperate need of churches.

They would do anything to be here this morning. God help you if you ever take this for granted. And you know what I believe the hour is that we begin to pray for the raising up of shepherds.

Lord, will you get, if he could do it with me, I don't know how to do all this, but I can give you a heart and raise you up. And you know what, in that church, I cried my tears, but I cared for that flock. I prayed for

them.

Let me tell you how I left them. Because you may get worried here this morning when I tell you. Do you know I was there with them seven years, seven years, praying, guarding, watching over them.

And one Wednesday night I walked into Bible study. You better pray about this coming Wednesday night. I walked into the Bible study as is normal.

In fact, it was an hour and a half before because I was always in there praying in the room for an hour and a half before anyone ever walked in there. And I'm praying, praying, praying like I do every single meeting. And as I'm in there praying, all of a sudden something happened.

Really strange. And in my mind's eye, every single person in that congregation, their face come up before me. Pat came up before me.

And the Lord spoke to me. All this is in my mind. And he says, you didn't bring them through.

I brought them through. And he showed their entire life over that seven years, how he had guided them and guarded them and protected them. It wasn't you, it was me.

And then he brought Ivor up and Olive up. And he brought all the different individuals, one after another. And he'd done that with each one.

I didn't know what was happening. I didn't understand it. I've got no plans to move.

And he showed me each one of them. What I didn't realize was that night was he was lifting the responsibility over me and saying, you know, all the time as you ministered, really it was me. You were there.

I put you there. You're faithful. You loved them, but it wasn't you doing it.

It was actually me doing it because I'm the great shepherd. I'm the good shepherd. I'm the only real shepherd.

And that night, I didn't realize as I walked into the meeting, that would be my last Wednesday night Bible study. Events broke loose that I'd never seen coming. And that was my last Wednesday night leading a Bible study.

And I had to leave that place. Seven years, God entrusted that. Saints of God, we're dealing with something very spiritual here.

Very real. Can we pray together? Father, we bow our heads and our hearts here this morning. Lord God, we don't want to play games with all of these things.

We do want a humble heart. We want a broken and contrite heart. We want a pure heart.

We want a God-fearing heart. We want all of these things. We want this heart functioning.

And Lord God, we cherish you, God. We realize, Lord God, it's not men. It's not their preaching.

It's not their giftings. Lord God, it's you, by your grace, puts a certain kind of heart within a man or within a woman. And Lord God, we thank you, God, for your grace, for your power.

Lord God, that it's an act of your grace when you give someone who truly bleeds for the body. Lord God, a shepherd who cares, who would lay down his life for the flock. One that would go out to meet the wolves.

Lord God, one that will deal with the sheep. Lord God, one that would lead them and gather those that have gone astray. And Lord God, we are praying here this morning.

Lord God, we pray, O God, for Australia and Canada, for America, for Germany. Lord God, we pray, O God, for South Africa, New Zealand, for England, Scotland. Lord God, for Wales, for all of these nations, for France.

Lord God, for the many nations, O God, that are represented in our midst. Lord God, we pray for these nations. Lord God, we pray for the Czech Republic and Lithuania and all of these nations.

Raise up, my God, shepherds after your own heart. My God, we do believe it's the time of the latter rain. It's the time of the end of harvest.

It's the last harvest of world history. And we pray by the grace of God, will you send down the former and the latter rain. And O God, we're asking, O God, will you grant that heart that thinks like you and feels like you and acts like you.

Lord God, will you grant to this church the ability, the grace, the power, Lord God, to function in the church of God in Jesus' mighty name.

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