

Where Have All The Shepherds Gone

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the need for genuine shepherds in the church, highlighting the scarcity of true shepherds who build upon Christ, preach the message of the cross, and gather the scattered sheep. It calls for a revival of godly leadership, urging for shepherds who deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Christ, leading the flock with humility, truth, and sacrificial love.

Duration: 1:14:09

Scripture: Matthew 16:18, Matthew 9:36, Matthew 10:1, Ephesians 4:11, 1 Peter 5:1, Jeremiah 23:1, John 10:11, Acts 20:28, John 21:15, 2 Timothy 4:2

Topics: "Genuine Leadership", "Sacrificial Love"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need for genuine shepherds in the church, highlighting the scarcity of true shepherds who build upon Christ, preach the message of the cross, and gather the scattered sheep. It calls for a revival of godly leadership, urging for shepherds who deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Christ, leading the flock with humility, truth, and sacrificial love.

Transcript

Please turn with me here this morning to Matthew chapter 16. Matthew chapter 16 and we're going to continue with our message here this morning. Please do keep us in prayer.

We'll be in London in just 10 days time and we invite anyone online to come and join us. It's going to be a very important time. We're going to have four meetings over that weekend and we do encourage you to be there but here this morning we're turning back again to our third message.

My first one was called a message for the hour. Our second one last week was called where have all of the churches gone but here this morning reading from Matthew 16 I want to give a third message and it dovetails with last week. Last week we dealt with where have all the churches gone.

Here this morning I want to deal with where have all the shepherds gone. The church has gone, the shepherds gone. Reading from Matthew chapter 16 here this morning and in verse 13 it says when Jesus came into the coast of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples saying whom do men say that I the son of man am and they said some say that thou art John the Baptist some Elias others Jeremias are one of the prophets he saith unto him but whom say ye that I am and Simon Peter answered and said thou art the Christ the son of the living God and Jesus answered and said unto him blessed art thou Simon Barjona for

flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee but my father which is in heaven and I say unto thee thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ from that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day then Peter took him and began to rebuke him saying be it far from thee Lord this shall not be unto thee and he turned and said unto Peter get thee behind me Satan thou art an offense unto me for thou savorest not the things that be of God but those that be of men then said Jesus unto the disciples if any man will come after me let him deny himself take up his cross and follow me for whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it for what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul will you pray with me here this morning heavenly father we thank you nor god that these things are not revealed by flesh and blood by mere teaching or learning or listening or reading nor god these things are understood by revelation from our heavenly father you say in the word of God that you have hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes and so we come unto you as mere children as babes and the things of Christ and nor god we ask that you open our eyes and our ears and our heart don't let us be hard-hearted don't let us be cold or indifferent nor god don't let us be seduced by this world don't let us be deceived by the evil one nor god we pray oh god that we might be built on a true revelation of who the lord Jesus Christ is of his finished work of the power of the cross of Jesus Christ we know that the gates of hell wage a warfare against the true message of Christ against the true message of the cross and so we pray we humble ourselves even in this meeting and we pray for your grace keep us in this narrow way preserve us so god and keep us in the truth of god sanctify us that we might be your church your personal possession the church that you are building upon the revelation of the lord Jesus Christ we bless you and worship you this morning in Jesus name my message my third message here where have all the shepherds gone last week we asked the accompanying question where have all the churches gone i get emails all the time in fact year in year out where is there a church near me that preaches the word of god i want to give you one of the main answers and reasons for the loss of real churches in every community and i believe it's held within my question here this morning where have all the shepherds gone i believe we have a crisis in the church of this generation where are the real shepherds last week we asked where are the real churches preaching the word of god this week i want to ask of us where are the real shepherds we are in a crisis because it's very very hard to find a real shepherd in the body of Christ for many years we've traveled from country to country teaching in conventions teaching leaders running bible schools teaching those that felt the call of god on their lives i've gone in and out of all manners of churches for decades i have watched ministry very carefully and i want to tell you here this morning without any exaggeration it is very rare to find a god-called shepherd or a god-gifted shepherd in the body of Christ a shepherd is a very rare thing and a very hard thing to find there are vast multitudes that claim to be shepherds there are those that claim the anointing the gifting the call the ability the ministry and yet it is very hard in my estimation and my only judge is the word of god i'm judging by the word of god and where we have read this morning in Matthew 16 i believe holds a message for us concerning this great tragedy in the church of our generation why can you not find a local church in your community it's all because we have lost real shepherds if we had real shepherds we'd have a real church let a real shepherd be in limerick and we're going to have a real church in any community i don't care how hard it is how difficult how terrible the situation if you get a real shepherd i'm in a god-called god-anointed shepherd there's gonna arise a real church sheep are gonna be

gathered out of darkness and began to feed around the lord jesus christ we have just read here in Matthew 16 18 and i jesus speaking say unto thee thou art peter and upon this rock i will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it one of the great things that have broken my heart terribly and caused me to groan with prayers unto god in heaven has is to be watching the scattering of genuine sheep you see in our world there are many sheep but very few real shepherds in fact the sheep that are scattered across our world are just that they are scattered and i want to give you the reason again i'm getting so many emails from genuine bible loving jesus loving christians who love holiness and righteousness who are seeking for a church and you know what the problem is there are no shepherds listen carefully for a moment as i introduce us in one kings chapter 22 verse 17 it says and he said that is the prophet of god i saw all israel scattered upon the hills as sheep that have no shepherd again in ezekiel 34 in verse the prophet says and they that is god's people were scattered because this is the reason because there is no shepherd then again in jeremiah 23 and verse 1 will be unto the pastors or the shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture saith the lord here we have three prophets of god in the old testament and they are actually showing us that when you see god's people scattered abroad not strong assemblies and gatherings of god people but they are scattered on the hillsides scattered from one another it actually gives you the reason why god's people are so scattered why people have no churches why they can't find a real church why they're not gathering to pray and evangelize and under the teaching of god's word why they're not enjoying the blessing of fellowship and of unity together do you know why because there was no shepherd so we see the scattering of the sheep is connected to the loss of the shepherd and that's my message where have all the shepherds gone you may say oh we know there's lots of shepherds there are vast multitudes of shepherds i'm sorry but that is not true as i look at the world today as i look at our nations the sheep are scattered everywhere and this is the reason there are no shepherds if we had a genuine revival in the church real shepherds would arise and this and the genuine sheep i mean born again sheep would gather one more time the value of a shepherd is beyond any um any amount that i could estimate this morning the value of a shepherd because when a shepherd is lost the sheep scatter this is taught all through the bible now when we go to the old testament here elders are leaders amongst god's people the term elders is mentioned over 200 times in the entire bible in the old testament elders were placed over villages over times over entire cities and in fact over entire nations when we begin to study the bible we see that moses joshua king david king solomon and ezra the revivalists all upheld this local form of leadership all these men whether they be patriarchs kings or restorationists whatever they are whatever era of god's people in the old testament they always established elders just because you have a king doesn't mean you do away with eldership this was god's ordained way to gather his sheep in the old testament prophets like jeremiah ezekiel and joel directed their messages directly to the elders of israel we have seen that it takes a prophet to expose this lack of shepherds we need a prophet in this generation to speak to the church and to cause repentance to come that we might see shepherds raised up once again god actually sends prophets to the shepherds to the pastors of the churches and oh boy do the pastors of this generation ever need a prophet to come on to them and so we see that jeremiah ezekiel and joel they prophesied to the elders it wasn't the sheep to blame they got scattered and you know what while i challenge and encourage every christian get into a good church if you can you're not the main problem here it is a loss of real shepherds if shepherds were real shepherds rather than a name only we wouldn't have this great scattering of genuine christians in this hour jeremiah chapter 23 and in ezekiel 34 these chapters are filled with warnings and rebukes to neglectful and deceitful shepherds our pastors they point the finger and they say you've scattered the sheep the sheep are wandering on the health sides sheep that are not in the flock sheep that are not together sheep that are not assembling and encouraging one another and he points the finger at the

elders if an elder does his job right he's going to create unity he's going to feed the sheep he's going to encourage them now this term elder is carried over to the new testament church and it's used 19 times in the new testament of the leadership of the local church there must be elders in the local church and these elders are placed there to gather a church you you will have a scattered church if you do not have elders when you begin to study eldership in the new testament you see that the apostles considered it a priority we must raise up elders we must appoint elders we must place men men of quality men of wisdom men of ability men of character over the house of god we need shepherds to look after the flock now when you come to the new testament you find that the leaders in local churches are called by three different names they're called elders which is the greek word presbyterus that means it's the word for elderly older or the one who's senior or it can simply mean maturity when it's talking about a ministry in the church it's not talking about age you could be 21 years old and yet mature in the things of god not foolish you could have someone born again for 50 years and they're stupid they're foolish they're immature they're like a babe in christ and so we see that these local elders have to have a maturity about them they are put in the house of god not just one more than one to guard the sheep to tend the flock these elders are also called bishops or overseers this is the greek word episcopus episcopus and it means a superintendent someone who oversees things someone who watches the flock someone who inspects the sheep someone who investigates you say be very careful church of god flock of god sheep of god be very careful that you think that no man has the right to ask you a question to investigate to inspect your spiritual health do you realize that god raises up elders bishops overseers to actually take care of the sheep if i look at your life it's not to criticize you it's not to scrutinize you to find something wrong it's to help you to encourage you to move you on in your walk with god now these three terms elders bishops and overseers i don't i've taught on this before but these three terms are synonymous they're talking about the one office of leadership in the church and we must not change that this is the biblical name for leadership bishops isn't a man with a funny hat neither do we call local leaders reverend that's the one that gets me most mad to call a pastor or an elder reverend that's blasphemy only one person is called reverend in the bible and that's the lord jesus christ when i see a man being called the right reverend so and so it is an abomination there's something terribly terribly wrong with that and then there's multitudes of men in the church call themselves pastor they call themselves pastor but they're in it for money they're in it for their own ministry they're in it to build something but they're not there functioning as a real pastor or as a real shepherd there's three tasks of these elders are leaders in the local church and listen very carefully you as a church here you've got to understand what an elder is without an elder in the church the sheep scatter every man does what he thinks is right there's something about a real elder in a church that he brings a unity we're all gonna feed in the same place we're all gonna follow the same example we're all gonna be warned about the same dangers that is the task of a real elder and you can tell when there's a god-gifted elder in the midst of the church now look at the three ministries in the new testament of an elder number one is to lead to lead some people in the church say i don't need anyone to lead me then you don't know your bible you're very ignorant if you say no one is going to lead you you you might say we don't need men in the church well god has put men in the church and we're going to deal with some of this this morning this leading means to stand before the people of god or to preside over or to maintain rule in the midst often it talks about those who are over you and the lord are those who rule the church it means to attend to or to lead or to take command so we say that elders are given by god to keep the flock together there's gotta be leaders or elders men who are gonna lead and watch over that flock this is one of the great ministry of a leader is to actually watch the flock to guide them to steer them in the right direction second of all is to feed them how does a shepherd feed sheep he preaches he teaches he exhorts he warns he opens up the written scriptures this is wonderful sheep food i like to feed the sheep with good food with the best manna i

possibly can i love to search the word of god to find the greatest scriptures are going to help you as the sheep of god i search out green fields for you when when it seems to be getting a bit dry a bit hard i begin to pray oh god lead us in the green pastures help me to lead this flock into places where they can face also a third thing a elder does is to warn or to guard or to protect against wills against false prophets against dangers don't go in that direction don't do that thing it's against the word of god and so in the new testament we see that these elders are to rule by persuasion and to persuade you i don't tell you to blindly accept everything i'm saying i want to reason with you i want to persuade you but you've got to be willing to be persuaded are you willing this morning for me to persuade you by the word of god or do you just think well i'll have my own opinions you see an elder is to rule by persuasion how do i rule the church by persuasion also by example then also we're told in 1 timothy and 5 that the elders are to rule well there's some who rule better than others and then elders are to rule with diligence all of these are biblical statements and so we say that an elder is to rule he is the government of the local church if you don't like uh government you'll have anarchy you will have a scattering every person think in different things since my whole task is that we believe what christ says that we have the mind of christ that we feast on the doctrine of the lord jesus christ this is real eldership in the local church and you know what my question is where have all the shepherds gone what i'm telling you is basic and elementary and i want to tell you shepherding is one of the greatest tasks in the body of christ it's a wonderful profession it's almost older than any other profession that you can possibly name to me the first shepherd is mentioned in genesis chapter 4 and we're told abel was a keeper of sheep he was a shepherd right back at the very beginning one of the first two children ever born in mankind chose to be a shepherd he i i believe he not only chose that there was something within him there was a burden a calling a desire to shepherd the flock what a remarkable thing and when you read the old testament abraham was a shepherd isaac was a shepherd jacob was a shepherd moses was a shepherd david was a shepherd even job was a shepherd we read that job had 14 000 sheep what a shepherd job was we sometimes forget that a man like job was a shepherd he had to have been a gifted shepherd to look after 14 000 sheep and i'm sure he raised up many other shepherds he trained shepherds he watched over them to make sure they worked well we also read that solomon he had 120 000 sheep oh what a shepherd that is now when you begin to study sheep you find out there is more than a thousand different breeds of sheep all sorts of colors and kinds and preferences but i want to tell you a sheep is a sheep doesn't matter what country what nationality where they are what they look like basically a sheep is a sheep doesn't matter that if it's different in size or in its shape or its color or its geography a sheep is a sheep just the same and a shepherd knows a sheep when he sees it as a true shepherd knows how to inspect the sheep and to find out is it a goat or is it a sheep in the middle east a goat looked like a sheep sometimes acted like a sheep sometimes hid in the midst of a sheep but a shepherd's task was to identify a goat he knew a goat and as he held out his rod he could separate between the goats and the sheep a good shepherd can do that a good shepherd recognizes there's something wrong here you may look like a goat but let's just deal with you you know a goat it has a certain character once you deal with a goat it'll rip the door off it'll tear the place apart it gets very angry and i assure you i've met a few goats along the way i thought they were sheep and then they turned on me and tried to devour me like a ravenous wolf look at this great ministry of shepherding christ in john chapter 10 and 11 is called the good shepherd in hebrews chapter 13 verse 20 he's called the great shepherd in 1 peter chapter 5 and verse 4 he is called the chief shepherd and when you look at the life and ministry of christ you see what a true elder is a true bishop a true shepherd one who lays down his life for the sheep look at christ his sacrificial love his genuine compassion he laid down his life and as an example to every truly god-called pastor and shepherd where are all the shepherds in this hour i've seen some of the most ambitious men i've met in my whole lifetime haven't been out there in that world they've

been men in the pulpits some of the worst liars that i've had to deal with in my entire life haven't been drug addicts on the high street they've been pastors in churches i could tell you stories that would make your hair stand on end concerning having to do with men that call themselves they take the word shepherd or pastor they make it a title and it was never meant to be a title it is a calling it is a sacrificial ministry if you see a shepherd that is not laying down his life loving the unlovely sacrificing himself if you see him making a business out of it changing everything you you know there's something terribly terribly wrong and so we see throughout scripture an elder whether in old testament israel or the new testament church a real elder any local leader i don't care what their particular gifting is if they're in leadership raised up by god in a local church do you know what they're going to act as a shepherd over the sheep they're going to care for the flock of god they're going to warn of wolves if you get a man who doesn't warn doesn't feed you on the word of god doesn't lead you to follow christ that man is no shepherd at all and the old prophets would rise up and prophesy against them listen again ephesians chapter 4 and verse 11 and this is concerning christ who ascended on high after he ascended he gave five gifted ministries to the local church all local leaders are called elders but within those elders you can have five distinct ministries and i can prove to you very accurately that a man could be a gifted as an apostle but in the local church he's an elder or he could be gifted as a great bible teacher but he's still an elder in the church or he could be a prophet and yet in the local church he is an elder so eldership when we see this in acts chapter 13 we begin to see five men who raised up over the church at antioch and they were split between gifted prophets and teachers but all of them was the eldership they were the elders of that church and they had to act like shepherds so shepherds is a very broad term this task of shepherd in the church of god but also i want to point out in ephesians chapter 4 verse 11 it is also a gifted ministry he gave some apostles some prophets some evangelists some some pastors and some teachers five ministries a pastor is different than a teacher a pastor is different than a prophet a pastor is distinct from an evangelist and this term pastor is the word for shepherd it is the greek word poyman it's the greek word poyman and this word is used 18 times in the new testament poyman and you know 17 of those 18 times it's written in our english bible as shepherd but here in ephesians 4 verse 11 it's the only time that it's written as pastor and so we see that a pastor is an actual shepherd when christ ascended up on high he gifted shepherds this is one of the five ministries he puts in the church of jesus christ worldwide and locally it's a shepherd every preacher in a local church isn't gifted supernaturally with the mighty ministry of a shepherd neither is every local leader a teacher but we see that certain men excuse me for my throat this is why you need to pray for me and these days i need to get my my voice and chest back and be preaching there in the church and so you see and so you see that this ministry of the shepherd is gifted into the church if we didn't need shepherds god would not give them now coming to matthew chapter 16 here we know it's dealing with peter what we've already dealt with last week and over in one peter chapter five verse one peter himself says who i'm also an elder in one peter five he was speaking or writing to the elders of the church listen to what it says the elders which are among you i exhort on the word elders there is presbyteros and then he says who i'm also an elder so he's speaking of the elders in the local church these elders these men who are to shepherd the flock this office of bishop or overseeing in the church and peter says i'm also an elder i'm speaking to you but i am also an elder and a witness of the suffering of christ we know that peter was an apostle he was certainly an evangelist but here you have him saying in the local church i'm an elder i am a fellow elder i'm not the best elder i'm an elder elders are elders in the local church don't just think that this is a term we're so used calling every preacher a pastor that we forget that there is a calling of eldership to lead the flock to feed them like a shepherd feeds them it is a vastly needed ministry so in speaking to these elders listen to what he says feed the flock which is among you taking the oversight the bishopric the episcopus taking that oversight thereof not by force but willingly and so the first thing he says to elders is feed that flock you

see peter could recognize a real shepherd he could stir up real shepherds in the local body but here let me take you to matthew 16 and just give you three quick points here in this message concerning what where are the shepherds where have all the shepherds gone in this iron generation can we just stop for a second and like last week i showed you why you can hardly find a local church why it's so hard whatever country you're in this morning why it is so hard to find a real local well i want to tell you why it's so hard to find a real god-gifted shepherd a real shepherd of the soul one who warns who feeds and who leads and same to god if you're a true sheep you desire to see that in the church i hate this rebellious attitude that says i don't need men i don't need anyone to lead me i don't follow any man i just worship jesus that is so unbiblical it sounds very spiritual but those individuals are really off mark they don't know what they're talking about in fact they show that they are a sheep because they're following their own tale you know sheep are big problems there's a lot of problems with sheep candace's dad once said whatever you do don't get sheep well i'm going to try my best but here i am a shepherd a shepherd of human sheep but you know what there's so many problems with sheep it's a fact of reality if you're not called to be a shepherd you could never do this you're either going to abuse the sheep or get very very discouraged but a god-called shepherd a man who is raised up of god to be an elder in the church or a gifted pastor he is of a very different kind but i want to show you why it's so hard to find a real shepherd in this art number one because the shepherds of this hour build upon men rather than christ they build upon what is of man than the lord jesus christ we find this in matthew 16 but verse 18 jesus speaking to peter thou art peter and upon this rock i will build my church remember what we said last week jesus speaking and said you're peter you're a rock in my hand you're peptros you're one stone in the building do you realize why we have so few shepherds because they think the church is to be built upon them that a local church relies upon them that without them there would be no local church they actually try to build everything around themselves and if you ever get a shepherd or a pastor who's so insecure that he doesn't allow you to test or question or to ask something there's something terribly wrong i am not an insecure man but if you ask me a question be prepared that i asked you questions also don't think it's a one-way street here you you have no right to scrutinize me if you don't think i should scrutinize you and if you're not allowed to question me then why should i question you but we see it that christ is laying out so clearly peter you're a rock in my hand you're a petros and i will build upon this petra this rock i will build my church two different things christ was actually saying peter i'm not going to build upon you you're a god gifted apostle you're going to be an evangelist i'm going to raise you up as a shepherd but all you are is a stone in the house of god anyone with a real shepherd's heart must not think more of themselves than they ought to a shepherd is a stone in the house of god he is not the foundation of it he is only a man he is only a shepherd he is only an underservant there is one shepherd over the entire flock and he'll hold every man accountable we need gifted shepherds again in the church we need elders in the church again but they're going to understand all i am is a stone in the house of god the church is not built upon me oh yes i'm gifted and called of god so that the sheep don't scatter but if they scattered they'd still follow jesus as a gifted shepherd i am not the rock i'm not the stone a true shepherd will make sure that christ is the only rock upon which the church is to be built look at the verse before this verse 17 and jesus answered and said unto peter blessed art thou simon barjona for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you but my father which is in heaven peter had just received the divine revelation concerning who christ was he was taught this by the father not by man not by intellect not by bible college and this is what we need this is why we've got so few real god-gifted shepherds in the church they have never been taught of the father i've met shepherds in this city of limerick i met up with one tried to encourage him and said what's your testimony i was utterly shocked i went this man is not born again he's never dealt with sin he doesn't know what the new birth is he's never had a divine revelation and yet he's a pastor in the church a pastor over sheep no wonder the sheep are

confused when the man doesn't even have the most essential thing right you see men are building upon man rather than christ it's man's intellect man's opinion man's ideas and we're wondering why everything is so wrong a real shepherd is someone who's had a real revelation from the father this is where it all begins a man who sees real revelation his eyes are open and he sees who christ is if you see who christ is you're gonna have to preach him you won't be able to do anything else you will be a shepherd who actually oozes out christ will want to build the church upon the lord jesus christ you'll say this revelation changed me and i want the church to be built upon it not upon me not my ministry not my gifting it's always christ if a man has any gifting he makes christ the center he makes christ the subject he makes christ the focus of the prayer meeting the worship the evangelism the teaching everything we do in the church is centered around the person of the lord jesus christ but notice here why do we not have shepherds because the shepherds of our generation have built upon men rather than christ in fact they've fallen into the same trap peter did after receiving this revelation he is born again he is called of god do you know what happens when christ begins to deal with peter and the disciples and say i'm gonna suffer and i am gonna die do you know what peter immediately says in verse 23 peter turned onto christ sorry uh let me say that he turned onto christ and he said not so master then in verse 23 jesus speaks onto him and says peter get thee behind me satan do you see what peter was doing here peter is doing in this moment of time in his younger days in ministry what so many shepherds have done across the church they have a divine revelation of christ they think they know everything because they see who christ is and then all of a sudden they're saying oh no christ you don't need to suffer do you realize how subtle satan is the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church built upon the revelation of who jesus christ is but i want to show you satan desires to come in to take shepherds away from the message of christ of a message of suffering of the crucifixion and of the cross of jesus christ in verse 24 and jesus said unto his disciples if any man will come after me let him deny himself take up his cross and follow me jesus immediately begins to deal with the disciples you see satan is going to prevail if you begin to exclude certain aspects of the message you begin to change who christ is you have a revelation and you begin to change that and the cross has not done its work in your life there's going to be serious trouble look what began with peter so many dangerous things remember christ warned him you're going to deny me oh no master i'll kill for you i'll die for you i'll suffer for you i i'll never deny you and yet jesus prophesied he was going to deny him before that cock crew saints of god i want to tell you that the very first thing the reason why we do not have shepherds in this hour is because the ministry of a shepherd is being built upon what man is man's intellect christ turns here and he says i'm not going to build the church upon peter i'm not going to build this church upon this man this man actually allows the devil to come in and begin saying you don't need the cross you don't need to go the way of suffering you do not need to die to self and christ has to correct him and say if you're going to be my disciple do you know what you will deny yourself so much ministry in the church today says we want to give you a feel-good aspect we want to you to have a high self-esteem we want to entertain you we want to train you like a business course but they're not saying die to self deny yourself and yet jesus done that with peter if peter's ever going to be a shepherd in the church he's going to have to deny himself take up your cross and follow me that was christ message to peter and i believe this is where most shepherds have failed it's at this place where they step out into ministry and they want to preach christ and they know who christ is but they begin to change the message of the lord jesus christ they're building upon man do you know why peter done this his feelings his sentiment what he desired his ambitions his vision for the future you see how all of that impacts if you build the church upon a man or if a man builds the church on his ministry his thoughts his ideas his leadings it's disastrous do you know the only cure is for that man to get to the cross if he doesn't get to the cross he'll never be a real shepherd i want to assure you and peter had not denied himself taking up his cross he could never have been a

shepherd in the house of god and neither can any of you maybe god's calling you to the ministry but this is the thing this is going to decide whether you'll be a false shepherd or a real shepherd it's going to be this message of the cross deny yourself oh i've got a calling i can preach i can minister i want to serve god then the test is you are going to die you'll die to your ambitions your dreams your visions you're going to come the way of the cross your name will be blasphemed you you will be ridiculed you're going to suffer if you're going to follow me you're going to suffer never think that a shepherd will be used to lead the sheep who hasn't suffered deeply no no it's all part of it over in john chapter 21 we read when peter had denied jesus he went back to his nets in fact he turned to the others and he says i go a fishing and they say unto him we also go with thee and they all went forth and entered into a ship immediately and that night they caught nothing of course not you're you're called to something if a man is called to be a shepherd and yet he tries to be satisfied in something else he'll end up with nothing in his net very frustrated do you see the dealings of god with a real shepherd he'll make everything come down to nothing you know why he wants a real shepherd in the house of god he failed his master he denied him he's disappointed in himself he doesn't feel the anointing anymore but christ isn't finished with him christ is going to make something out of this man and by the time he does he's going to be a man dead to self dead to his own ambitions he's going to be a true shepherd raised up in john chapter 21 jesus comes and says peter do you love me out of the blue he comes to him do you love me peter turns and says lord thou knowest thou lovest i love thee three times jesus asked him do you love me and the third time peter gets very angry with jesus and this is the reason you you can't tell us unless you look at the greek here the the first two times jesus says do you agape me in the greek do you agape me do you love me with the love of god with all of your strength peter each time says i fill you you jesus said do you agape me he responds i fill you you he couldn't even say i love you with all my heart then the third time jesus said he drops it down and says peter do you filio me peter must have dropped his head and said master you know i fill you you you know but also something else happens here you see jesus is dealing with this man i'm tired of shepherds in the church who have never been dealt with with christ and they go on teaching their errors and their attitudes their pride their arrogance their boasting their self-centeredness their changing of the gospel it has scattered the flock they abuse the flock they tell lies they'll take money they manipulate they don't care about the sheep what a tragedy look at jesus dealing with this man he's gonna have a shepherd on the day of pentecost he really is but notice when he says do you love me that he also says feed my lambs if you love me feed my lambs and then twice he says feed my sheep look at peter the shepherd in preparation you see we've got to get this attitude to christ sorted out we've got to get your relationship as a shepherd there's too many babies in the pulpit there's too many game players in the pulpit there's too many um wearing nappies in the pulpit i really mean it it's terrible no growth no maturity don't you know the bible says to be a qualified elder in the church there's at least 22 qualifications the bible teaches us and i've said it many times the paul teaching timothy and titus he says an elder for a man to be an elder in the church he's got to be blameless the husband of one wife vigilant sober of good behavior given the hospitality apt to teach not given the wine no striker uh not greedy a filthy looker but patient not a brawler not covetous one that ruleth well his own house not a novice not a young believer he must have a good report of them that are without not self-willed not soon angry a lover of good men just holy temperate and we're only beginning 22 qualifications i named to you only one of them is the ability to teach the ability to feed the flock all of the rest are to do with character nature who you are this is the first great reason why you cannot find shepherds in this earth and why the sheep are scattered i point the finger at the shepherds the men in the pulpit the men who claim titles and ministry it's you that are responsible that sheep are scattered everywhere i know it's hard i know ministry means death to self i understand that but we've got to get back to reality if we don't have this work of the cross in a shepherd's heart then the church is going to be filled

with pride arrogance selfishness bitterness unforgiveness and anger it's going to be the product of that shepherd and the sheep will scatter secondly the second reason why you cannot find real shepherds in this hour is because they change the message from the cross to contemporary trends candice and i went for a holiday once and uh we it was a spanish-speaking island we went to and we got there and as we always do we look for a local church we managed to find one and we eventually found it with some difficulty we walked into the meeting and a whole group of people gathered there we sat down and that pastor of that church stood up and started telling us a story about his pet cat i just knew he wasn't going to spend all that time in that cat i just knew soon he's bound to open up this bible i just knew he's gonna talk about the lord jesus christ i could have been a sinner walking into that church i could have been someone on my way to hell he didn't know me from adam but all he could do i can't remember one other thing he said he never mentioned a scripture and in fact he told us that last night was his date night with his wife he's a mature older man and he said i don't let anything get in my way of my date night with my wife well i knew that by his message he had absolutely nothing i've never heard anything worse than that man more empty i can assure you i'm not going to that church ever again you see they change the message from the cross to contemporary trends when you find a man who thinks he has the right to change the message lighten it leave something out improve upon it add to it you know that you're dealing with a man who's a false shepherd he is not a real shepherd look again in verse 23 here it says then jesus turned and said unto peter get thee behind me seeking thou art an offense unto me for thou savorest the things that be not of god but those that be of men what is the true message of the church if you're going to be a disciple if you're going to follow christ you're going to have to deny yourself a shepherd who does not preach this has his basic food for the sheep is not a real shepherd a real shepherd who's been dealt with with christ when it comes to his message is going to preach the cross you see the cross is central to the ministry of a shepherd you cannot be an elder in a church when this hasn't marked your personal life and you've died and you've come under the power of it you see that's why they don't preach this anymore because they've never had it in their own life if a man whatever a man has in his life he wants to preach that and communicate that to the sheep a man who always talks about grace and lessens holiness i can assure you where that man is there's no doubt about where that man is peter is being prepared as a shepherd and if he is not clear that the message is christ and him crucified he is going to damage the purse sheep he'll mislead them peter has to be a disciple in order to make disciples he's got to deny himself in order to preach to the sheep to deny themselves he's going to take up his cross and to follow christ even unto death if those sheep are also going to follow the example of that man of god and so a local shepherd must embody this principle of the message of jesus christ you see we are to preach the word of god we're to preach the person of christ and we're to preach the lord jesus christ and him crucified to be an elder you have to have the ability to teach that's the basic opening up of scripture the ability you don't need to be greatly gifted you don't need to be able to expound it profoundly but you've got to be accurate you've got to be clear you've got to make christ central there's never an excuse you say i won't judge you for lack of gifting never judged a man on the basis of gifting whether he's loud whether he's quiet whether he's profound whether he preaches long or preaches very short i never judge a man on those things but i do judge him is he faithful to the word of god is he faithful to christ is he faithful and preaching the cross we read also in timothy about elders who labor in the word and doctrine the word labor there means to an extended day of hard labor and hard work that you labor until the point that you're exhausted you're you're very tired you're laboring to teach you're laboring to preach you want to preach christ and him crucified you see the true cross when it is preached will produce a real church and the true church will proclaim the real cross and a true vision of the church with christ alone as its foundation will always bring about a great conflict with satan now look at this a church that understands the message of

denying self and going the way of the cross that is the foundation that christ builds his church upon if i find a church that preaches the cross that lives the cross who has elders who embody the cross then i know i'm looking at a church built on the revelation of who christ is it's a true revelation and the true message you see where you get truth preached i find a real church i walk into church how do you know that church is built on christ how do you know it's built on a revelation of christ by their message by their lifestyle and i show you a church that is built upon christ is going to be assaulted by satan it's going to be the target of satan look at peter here he had a revelation of who christ is so the gates of hell attempt to prevail against the church what does it look like when the gates of hell try to prevail against the church well look at this onslaught against peter you had the devil coming in on peter saying he doesn't need to go the way of the cross you don't need to preach the way of the cross you don't need to suffer or lose out on your friendship with christ you will not be separated by death to self all of this was satan's strategy now what does it mean here when jesus says i will build my church upon this rock revelation of who i am a divine revelation of the father i'm going to build my entire church on this and you know what that revelation is also going to include the cross and death to self and being crucified with christ what does it look like when the gates of hell attempt to prevail against the church they are against this message do you see here in matthew 16 first time we read about the church first time we read about the cross and now we're seeing what the onslaught looks like against the church how satan you know we think of the gates of hell it's an unreal thing but when you see satan coming to peter and working on his flesh and his thoughts and his emotions and saying you don't need to worry about that how many people have we met they they go out and get drunk and take drugs and sleep around to say i know once they've always said i know i'm okay i know i'm a christian they don't realize that the gates of hell have prevailed against them they're utterly defeated they're defeated by the gates of hell but what does the gates of hell mean you see it's the gates of ancient cities in the middle east the gates were first of all a place of strategy a place of strategy it says in the bible that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil that's the word strategy or methodoia it's the word for method satan has methods which he comes against the church with strategies secret schemes specially planned devices arguments tricks traps that's what the devil does when the gates of hell try to prevail you know what they try to undermine lifestyle in the church it doesn't matter what your kids are like it doesn't matter how you treat your wife it doesn't matter about how you live out holiness it doesn't matter if you never read your bible you can go preach to others what a tragedy that is the gates of hell we need our eyes open this morning to identify and recognize how the devil wants to prevail against the church but a church built on the revelation of christ christ and him crucified the way of the cross a church built on this message is going to nullify the strategies of hell because hell will always lie against this you don't need to go that way what did peter do peter changed his message peter actually began to say lord you don't need to do that jesus turn says get thee behind me satan it's about time we start doing that with some pastors and i'm not telling you sheep to do that we need prophets again we need prophets in the church who will expose the false message of these pastors who've changed the message paul rebuked peter when he changed the message we ought to stand those in ministry if you're young in ministry a young preacher don't you be scared to contend for the faith it's a strategy of hell to change the message of the church that's why you can't find a real pastor in this hour a real preacher in this hour a real shepherd of souls you know why he's listened to the strategy of the gates of hell those gates of hell are not only a place of strategy but a place of war from those gates of hell of planning they wage war against real shepherds i don't believe one shepherd goes into the pulpit without hell waging a war you can compromise don't mention that you don't need to deal with sin you can be lazy lie about the home you don't need a study just pick up something to share with the folk you don't need a word from the lord you know for weeks i've wrestled over these messages for london i was going in a different direction but praying wrestling searching longing saying oh

god give me a word for that people who are going to be in london in two weeks time says we are not ignorant of the devices of satan i know what the devil's voice sounds like and i know the gates of hell want to prevail we are in a fierce battle every shepherd every church is in a fierce battle and it's only the cross undoes the work of satan when we go the way of the cross we bring to naught the devices of satan and of hell there's only one way to get to the book of acts and that's the way of the cross that's how peter got there christ dealt with peter peter your life has to be the cross your message has to be the cross jesus rebuked peter and says get thee behind me satan he actually let him know your message has become a message affected by the gates of hell and by satan himself what a tragic thing and if the devil can do that with an apostle he can do it with anyone in our day and generation a third and last reason here why it is so hard to find a real god-gifted shepherd because the men who call themselves shepherds are scattering the flock the very men who are meant to be gifted and called to gather the flock around the lord jesus christ are doing things that scatter the flock notice in verse 18 jesus said i will build my church this is his church he didn't delegate that to any man any woman any ministry any apostle it is his church he'll never be keith malcolmson's church this is not my church i only ever call this my church whenever i'm saying i'm a part of it i belong to it i've never once said this is my church as a personal possession never would never could because that's never true god could bury me tomorrow and raise up another shepherd that's what god does again we see the same thing when christ came pardon me when we see christ in his earlier ministry pardon me i've got my drinks and my sweets if mary could should be giving me a sweet this morning we see jesus in his earlier ministry in matthew chapter 9 listen very carefully before we close but when christ saw the multitude he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted and they were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd do you see this is a real shepherd jesus is the great shepherd and when he sees the scattered sheep fainting scattered everywhere having no one to feed them or to guide them you know it says over in mark 16 that he began to teach them many things a shepherd will begin to teach when he sees this when he sees them fainting and scattered he begins to teach that's why i'm teaching the word of god because i see this across our world in this hour i want to get messages out that are going to teach the sheep because they're scattered and they're fainting and no man cares about them and there's no shepherd to preach them and encourage them and pray for them and so i begin to teach it moves me to teach then just after this in matthew 9 says as a result of seeing this terrible thing jesus said unto his disciples the harvest is truly plenteous but the labors are few pray ye therefore the lord the harvest that he will send forth labors into his harvest and then straight after this in the next chapter matthew 10 jesus goes off for an entire night of prayer and he's praying and straight after he chooses the 12 apostles to go out and preach the word of god he comes down from that night of prayer remember what's just happened he has seen the scattered sheep he then begins to teach them he then goes to prayer he then chooses 12 men and he sends them out to preach and to gather the sheep together this is what a true shepherd this is how he works let's begin to teach let's begin to pray let's begin to prepare other shepherds and i'm praying that through all the messages we do somewhere in australia or america or south africa or new zealand or some other country in holland or elsewhere that shepherds are going to be birthed i believe that a supernatural work is about to happen where god is going to raise up shepherds beyond number you see i've got many promises in this bible and i can preach many things here i've got much more but for the sake of my throat i'm closing and i can give you many promises i will multiply shepherds on the hillside i will give you shepherds after my own heart saints of god in order for the gates of hell not to prevail to scatter the sheep we need another genuine revival where god is going to raise up many shepherds there's so many neglectful shepherds who will not do the right thing but we need true shepherds look at the vast multitudes on the hillside scattered there's no churches i'm getting emails constantly there's no church no prayer meeting no preaching no evangelism no place to gather that is safe

we're tired of the rubbish we're tired of all the gimmicks of decades give us a real pastor a real shepherd of the souls you know what we need to be praying for this in this hour that god would suddenly raise up across the nations a vast army of shepherds again either shepherds as elders local leaderships or those that are gifted supernaturally with the ministry of a pastor or a shepherd we need it again and i'm praying i am praying for this because the gates of hell want to prevail they've nullified the shepherds they have changed the message in the pulpits and they have scattered the sheep and after decades of what men have said were true revivals decades of universal preaching and ministries look at the condition all i see is sheep scattered everywhere we need a real genuine work of god today the last day of this month i know people are talking about halloween but in germany and i love this they call this day reformation day where they look back to luther and all the great reformers who god raised up to change an entire continent and the world what a remarkable thing and just after the beginning of that john knox who was training to be a catholic priest he was a rough and hard man but he began to see the truth of the gospel and god began to deal with them and john knox was raised up of god as a great reformer and preacher for scotland the history books say the reformation took place in a greater degree in scotland than any other country in the entire world whether germany france or anywhere else scotland was changed politically socially educationally economically through 40 days of preaching by just 40 days and the entire nation changed and the history book john knox is an eyewitness in his history of the scottish reformation he said in every village and community of scotland overnight shepherds were raised up through the preaching of the word of god god had been preparing these vessels but they were hidden they were young they were uneducated they didn't have much money but all of a sudden shepherds filled the entire nation and scotland became a reformed nation and returned to preaching the gospel and the genuine heaven-sent revival saints of god i believe it is time again oh god do it again in our hour send us a mighty army of pastors shepherds springing up in homes the most unlikely oh it may be small new churches but oh god raise up shepherds again to feed the flock to lead the flock to guard the flock we've been tired of the mega church give us real pastors in the church again and if you're called of god to be a pastor i pray you won't be able to sleep at night i pray that you're going to wake up dreaming of the sheep scattered on the mountainside that you're going to pray night and day that you're going to fast that your heart's going to break over this that you're going to have such a call that you'll get no rest until you begin feeding the sheep but saints of god we need qualified shepherds in the church again we need shepherds appointed put in place who it is obvious they're called of god will you pray with me father we pray for all of our friends that are scattered in many nations across this world we pray for ireland we pray for limerick my god the sheep have been scattered after decades of false gospels of compromised messages of false pastors of shepherds who jeremiah and ezekiel would have risen up and rebuked we are tired of it and we see a church scattered across the world but oh god we believe like in john knox's day one more time one last time will you not revive us will you not pour out your spirit even upon the older men the presbyteros will you revive and pour out yes on the young but also on those young preachers will you raise up right across this world father i pray that even through this message you're going to raise up new churches you're going to raise up shepherds you're going to raise up preachers you're going to raise up men and women who are going to stand and seek after you once again father i pray for all of our friends that you'll begin to gather them under the ministry of genuine god-sent leadership in jesus name amen god bless you

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