

The Great Shepherd & His Under-shepherds

I. Slide1-5 **Announce:**

- A. Slide6 Baby Dedication 2nd service: twins, Matthew & Madilyn Dulaney. Chad & Rachel.
- B. Slide7^{bl} Announce: Elementary Principle position opened. Submit resume to Heisdy in HR dept

II. Slide8 **Intro:** *The Great Shepherd & His Under-shepherds*

- A. The writer gives us another picture of Christ, in vs.20 as *the Great Shepherd*.
 1. Psalm 23 is the reminder to **us as His sheep**, that **our path is not** always beside the **still waters**, or in **green pastures**, but also through *the valley of the shadow of death*. Which includes any **dark, dread or awful experience** that we're called to pass thru.
- B. **Prayer:** Lord, as our **Great Shepherd**, You **care for, lead, & protect** your flock.
You will feed Your flock like a shepherd; You will gather the lambs with Your arm, And carry them in Your bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.
- C. Listen for **your part, my part & Jesus' part**.

III. Slide9 **OBEY & PRAY (17-19)**

- A. Here's 2 very practical things you can do for church leadership... **Obey & Pray**.
- B. *Story:* A friend had a problem getting his son to clean his room. The son would always **agree** to tidy up, but then **wouldn't follow through**. After H.S. the young man joined the Marine Corps. When he came home for leave after basic training, his father asked him what he had learned in the service. "Dad," he said. "I learned what **'now'** means." (*Obey*)
- C. Slide10 **OBEY (17)**
- D. **Obey** those who rule over you, and be **submissive**.
 1. **If they** are faithful to care for your soul & teach you the word, **you** have the responsibility to **obey**.
 2. In **military terms** **submission** can be described as a soldier under an officer.
If the soldier begins to act on his own, & be independent of the others, he is guilty of insubordination & will be punished accordingly. [adapted, Martin Lloyd-Jones def]
- E. Slide11a Some churches give their pastor **too much** authority.
 1. **Problem today** – *abuse of this position*.
 2. *He's God's anointed* – as they are blindly taken advantage of.

- a) This *does not mean* unqualified blanket obedience.
 - b) That smacks of **Jim Jones** & his 900+ followers in 1978 that drank the cyanide laced Kool-Aid in Guyana.
 - c) *Or* the 1993 siege of the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas As the self proclaimed messiah **David Karesh** led 80 to their deaths.
3. Of course these leaders who take advantage of the sheep ignore Jesus own words, *You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.*
- F. Slide11b Some churches give their pastor *too little* authority.
1. **Problem today** – *lack of respect for the position.*
 2. The pastor used to be highly esteemed in his town/city. He was known as being an *intellectual, faithful, holy.*
 3. *Now* he has been *reduced to a novice shrink; or an untrustworthy huckster* just out for your money. *Or* one who **peddles his latest religious wares** (like a beautiful gold pendant with his *name/ministry* plastered all over it)
 4. *Today*, do to our ever-present Christian media, via radio & TV, what the average pastor receives after a sermon is, *that was pretty good pastor, but when I heard pastor so & so teach it he brought out...*
 - a) His **pastoral authority** gets lost in the fog of the ever popular, ever articulate, & ever popular Radio preacher.
 5. *So what is the proper balance?* vs.17
- G. Slide12 He is a **leader...not** a **dictator** who drives the sheep from behind. He is a **shepherd** who goes before & leads the way [Nehemiah, *A servant who leads & a leader who serves*]
1. As has also been said, *He who thinks he leads, and has no one following him, is only taking a walk.*
 2. 1 Thes.5:12 **And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.**
- H. They watch out for your souls [*watch* = to be w/o sleep] *LKGNT*
1. Like the shepherds in Lk.2:8 who were **watching over their flocks by night.**

2. They loose sleep over you. They are to be caring & conscientious shepherds over you.
- I. A church leader is to lead wisely & lovingly *as those who must give an account*. [yet, not to the congregation *but to the Lord*]
1. Our relationship, is **serious business** for *both* of us. [so let's make a deal...:]
- J. *Let them do so with joy and not with grief/groaning.*
1. **Note**...the responsibility for making the operations of a church **a joy & not a burden**, is placed on the **congregation**, **not** on their leaders.
 2. **How can you as a congregation make it a joy?**...glad you asked. What he said, simply **obeying & submitting** to all proper teaching & all biblical counseling you receive.
 - a) Let's be clear...*I'm* not suggesting this for our church...*No God* is demanding it.
 3. **Does your conduct give your leaders reason to report joyfully about you?**
- K. **Slide13 PRAY** (18,19)
- L. *Ask God to make His shepherds faithful & fruitful.*
1. Pray that we don't get **prideful** when we succeed; **nor** get **depressed** when we fail.
- M.(18b) The writers conscience was clear, as was Paul's when he said, **Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the **holiness** and **sincerity** that are from God.** 2 Cor.1:12
- N. *Opportunities:* Pray for us...on Sunday morning (**2nd service** in room next to front office)
1. **Or, Men on Tuesday mornings** (7-8am) [back door by gym, in worship room]
 2. *How different the modern church would be if the **majority** of its people **prayed** for its pastors & lay leadership.*
 3. **Is it any wonder that Satan does his utmost to *snatch that weapon* from the Christian **or** to *hinder* him in the use of it?** Andrew Murray
- O. **Slide14 Obedience & prayer** will be the **2 oars** that will steer any church in the rt direction.
1. **Be respectful, supportive, be a cheerful team player.**

IV. **Slide15 A PRAYER & AN APPEAL (20-25)**

- A. This lovely benediction captures a number of the major themes of the epistle (e.g., *peace, blood, covenant, resurrection, Shepherd, equipping*).
1. With such marvelous resources as these, who can excuse any failure to become the man or woman God intends you to be?¹
- B. Slide16 A PRAYER (20,21)
1. He asked for prayer & now prays for them.
- C. He extends Peace, Care & Promise to us.
1. Slide17a PEACE - *The God of Peace* [5 times in the NT]
 - a) Divine tranquility. *His personal Shalom.*
 - b) Jer.29:11 I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of *shalom* and not of evil.
 - (1) And this promise of *peace* was given to the children of Israel in the *beginning* of the Babylonian captivity.
 - (2) Peace is not the **absence** of *trouble*, but the **presence** of **God**.
 - c) Slide17b No storm need to sink you Christian. Jesus said, *Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*
 2. Slide17c CARE - *The great (risen) Shepherd of the sheep*
 - a) There are 3 separate titles given to Christ, the Shepherd:
 - (1) The **Good** Shepherd *who dies for the sheep* [John 10:11; Ps. 22]
 - (2) The **Great** Shepherd *who perfects the sheep* [hear; Ps. 23]
 - (3) The **Chief** Shepherd *who will come for the sheep* [1Pet.5:4; Ps. 24]
 - b) Dr. **Bob Smith** Philosophy professor at Bethel College in Minnesota makes a humorous point to his classes that **sheep** are the *prima facie evidence* against **evolution**. *Sheep are so unintelligent & obtuse & defenseless, they could not have possibly evolved – the only way they could have survived is w/a shepherd.*
 - c) Jesus took this term & applied it to himself when he said, *And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd.*
 - (1) He lives not only to give us life but also to **tend** us (care/look after), so we may bring Him **glory**.

¹ Ray Stedman; pg.158

3. **Slide17d PROMISE** - *Through the blood of the everlasting covenant.* [an eternal promise]
- a) This was the *blood-shedding Christ* who *made* the covenant, *procured* the covenant, & *sealed* the covenant.

D. **Slide18bi** (21) Believers who are motivated by **legalism** are always anxious to know what is expected of them.

1. They want to do *only what is necessary* to make themselves look respectable.
2. They *crave specific rules* so they can know precisely how to behave.
3. They plod along hoping that someday *their efforts will pay off.* *According to the NT such people are legalists; they are using the law to establish their righteousness.* [Erwin W. Lutzer]
4. *Are you motivated by legalism or Love?*

E. **Complete** = equip, fix, make good, mend, set.

1. **The word includes 2 thoughts:** *the supply of that which is defective, and of the amendment of that which is faulty.* Wescott, LKGNT
 - a) The idea here is *to repair things so they can be useful.*
 - (1) **Matthew** uses it when they *mend their nets.*
 - (2) **Paul** uses it when he talks about *restoring a brother* (to set a bone).
2. This beautiful request *then* is for **God to mend & perfect His children w/ everything good, thus equipping them to do God's will.**

F. **Every good work** – A great artist attends to the minutest details. *He'll make it all do-able.*

G. We can not **do His work nor His will until** we are **in Christ.**

1. **In Christ** - used 169 time's in Paul's epistles alone.
2. Once we are **in Christ** we then can do His works *through Him.*
3. Did you know, He has an *eternally designed job description* for each of us, **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them** [*His love has you smothered & covered*]

H. **Slide19 AN APPEAL** (22-25)

I. (24) **Know your leadership personally** (*not just me.* I have a great team around me. **Lay leaders**)

1. Be on good terms with them.

2. **Let nothing come between you & them** [be honest, transparent, & nice]
 - a) **There will be issues** (we're human & we're sinners), **deal w/them**.

J. (25) Superior **Grace** from a Superior Savior.

K. **Slide20 End - Painter Benjamin West** (*One of the first American artists to win a wide reputation in Europe; known as the **American Raphael***) tells how he loved to paint as a youngster. When his mother left, he would pull out the oils and try to paint. One day he pulled out all the paints and made quite a mess. He hoped to get it all cleaned up before his mother came back. But she came and discovered the mess. West said what she did next completely surprised him. She picked up his painting and said, **"My, what a beautiful painting of your sister."** She gave him **a kiss** on the cheek and walked away. **With that kiss**, West says, **he became a painter**.

1. Every day you and I are trying to paint the picture of **Jesus** in our lives through what we **say** and **do**. **But we make messes**. The last thing we need is for someone to come along and say, **"What a mess!"** What we need is **a kiss of encouragement**. *It's vital for life, it's vital for ministry, and it's vital for relationships.*