

SUBJECT: The Good Shepherd

THEME: The sacrifice necessary to be a good shepherd.

PROPOSITION: Has the Good Shepherd died for YOU? Or are you still living in fear of death.

I. THE COWARDICE OF THE HIRELING

II. THE COURAGE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

New Movie –“23 Blast” based on story of Travis Freeman, a man born with sight but lost it at age of 19, within 48 hours – due to sinus. Still played football! “Disability does not equal inability” Kind of the opposite of Jn. 9!

As was pointed out last week, the analogy of a ruler as shepherd and his people as sheep was a common means of describing the ruler-ruled relationship in the ancient world. From the Homeric kings onward, rulers had been referred to as shepherds of their people. In The Republic of Plato there is an interesting dialog that takes place between [Plato and Thrasymachus](#) regarding the proper role of Rulers. The analogy of Shepherd-sheep is used in the discussion.

[Thrasymachus](#) chief argument is that "injustice" is superior to "justice."[Thrasymachus](#) argues that a ruler, like a shepherd, has only his own profit in view. In other words, the shepherd in [Thrasymachus'](#) view is only interested in his own personal gain and not in what is good for the sheep. He views the ruler-shepherd as one who is to be served by people-sheep who have as their only goal in life the happiness of their ruler. He goes on to argue that in any business transaction, the unjust man always ends up with the most money and so, injustice must be superior to justice.

[Thrasymachus](#) viewed life from a strictly material sense and FAILED TO SEE that the true MOTIVE of a ruler-shepherd was not the furtherance of his own estate, but rather the increase and prosperity of his people-sheep.

[Plato](#) summarizes and corrects [Thrasymachus](#) argument as follows:

"...You represent him, in his character as feeding up his flock, not for their own sake but for the table or the market, as if he were out to make money as a caterer or a cattle dealer, rather than a shepherd.

Surely the sole concern of the shepherd's art is to do the best for the charges put under its care; its own best interest is sufficiently provided for so long as it does not fall short of all that shepherder should imply..." *Plato, p.345, [Ruling as an Art](#), p. 27 in F.M. Cornford's translation of the Republic.*

10/12/19 – show a similar (anti capitalist) argument from DeSousas "[America](#)" book, p. 181 < >.

We have then in Plato two representations of the office of shepherd. One, as an unjust man interested only in his own welfare. The other as a Compassionate shepherd whose only Motive is the good of his flock.

This is a similar picture to the one that we have drawn for us by Christ in **JOHN 10 :1 ff** .

Here, the unjust shepherd is seen as a thief and a robber.

One whom the sheep will not willingly follow.

One who has only his best interest at heart.

One who as a thief comes but to plunder, to kill, steal and destroy.

This figure of the unjust shepherd is COMPARED TO the TRUE AND GOOD SHEPHERD Who has come in the appointed way

To lead His flock out of the fold and into lush pastures.

One who will provide for the Safety, Liberty and Sustenance (9) of His flock.
One whose voice the sheep gladly hear recognize and follow.

He is referred to here as the **GOOD SHEPHERD**. One who is "fair" and "lovely" and "beautiful." (as the term "good" implies.)

One whom the king of Israel once referred to as "My Shepherd." 23rd Psalm.

One whom, as the text says today, is characterized by his willingness to **"give his life for the sheep"** v .
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THIS IS A SHEPHERD WHO IS FAR REMOVED FROM THE PICTURE THAT **THRASYMACHUS** PAINTED OF ONE WHO SHEPHERDED FOR HIS OWN PROFIT. TO BE SURE,

THRASYMACHUS ' SHEPHERD IS SEEN IN **John 10** : LOOK AT V . **12 - 13** FOR HIS CHARACTER.

I. THE COWARDICE OF THE HIRELING

THE HIRELING IS CHARACTERIZED AS HAVING A CALLOUS:

1 . REPUGNANT SELF LOVE "Seeth the wolf, Leaveth the sheep, fleeth" for his own safety.

Plato, in "The Statesman", concludes that rather than use a term such as "Shepherd" for a statesman, perhaps a term such as "MANAGER" OR "TENDER" OR "SUPERVISOR" OF SHEEP WOULD BE A BETTER COMPREHENSIVE TERM TO DESCRIBE THE ROLE OF STATESMAN THAN THE TERM "SHEPHERD." *Plato, "Politicus" or "the Statesman" approx. 275.v .*

READ 12 -13

12 - not the owner - leaveth and fleeth. Why? **13** = because "HE IS A HIRELING AND CARETH NOT FOR THE SHEEP."

Those who shepherd a flock strictly for the gain that it brings them, are called hirelings. They are unworthy even to be called shepherd. THEY LABOR ONLY SO LONG AS THERE IS MATERIAL GAIN IN IT FOR THEMSELVES. THEIR CONCERN IS NOT FOR THE SHEEP, BUT FOR THEIR OWN HIDES.

They have not PAID FOR THE SHEEP. The sheep have no real value to them beyond the worth of a day's wages. Their own health and well being is all that concerns them

13 read.

IN CONTRAST TO A "CALLOUS, REPUGNANT SELF-LOVE" WE SEE THE:

II. THE COURAGE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

THE GOOD SHEPHERD IS CHARACTERIZED BY HAVING A **COMPASSIONATE**:

1 . REDEEMING LOVE "He giveth his life for the sheep."

A TRUE SHEPHERD would never leave the sheep defenseless against their enemies. You may remember that when David was about to go up against Goliath that he recounted to Saul how that he had had occasion to go up AGAINST both a lion and a bear in defence of his father's flock. David with the Lion and the **1 Sam 17:34-37**

"...I went out after him and smote him and delivered it out of his mouth. And when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and slew him. v.**36** Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear."

David, as a shepherd, showed disregard for his own life in the protection of those sheep under his care. He was willing to risk his own safety and well being for the flock, **BECAUSE HE WAS NOT A HIRELING, BUT A TRUE SHEPHERD.**

He was not thinking of self-preservation but rather the safety of his sheep! This willingness to "lay down his life for the sheep" was ingrained in him as part of his nature. He did not have to stop and consider what course of action to pursue when the lion and the bear attacked. He leapt to the task recognizing that in obedience to his position God would be on his side and give the victory.

The **TRUE SHEPHERD** is not characterized by **COWARDICE** and a **REPUGNANT SELF LOVE** but rather by **COMPASSION** and a **REDEEMING LOVE** for the **SHEEP**.

4 times in this passage Jesus mentions His voluntary **death FOR THE SHEEP**.
(Laying down of life = **11 ;15 ;17 ;18**)

It was a voluntary laying down of life and a necessary laying down of life so that He might provide a **Door** through which the sheep might pass from the fold of Israel and from the fold of Satan into the Flock of Christ, and there find Safety, Liberty, and Sustenance. (9)

Dr. Godsey of **Mercer University** said in a lecture series in January 1987 that "Jesus did not have to die." and that "the death of Jesus is not atoning.")

But the Word of God disagrees with the learned hireling Doctor.

Giving of his life:

Gal. 1:3-5 "...**Who GAVE HIMSELF** for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, (Satan's fold) according to the will of God and our Father"

Eph 5:2 "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath **GIVEN HIMSELF** for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."

John 10:11 - "giveth his life for the sheep." Why?

HE HAS PAID A PRICE FOR THE SHEEP! **REDEMPTION**

TO REDEEM MEANS "TO DELIVER BY PAYING A PRICE." We were all under the curse of death due to our sin, both Jew and gentile, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." But Christ, through the giving of His life, has paid the debt that we owed, thereby purchasing us out of the slave-market of sin.

Gal . 3:13 "Christ has **REDEEMED** us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;..."

Rev. 5:9 The 24 Elders song "thou wast slain and hast **REDEEMED** us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation."

HE GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, IN OUR STEAD, THAT WE MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY. (**10:10**)

HE IS Our **SUBSTITUTE** -

I Pet .2: 2 4-5 "**Who His own self BORE OUR SINS in His own body on the tree**, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; **by whose stripes ye were healed**. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

Matt. 9:36 "... he was moved with compassion on them,...because they were as sheep having no shepherd." (**37** - harvest is plenteous, laborers are few.)

THERE WERE MANY IN THE FOLD OF JUDAISM, BUT THERE WAS NO TRUE SHEPHERD! CHRIST CAME TO THAT FOLD, WAS ADMITTED BY THE GATESKEEPER, THE H.S. AND CALLED OUT THOSE WHO WERE HIS SHEEP.

II Cor. 5:21 ; "For He hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

AND HE DID IT AT A TIME WHEN WE WERE LOST AND WITHOUT HOPE.

R o m . 5 : 8 , 1 0 ; "But God commendeth His love toward us in that, **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us....For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more , being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

IT WAS THE REDEEMING SELF-SACRIFICING LOVE OF CHRIST FOR HIS SHEEP THAT ALLOWED US TO BE RECONCILED TO GOD. AND BECAUSE IF THIS, WE HAVE A...

2. RECIPROCATING LOVE "HE KNOWS HIS SHEEP AND THEY KNOW HIM! **V. 14**
10:14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My *sheep*, and am known by My own.

THIS IS A FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY. **THERE ARE NONE WHO KNOW GOD WHO DO NOT KNOW THE SON! NONE WHO ARE SAVED AND DO NOT KNOW IT - AND CONVERSELY, NONE WHO ARE SAVED AND DEAF TO THE VOICE OF THE SAVIOR.**

II Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, **THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS.** And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

The **reciprocal knowledge** is so sure and profound that it can only be compared to the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son: **JOHN 10:15**

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Expos. "**AS**" = "kathos" = "as, in the manner that." "according as" "how, in what manner."

CHRIST CAME TO THE FOLD OF ISRAEL TO CALL OUT AND REDEEM THOSE WHO WOULD BUT HEAR AND RESPOND TO HIS VOICE. (cf. the **blind man's ex-communication and subsequent communion with Christ**, the GOOD SHEPHERD.)

BUT THIS **SELF-SACRIFICING, REDEEMING, RECIPROCAL LOVE** IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLD OF ISRAEL ALONE!

V. 16 "

v 16 = the CONSEQUENCES OF HIS DEATH.

MOTIVATION determines ACTIONS.

"OTHER SHEEP" "flock" not "fold" in **16 c.** **16** = "AULAIS" FOLD VS. "POIMNA" FLOCK

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold (= "AULAIS" = FOLD) : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one FLOCK ("POIMNA" =FLOCK) , and one shepherd.

There is but one flock. Saving grace has brought every individual sheep into one and the same perfected position in Christ Jesus.

He is the **DOOR for the sheep** - out from their former estate into his saving grace.

Cf. this verse with **9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.**

Our entrance, or **salvation**;

our safety, in that our Shepherd will lay down his life for us;

our liberty, in that we are not corralled in but rather are in His flock and have freedom to move within the flock;

our sustenance, in that we have a shepherd who will provide for us.

"The listening to Christ's voice brings the sheep to Him, and this being what constitutes the flock, THE FLOCK MUST BE ONE AS HE IS ONE." **expos.** (*there may still be folds within the flock*)

THE THING THAT SETS CHRIST APART FROM EVERY OTHER "WOULD BE" GOOD SHEPHERD, IS V .
17-18

Joh 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

Joh 10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

THAT IS THAT CHRIST IS OUR SOVEREIGN SHEPHERD!

"I LAY DOWN MY LIFE - THAT I MAY TAKE IT AGAIN!"

MANY MAY CHOOSE THE TIME OF THEIR DEATH - BUT NONE OTHER CAN TAKE UP LIFE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD BUT THE PRINCE OF LIFE HIMSELF - OUR GOOD SHEPHERD!

I AM THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

"I AM THE TRUE BREAD"

"I AM THE TRUE VINE"

I AM THE TRUE AND GOOD SHEPHERD"

As the **GOOD SHEPHERD**, Christ came and GAVE HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP.

As the **GREAT SHEPHERD** = (**Heb, 13:20-21**) Christ ROSE FROM THE DEAD to care for His sheep.

Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that **great shepherd of the sheep**, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Heb 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

As the **CHIEF SHEPHERD** | **Peter 5:4** He will COME AGAIN for His sheep.

1Pe 5:4 And when the **chief Shepherd** shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

IS CHRIST YOUR SHEPHERD TODAY?