

Russell Kelfer

The High Cost of Shepherding

#1126-B

Series: Making the Spiritual Switch

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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The High Cost of Shepherding

Father, it's a new year, a new day, and a new fresh outpouring of Your incredible grace. Your compassions fail not. They are new every single morning. How great is Thy faithfulness, and how presumptuous,

Father, we tend to be when we awaken in the morning without a fresh awareness of the new grace and mercy that is ours for the taking. And we tend, so often, to live spiritually anemic lives, trying to live off of yesterday's grace. Please forgive us.

Father, there are so many in our fellowship and in our class, and in our circle of friendships, even here this morning, who are struggling and hurting. We ask You, Father, that You would somehow give us grace and understanding in how to pray, and that You would pour yourself into their lives in ways we cannot even fathom. We pray for Marty, that You would continue to give him grace as he struggles to recover from his kidney transplant. We pray, Father, for Larry and for Randor, as they prepare to leave for Uganda. We pray that You would give to them a discernment and a wisdom and grace and ministering power that will allow them to be instruments of Your Spirit, in ways we cannot even imagine.

We pray that this time we spend together, this morning, Father, in spite of the teacher, might somehow allow Your Spirit the freedom to touch our hearts.

For we pray in Jesus' Name,

Amen.

Okay, question number one (you love those): how many of you are parents? Can I see your hand? See, it does work. Question number two: if I were to ask you, what does it cost to be a parent, how would you answer? Tough question isn't it, because you can't really attach a cost to it. If you try to figure it in terms of financial expenses: lodging, food, clothing, medical expenses, and college costs, it doesn't work. If you try to think of it in terms of time: trips to the hospital, trips to the dentist, trips to school,

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trips to Little League, piano lessons, choir, football practice, band practice...you know what I mean, that's no measure of cost. Or, you may try to figure it in terms of emotional cost: the fears, the tears, the hurts, the worries, the anticipation, but that doesn't work. You can't really gauge the emotional cost of being a parent. It's so personal, it's so private, it's so all-consuming.

No, the cost of parenting can't be measured. And the reason is, to be a parent, or to be a husband or wife for that matter, involves more than measurable costs. It involves the ultimate cost—the loss of control of your life, doesn't it? When you get married, you give up a part of your life to another person. It is no longer what "I" want. It's no longer what "I" need. It's what "we" want and what "we" need. Then you add children into the mix and suddenly your whole life revolves around somebody but you. You get outside of yourself, and if are going to give yourself to the task of parenting you have to set up a whole new set of priorities, don't you? You can't measure the cost of being a parent, because being a parent costs you your life. It's worth it, boy is it worth it, but that's the cost. And people who become parents, beloved, without realizing that, are in for the shock of their lives.

You see, no good parent would hesitate to risk their life if their children were in danger. No good parent would be unwilling to do without something they wanted if their children had a need or their children's welfare was at stake. No, because somebody else's life comes before your own. You give of yourself, and if need be, you give your life. That's the cost of parenting.

No one understands that better than God. Because you see, God, the perfect Father, ultimately gave everything He had for a rebellious bunch of ungrateful children. And many of us, even to this day, take for granted what He has done. When His children were in need, the Scripture says that He laid aside His robes of royalty.

...(He) took upon him the form of a servant [a slave], and was made in the likeness of man.

And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself [further], and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

(Philippians 2:7,8)

Beloved, that's the cost of parenting. And God determined in eternity past, we would need a picture book, so that we would understand what it cost. It is an illustration that would speak

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to the minds primarily of His chosen people, the Jews, and then on down from generation to generation, of what it cost to be spiritual parents. And that's what we are here to talk about this morning. In order for us to be able to grasp that, God reached down into His database of eternal values, and by the word "cost" He typed "shepherd." So now, every time you define the high price of leading, you look back at that picture; and the likeness of a shepherd appears on the screen of your mind, and God says, "This is what I mean."

I think it would make sense then, for us to pay careful attention to who a shepherd is, and what a shepherd did, and to the price he had to pay *to be a shepherd*. You see, no shepherd was ever off duty really. The Jew understood this. The main part of Judea, a central plateau, stretches from Bethel to Hebron, a distance of about 35 miles. The ground is rough and rocky and it's good for almost nothing agriculturally. It's only good pastorally. It's an acceptable place for sheep. So, the shepherd was a familiar picture to the Jewish mind. There was very little grass, and the sheep were constantly wandering off. There were no protective walls in which to keep them, so they had to constantly be watched. On every side there were bands of wild animals, thieves and robbers, and all of them had a singular goal, and that was to attack these defenseless creatures. So, the shepherd's job never ended.

I'll remind you again of what Sir George Adam Smith wrote. He said:

"On some high moor, across which at night the hyenas howl, when you meet him, sleepless, far-sighted, weather-beaten, leaning on his staff, looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them on his heart, you understand why the shepherd of Judea sprang to the front in the people's history: why they gave his name to their king, and why they made him the symbol of providence: and why Christ took him as a type of self-sacrifice."

And so early on in the life of God's people, He clearly made the *spiritual switch*. He had the psalmist write, "The Lord is my shepherd;" therefore, "I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1). He painted the picture on the blackboard of eternity that God would be the Shepherd; and we would be *the people of His pasture, the sheep of His flock*, Scripture says (Psalm 100:3). So, the picture was

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permanently engraved. All we had to do was transfer the image and make the “spiritual switch.” Why is that so hard? I don’t know, but it is, as we will find out in a moment, and it was for the disciples. The human mind just doesn’t quickly make that transfer. That’s why we are in the process of this study. That’s why Jesus stopped one day, and He gathered His somewhat slow learning disciples together and He said, “I want to talk to you about sheep and shepherds,” and they said, “Huh?” (Loose translation.) It comes from the Greek word, “huh.” And then He asked them to make the “spiritual switch.”

As we learned last week, this story had an unusual cast of characters, kind of the same group that was in all of the parables, but there was one unusual one. It was called “The Door.” And you remember the unusual part was, that Jesus reiterated that He was “The Door.” And not only was He “The Door,” He was “The *Exclusive* Door,” the only way to God. No one could come to God but by Him. He was the only entrance into the sheepfold.

So, that was the first principle to come out of this study—the exclusive aspect of the Gospel, for whosoever will may come, but whoever will come, must come by way of “The Door.” There is only one way.

The second truth that surfaced, and the one we want to look at this morning, is the price the Shepherd would have to pay to be a Shepherd.

THE PRICE THE SHEPHERD HAS TO PAY

Now, I want us to review for a minute, the story itself. You see the disciples were still reeling from the impact of these Pharisees who had made accusations to Jesus since the healing of the blind man had taken place. Jesus called them aside and tried to explain to them what this Kingdom was all about. The story went like this:

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. (John10:1-3)

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Can you imagine that? Can you imagine looking at this plateau full of dumb animals, all of which look alike, and calling each one by their own name? You see the significance of it, spiritually. And he not only calls them by name and leads them out. He doesn't drive them; He leads them.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. [That's what we will look at next week, Lord willing.]

This parable spake Jesus unto them: but [they didn't have a clue] they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. [They didn't know what He was talking about.]
(John 10:4-6 annotated)

God had come to earth and told them a child-like story that seemed so simple; it didn't even need to be repeated. And they could tell by looking into His eyes, He really had something to say to them, but they didn't understand what He was talking about. So, He did what He so often did. He said, "Let me explain it to you."

The first thing He did was to explain the mystery of "The Door." He said,

I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,
(John 10:9)

Then He goes on and basically, makes a couple of statements here that are literally mind-shattering. If you had been there, and been a Jew in that day and had heard what Jesus said, if you had a weak heart, you may have been in trouble. Listen to what He said and read between the lines.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy: I AM [has] come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

I AM [is] the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.
(John 10:10,11)

Now, immediately the intensity of spiritual warfare, beloved, multiplied. It didn't just increase; it multiplied. Jesus had drawn a line in the sand and placed the wiles of Satan on one side and the ways of God on the other. And now He identifies Himself as a second person in this story.

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He introduces himself as a Shepherd, and He goes beyond that. He says, “I am not only the Shepherd, I AM the Shepherd, the Good One, the Good Shepherd, the One who lays down His life for the sheep. I am the Shepherd whose nature is totally in harmony with the Father’s” (John 10:11). Jesus was talking to them, beloved, and the Pharisees understood it; that’s why they responded the way they did. The Pharisees understood that He said to them, “I AM the Messiah.” He was foretelling that His death and resurrection was coming. It was over the disciples’ heads, but they must have at least been impressed with the majesty of the statement.

Now, let’s look at those statements. We will only look at one point, but let’s remind ourselves of three, because we will get to the other two in the next week or so.

1- Jesus was saying there is a “false shepherd,” and he attempts to get into the sheepfold without passing through the door. He is a thief. He clearly has three goals: he wants to steal, to kill, and to destroy. We will look at those in a later lesson.

2- The Good Shepherd’s goals are the opposite. It says He has come to give life, and to give it abundantly.

3- Point number three, He said, and this is His most significant statement, “I AM the Shepherd, the Good One, the One who gives His life for the sheep. I love the sheep, I know the sheep, and I wouldn’t even think twice about standing between them and anything, even if it cost My life.” Jesus is painting a picture of the shepherd as the ultimate example of selflessness. He is saying there is nothing to compare with the cost of shepherding. No shepherd has a life of his own. The sheep are more than a livelihood to him; they are his life. If anything happens to one of them, it is as though it happened to him. Never are they off of his mind; never are they out of his sight; never are they beyond his grasp. He so identifies with these sheep that he and they become one.

So, shepherding then, whatever that entails; and we will look at that, really means one person becoming responsible for another person, to the degree that they become totally absorbed in the responsibility of taking care of that person or that flock.

THE KINDS OF SHEPHERDS IN THE WORD

So, Jesus is saying to us so that the issue becomes very

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clear, whoever this shepherd is, he is a very special person. And whatever the flock is, they are a very privileged people. The shepherd surfaces then as three things:

- 1- a type of unselfishness,
- 2- a type of Christ, and
- 3- a type of Christian leadership.

I want us to look carefully at those three things this morning, particularly at the last.

A TYPE OF UNSELFISHNESS

The fact that the shepherd represents total yieldedness was never in doubt in the Jewish mind, but we may need some additional insights to understand it. All we really need to do is read the twenty-third Psalm. You all know it from memory. Let me ask you a question. In the twenty-third Psalm, what benefits are listed for the shepherd? I couldn't find any. How about the sheep? He shall not want. He shall be brought to green pastures. He shall be led by still waters. He shall have his soul restored. He shall be led in the paths of righteousness. His cup will overflow. Goodness and mercy will follow him all the days of his life, and he will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. What a life! The shepherd is responsible for all of that. And what are the sheep responsible for? The sheep are to let the shepherd be the shepherd. They are to stop trying to live independently of his care. So long as they acknowledge that they are the sheep, and he is the shepherd, they are filled with comfort, stability, and peace. Goodness and mercy follow them all the days of their lives. Why? Because of who the shepherd is.

So, God is picturing the shepherd here, as the epitome of the unselfish life. He represents everyone who will ever live who gives their life to serving others.

A TYPE OF CHRIST

Now the scene shifts. Having portrayed the shepherd that way and having seen that *the Lord is My Shepherd*, that we are *the people of his pasture and the sheep of his flock*, the Scripture says, Jesus now astounds His followers with one of the greatest statements He ever made in Scripture. He said, "*I AM is the Good Shepherd, and I AM the I AM.*" The Pharisees couldn't handle this. The disciples couldn't understand it. And the reason is, Jesus

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was claiming to be God, and as God, to have all the attributes of God and to assume all of the responsibilities of God's ownership.

He was saying the shepherd is a type of Christ. He was saying that God in eternity past made sheep the way He did, so that shepherds would respond the way they do, so that you and I, by watching them, could comprehend who Christ is. And then He went further. He took the character of the shepherd and He carried it to the most unselfish extreme. He said, it is possible for a shepherd to face so much danger that even the threat of death would not deter him. Sheep were more important than his life. He would lay down his life for the sheep. And then Jesus said, "*I AM the I AM and I AM the Shepherd who will lay down His life for the sheep. I AM the essence of love.*"

There were two ways a shepherd could die for defending his sheep. One would be an intruder could suddenly appear out of nowhere and out of the impulse of rising to his sheep's defense, he could be killed. The other scenario, though less likely, is the shepherd could receive word that there was a band of thieves on their way to steal the sheep and to kill him. There wasn't time to move the sheep. He had two choices: he could abandon the sheep and run for his life, or he could stay in place knowing he would be slain.

A hireling, verses 12 and 13 said, somebody who had been hired to take care of the sheep but didn't have the shepherd's heart, would flee. But not the Good Shepherd. Now look at verses 16-18. It's an incredible verse, and a beautiful promise.

...there shall be one fold; and one shepherd.

Therefore, doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.

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.

(John 10:16c-18)

So, Jesus knew what was coming. The Good Shepherd came to earth knowing He was going to die for His sheep. There was never a doubt. Satan did not come upon Jesus unaware. He knew the price He was going to have to pay. The Scripture says that *He became obedient unto death*. He chose to die. *He chose to die for me; He chose to die for you*. It was an act of His will. It wasn't something that just happened.

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I just want to pause momentarily for us to reflect on that, beloved. Do you really realize the price the Shepherd paid for your soul? Do you realize that in eternity past, God looked down through the corridor of history and saw you, just you, and determined that you were worth the price of His Son? He chose to die for you. *That's the high cost of shepherding.* It's not something you casually choose to do.

A TYPE OF CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

I want us to close by looking at the main issue, the beautiful picture that develops from this image that Jesus was defining is more than just His relationship to us. As we will see in a moment, He was defining our relationship to one another. He was defining the cost it would take to be an under-shepherd; one who has assumed the responsibility for shepherding another. It means that those who enter the pastorate should not do so lightly. Those who go into any type of full-time Christian service should not do so lightly. Those who agree to become elders or deacons or serve in any way, as under-shepherds should not do so lightly. Those who agree to go to the mission field, should not do so lightly. Those who agree to teach Sunday school classes or to assume responsibility; even those who just agree to bring children into the world and become spiritually responsible for those children, ought to know the cost involved. Those who agree to disciple others should not take it lightly. The cost of Christian leadership is high. The reason is the Good Shepherd still lives in us and, *if He is willing to die for the sheep*, what about us? What should we be willing to do?

I want to remind you this morning, the pastor's call is not to build the church. God offered to do that. The pastor's call is to *give his life for the sheep*. The missionary is not primarily called to develop churches or Americanize foreigners. He is called to *give his life for the sheep*. The disciple-maker is not called to clone his personality; he is called to *give his life for the sheep*. The parent who is training a child in the ways of God may get weary in well-doing, beloved, but those children are the flock, and their spiritual well-being hangs in the balance. In varying degrees, it applies to all of us. We are all shepherds to somebody. And *the Good Shepherd who gives His life away for the sheep* and is willing to die for the sheep, in us, would do no less if we would let Him.

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That's the high cost of shepherding. Nothing you will ever do and nothing I will ever do will ever cost us more. But nothing we do will ever benefit us more as we walk into the presence of our Savior one day, and He wraps His arms around us and says "Well done, thou good and faithful shepherd. Well done." "It will be worth it all" (Esther Kerr Rusthoi), as the song says, but the pathway from here to there, beloved, is not supposed to be easy, and it's not. It will be strewn with rugged spiritual warfare, because the name of the game is people. And the need of the hour in the church is not just for bigger numbers, and bigger buildings, and more extravagant presentations, and more flamboyant messages or messengers. The world is unimpressed and unaffected eternally by all the hype and the bigness and the affluence. And the world is justifiably unimpressed with success-oriented ambassadors of fortune who claim God wants everybody rich, when the only people getting rich are them.

No, the shepherd is known, not by the size of his flock, or the magnitude of his ministry, but by his meek and quiet spirit and his servant heart. The more you want to rise in the kingdom, the lower you have to be willing to stoop to meet the needs of others. If need be, are you willing to die for them? If not, you're not a true shepherd.

Paul gave the elders at the church of Ephesus a clear understanding of the cost of shepherding. It's a good memory passage.

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

And now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. [This is it, so I want to give you a closing message.]

Wherefore, I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [shepherds], [here's your calling shepherd] to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.

(Acts 20:24-28)

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Isn't that interesting? Of all the things He could have told the shepherds to do; of all the things he could have told them to do organizationally, promotionally or financially, He gave them a singular command. He said, "You go back and feed the church; feed the church of God, the Word of God.

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, [and they are going to chew people up] not sparing the flock.

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

[So, He said, "I want you to pay attention.]

Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one [I warned you and warned you and warned you and wept] night and day with tears.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

(Acts 20:29-32)

Paul said, "The enemy is going to come at the flock from within and from without. All I want you to do as Christian leaders is be the shepherds you were called to be. That's your job. Be watchful, be faithful, be unselfish, and let the Good Shepherd be your example. He purchased you with His blood. Let me be your example," Paul said. "Night and day, I watched and I warned often in tears. The flock, beloved elders," Paul said, "is your responsibility. You must watch over them with a jealous, tender love. You must guard them from the attacks Satan launches from the world. You must guard them from the attacks that come within the body of Christ, because you are the shepherd; they are the sheep. And whatever the cost, whatever the cost, you are responsible."

THE CALL TO BE WHAT WE'RE CALLED TO BE

That, beloved, is the high cost of shepherding. It is not about committees and socials and celebrations and budgets. It is all about watching night and day for the enemy to steal into the family of God and begin to harass the sheep. It is all about watching night and day for the intrusions of ungodliness and immorality that broadside the church from outside. That's what the elders' jobs are all about. That's what the pastors' jobs are

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all about. Peter said it this way, remember? It's the same basic message.

Feed the flock of God which is among you [that's your job], taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind;

Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock.

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. (I Peter 5:2-4)

The shepherd must see that the flock is well fed. The Word is the only thing that can do that. Then, he takes responsibility for the flock, not lording it over them, but leading them by example; by being what he preaches, by living what he teaches. And Peter says, if, in your day-to-day ministry, whoever you are, if you are doing it grudgingly because it's your duty, or selfishly because it's your livelihood, when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will miss that crown. If you're "lording it over" those you minister to, assuming even unconsciously, a spiritual superiority, because you know more than they do, beloved, you are not letting the Good Shepherd do the ministering. You may be shepherding and proud of it, but crowns are not given for shepherding; crowns are given for letting God be the Shepherd He is.

If every time the phone rings and it's a hurting sheep, you moan and groan, you're not a real shepherd. Oh, you may wear shepherd's clothing; you may have a shepherd's title; but that's not the mentality of a shepherd. A shepherd never runs when the sheep are hurting; a hireling does, but not a shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. That means you give up your rights, your time, your enjoyment and they become insignificant in the light of one sheep that's hurting and crying or tangled in the brush, or has strayed and is missing from the flock.

You say, "But that will kill me. That's an all-consuming task. I'll get weary. I'll get tired." Right? Right. That's what it meant for Jesus. You say, "But that could mean a lifetime of people tugging at me, draining me, intruding on my time." That's right. That's what it meant for Jesus. You say, "That could lead to real spiritual warfare." Yes, it could. That's what it meant for Jesus. You say, "That's like dying for them." Yeah, you get it. That's what it meant for Jesus.

But, beloved, I am convinced that either we accept the call

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or get off the battlefield. Either we assume the mentality of a shepherd; and I'm talking about all of us; or we stop walking around with our spiritual rods and staffs as though we are something we're not. Either we become what we're called to be, or forget that we're called. Because when the Good Shepherd appears, He is going to have in His nail-scarred hand, a crown of glory reserved for shepherds; not for those who pretended to be shepherds; those who became what God called them to be.

I promise you, and God promises you that between now and then, if you accept the call, there will be sleepless nights, grief-torn days, late hours, disappointments, and spiritual warfare like you have never seen. There will be attacks from without and attacks from within. Paul said so. There will be wolves in sheep's clothing, and there will be sheep who insist on seeing how close to the ravine they can walk without falling. There will be times when you think you are leading, and you look around and the whole flock is going the other way. There will be times when you long for just one day with no interruptions, and no hurting sheep, but the phone will ring or the mail will come, and you will have to remind yourself you're a shepherd.

When that happens, I beg you, just listen quietly for the sound of the Good Shepherd's voice as He whispers, "Feed my sheep; feed my sheep; feed my lambs." Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the shepherdship thereof. Not because you have to, or for what you get out of it, but because you want to, knowing that when you get to heaven, a crown awaits you—a crown reserved for shepherds; shepherds who understand the high cost of shepherding.

THE HIGH COST OF SHEPHERDING

Oh, the high cost of shepherding,
What a price to pay!
Just to tend some wandering sheep
Who cannot find their way.

Is it really worth it?
Is the shepherd's task
Worth the all consuming cost?
(That's what people ask.)

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Sighs the Master Shepherd

“The cost is high! That’s true...

I understand how much it costs

I gave my life for you.

“I’ve guided you and guarded you

Through every trial and test...

Oh, beloved child of mine,

How can you do less?”

Let’s pray.

Our Father and our God, we pray that each of us might examine this morning, the high cost of shepherding; that we might think about the arena of life in which You have placed us.

Some are shepherding children or grandchildren, taking responsibility for their spiritual life. Some are teachers who are taking the responsibility for little children. Some are Sunday school teachers, who have agreed to shepherd a precious, precious little flock. Some are elders or pastors or Bible teachers or disciple makers, or just friends who are leading other friends. But, each of us knows what constitutes our flock. And most of us, Father, at some point in time; and maybe a lot of us even this last week, have grumbled and said, “Father, the cost is too high. I don’t like the pain of it. I don’t like the drain of it. I don’t like the time of it. I need, I need, I need.” And how the Good Shepherd must grieve when the flock gets tangled in the web around them and we as shepherds are too busy complaining to take the time to free them.

Somehow this morning, Father, we ask that you would speak individually to our hearts and let us leave this place with a fresh understanding of what it means to be a shepherd, and of that crown of glory that awaits us if we will.

In Jesus’ precious Name,

Amen.

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A Challenge to Further Study

1- What are Satan's three goals in John 10:10? What do you think those words mean? Can you make "the spiritual switch" and define them in terms of spiritual warfare?

2- What three things does Jesus do for the sheep that are the exact opposites of Satan's three ploys?

3- What do you think verse 16 means when it says, "There shall be one fold and one Shepherd"?

4- Paraphrase (write out in your own words and personalize) Acts 20:24-32. Ask yourself: "How does this passage help to crystallize the role of the shepherd in spiritual warfare? What are we as spiritual shepherds to be looking out for?"

A Challenge to Further Application

1- What is the significance of the phrase, "He calleth His own sheep by name?" How well do you know those you are shepherding? How well do you know their families?

2- What is the significance of the phrase "He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him?" What do you have to do to "go before" the sheep God has given you to lead?

3- Nearly everyone has someone to lead. Who is there in your life? Is it your wife? Your children? Those you disciple? Those you teach? Someone somewhere is following your lead, spiritually. How sensitive are you to what they see and hear? How willing are you to give up your own pleasures and treasures for their well-being?

4- If you don't have one, start a "sheep" prayer list, praying daily for those God has placed in your life who are following Him by following you.

A Challenge to Scripture Memory

Memorize John 10:10-11

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