



Gracestoration

Update

"Restoring people in God's grace and making disciples"

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The Good Shepherd's Authority and Power

Who is this Jesus we worship? The following Scriptures illustrate the Person, and Work and Life of Jesus Christ within the theme of Shepherding Grace.

Yahweh, the Great Shepherd planned and created the entire universe--the earth with all it contains including His special creation of mankind. He also likened mankind as His sheep for Him to lead, provide for, care for and enjoy. *"As for you, 'My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,' declares the Lord God"* (Ezek. 34:31; Ps. 100:3).

Sheep Without a Shepherd

His sheep rebelled, turned from their Shepherd and became lost, distressed, diseased, scattered, deceived, and prey for predators. *"My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill, and My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there is no one to seek for them. They became food for every beast of the field"* (Ezek. 34:6, 5).

God Provides His Shepherd

The Great Shepherd intervened by sending Jesus Christ as a "lamb" identifying Himself with His sheep so that He might restore His sheep to Himself.

The angel Gabriel came to Mary and said, *"you will bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus"* (Lk. 1:31). To Joseph he said, *"you shall call his name Jesus, for it is he who will save His people from their sins"* (Matt. 1:21).

The angels' annunciation of Jesus' birth to lowly shepherds who faithfully cared for the sacrificial sheep for the temple worship was to affirm that Jesus was the promised *"lamb without spot or blemish"* (1 Pet. 1:19). He would become the perfect substitutionary sacrifice for our salvation.

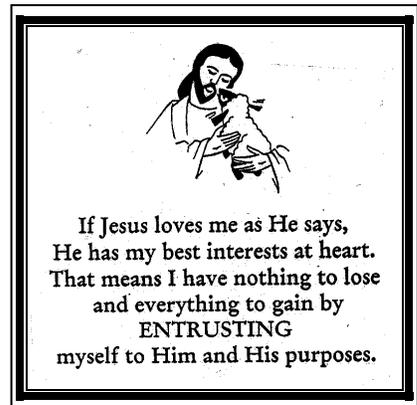
Confirming Testimonies

John the Baptist upon seeing Jesus rejoiced, *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"* (Jn. 1:29). The Apostle Paul declares, *"For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed"* (1 Cor. 5:7).

The writer of the book of Hebrews concurs,

"Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted" (Heb. 2:17-18).

John in the Book of Revelation refers to Him, *"from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain."* (Rev. 13:8).



Jesus' Purpose

The Lamb became the Good Shepherd. Christ Himself declares, *"I Am the Good Shepherd, the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep...I Am the Good Shepherd, and I know My own,*

and My own know Me...I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one Shepherd" (Jn. 10:11, 14, 16). "For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10).

Jesus -- Shepherd/Lamb willingly gave up His life in place of the wayward sheep that they may be restored to an intimate relationship with His Father--the Great Shepherd. Jesus also said, "The Father loves Me, because I lay down My life [for the sheep] that I may take it up again...and I give eternal life to them; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand" (Jn. 10:15, 15).

Jesus' Focus

Jesus our Good Shepherd has no hidden agenda, conflict of interests or ulterior motives. He always has His sheep and His Father's best interests at heart. "I can do nothing on My own initiative, as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just; because I do not seek My own will, but the will of the One who sent Me" (Jn. 5:20).

The Shepherd provides His life for His sheep here on earth, but He is also preparing for us a place with Him in heaven. "Father, I desire that they also whom Thou has given Me be with Me where I Am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou has given Me" (Jn. 17:24). Jesus also prayed, "That they all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in US...I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfect in unity" (Jn. 17:21, 23).

Jesus' Authority and Power

The Lord Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd spoke the words that His Father gave Him. He chose not use the power of His divine nature, "although He

existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped" (Phil. 2:6).

Jesus sought God in all of His words and actions, "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak" (Jn. 12:49). "All authority has been given Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:11).

Jesus' authority and power was never for His own benefit. "I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of the One who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day" (Jn. 6:38-39).

His mission and ministry, "For even Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written, 'The reproaches of those who reproached Thee fell on Me' (Rom. 15:3). "And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, for they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). "He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing" (Lk. 9:11).

Jesus said regarding His death, "I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me... I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." (Jn. 10:17-18).

When He spoke the people and religious leaders they marveled at His powerful authority and wisdom. "When the multitudes saw this they were filled with awe, and glorified God, who had given such authority... Nothing like this was ever seen in Israel" (Matt. 9:8, 31).

Jesus on the cross did not use His authority and power. The

elders and people railed upon Him saying. "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him" (Matt. 27:42).

Jesus' authority and power was never for His own benefit. His authority and power was used to benefit others.

Jesus could have saved Himself. Instead He willingly went to the cross to pay for our sin, giving us abundant life here on earth, and a place with Him in heaven. And as the song writer wrote, "He could have called ten thousand angels, but died alone for you and me."

In conclusion, the writer of Hebrews encourages us to "fix our eyes on Jesus who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

In the following chapter the writer summarizes God's awesome plan for us, "Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20-21).

"Oh how I love that name, 'The God of peace.' He is Himself the peaceful, joyful God, unruffled; and we within ourselves are made to enjoy 'the peace of God, which passes all understanding [which keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus'" (Phil. 4:7). C.H. Spurgeon