

Prelude

**Call to Worship C#688 Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us**

Advent Candle Lighting Isaiah 40:9-11; John 10:7-16

Invocation

Welcome/Announcements

**HYMN C#101 All People That On Earth Do Dwell**

Psalm 23:1-6

**HYMN C#287 A Communion Hymn for Christmas**

**THE LORD'S SUPPER**

**HYMN C#118 His Name is Wonderful**

Pastoral Prayer

Worship with Tithes and Offerings

Focus Text Luke 15:3-7

Message Pastor Dale McIntire

Christ the Shepherd of All Hearts

**Congregation Response**

**Choral Benediction C#292 Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne**

\*\*\*\*\*

**I. The Origin of An Idea**

**A. Christ the Shepherd: The NT/OT Connection**

1. NT
  - a. John 10 - The most familiar NT reference for Jesus
    - (1) Ego eimi - I, I AM
    - (2) The Good Shepherd
    - (3) References a much earlier OT assertion about God and His role among His people
2. OT
  - a. Psalm 23 - the most familiar description of the divine shepherd's role
  - b. Ezekiel 34 - the most poignant lament of the lack of a divine shepherd
  - c. Tracing "shepherd like a genealogical record through the OT

- (1) Genesis 48:15 - Jacob acknowledges the LORD as his lifelong shepherd as he blesses the sons of Joseph
- (2) Genesis 49:24 - Jacob again acknowledges the LORD as the shepherd who has protected Joseph and made him strong and fruitful despite the intense efforts of his enemies
- (3) Exodus - the image of the pillar of cloud and fire that leads Israel throughout her sojourn in the desert is a picture of God shepherding his people through their wanderings in the world (wanderings which were the result of their unbelief and disobedience, we should note.)
- (4) Numbers 27:17 - Moses prays for a shepherd for Israel.
  - (a) Moses knows his death is imminent
  - (b) God does provide a shepherd for Israel
    - i) A man named Joshua
    - ii) Whose name in Greek is Jesus!
- (5) Psalm 23: David proclaims the LORD is his shepherd as well and describes the ways in which God has shepherded him throughout the days of his life
- (6) **Isaiah 40:10-11 (ESV)** <sup>10</sup> *Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.* <sup>11</sup> *He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*
- (7) **Jeremiah 31:10 (ESV)** *“Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.’*
- (8) Ezekiel 34
  - (a) tells of the failure of human leaders to adequately and consistently shepherd God’s people and contains a promise that God Himself will remove the lesser shepherds and personally shepherd his people
  - (b) **Ezekiel 34:11-15 (ESV)** <sup>11</sup> *“For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out.* <sup>12</sup> *As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.* <sup>13</sup> *And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the*

country. <sup>14</sup> I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. <sup>15</sup> I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD.

(9) **Micah 5:4 (ESV)** *And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.*

3. NT

a. **Matthew 2:6 (ESV)** *“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”*

b. **John 10:11 (ESV)** *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

## B. Jesus

1. **Jesus is the fulfilment of every historical promise of God to shepherd His people.**

2. So what does it mean for Christ to be the shepherd of God’s people?

## II. Christ the Shepherd of All Hearts

### A. Characteristics of Christ’s Shepherding Ministry

1. He has compassion for the helpless

a. **Matthew 9:36 (ESV)** *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*

b. The compassion of Jesus, more than a mere emotional response, moves Him to action

(1) He feeds

(2) He heals

(3) He drives out demons

(4) He teaches God’s truth

c. Christ’s compassion for His sheep today still leads Him to take action in their lives!

2. He seeks lost sheep

a. **Luke 15:3-7 (ESV)** <sup>3</sup> *So he told them this parable: <sup>4</sup> “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? <sup>5</sup> And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. <sup>6</sup> And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ <sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need*

***no repentance.***

- b. Jesus never simply writes off His wayward sheep.
  - (1) He seeks them
  - (2) He finds them
  - (3) He brings them home
  - (4) He rejoices over them
- 3. He lays down his life for his sheep
  - a. **John 10:11 (ESV) *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.***
  - b. Why? Because the sheep are in danger of death and they need someone stronger than themselves to intervene lest they perish!
    - (1) Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
    - (2) Sin, a fact of every human's existence, is judged by God as deserving death
    - (3) Jesus takes our sin upon himself, in His body, and dies on our behalf the death we deserve.
    - (4) Jesus lays down his life for the sheep!
- 4. He judges the sheep
  - a. **Matthew 25:32 <sup>32</sup> *Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.***
  - b. The separation criteria is entirely up to the shepherd
    - (1) At the end of life, you will not decide for yourselves what happens to you
    - (2) That decision rests entirely in the hands of the Shepherd.
      - (a) Those who in faith give their lives to Him, to becoming like Him through the work of the Spirit enter into eternal joy
      - (b) Those who have no real love for him, who live their lives on their own terms and have little regard for the claim of the Shepherd upon their lives will go away to eternal punishment

**B. God still calls people to join the Good Shepherd's flock**

- 1. **John 10:16 (ESV) *And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.***
  - a. Some who do not yet know they belong to the Shepherd must be brought in
  - b. But those who do belong to the Shepherd must heed his voice and follow Him.

**III. Congregational Response**

- A. Come, follow the voice of the Good Shepherd and join His flock**
- B. On the white card: one area of your life you where you want to follow the voice of the Shepherd.**