

As Sheep Without a Shepherd

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Date: 14 April 2013

[0:00] Matthew 9.35 Matthew 10.35 Matthew 10.35

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When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them. Why? Because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd.

[5:14] The great shepherd of the sheep. He sees, he has eyes to see, and he notices those who are troubled. He notices those who are harassed and abandoned and helpless and oppressed.

He sees the hopeless and he gives them hope. And his heart is moved. His heart enters in. He enters in into the human dimension.

He enters in and he's in touch with human suffering. Wherever we're at, whether it might be troubles at home, whether it might be concerns of health, of fears, of concerns.

He knows his sheep, we read, and his heart is moved when he sees those fainting and scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. It says he's moved with compassion.

He's moved with compassion. He's not some unfeeling, stony idol, some unfeeling creation of man, some golden idol constructed by man, no matter how beautiful they might be.

[6:19] He's a living, breathing God with skin on. And he is with us as the Lord, our shepherd. And he has compassion on those he touches.

We see his tears were mingled with the tears of the sisters of Lazarus at the tomb, where it says, Jesus wept. Jesus wept.

He burst into tears. There's the sense of it. There's a sense where he wept as we would weep.

When you've had those moments of weeping, the Lord Jesus knows what it's like.

He sees the trembling woman in the crowd and he is sensitive to her faith as she reaches out and just touches the hem of his garment. He sees her need and he senses it as she touches in faith, reaching out to him.

He was moved with compassion. He truly is the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He's familiar with it. He's acquainted with it. He knows what it's like.

[7:25] He was in contact with and ministering to the distressed people of his day. Those that others would neglect and cast aside. He walked with the common man.

He walked with the everyday people. And he reached out in love to the neglected. He reached out to the weak and to the friendless. He was filled with strength and love and totally selfless.

You know, we can all be selfish and not consider others. But our Lord Jesus was not like that. This world that our Lord Jesus walked in was often cruel.

It was cruel. It abandoned the unfortunate to the dangers of the desert. The miseries of life in general without some welfare net.

There was a lot of concern and danger as the unfortunate were often left at the mercy of wild beasts or starvation not able to receive income except by begging.

[8:34] And there was no health care in this society. There was no health care for the sick of his day. The left was shut out from society and commanded to cry out of his uncleanness at the approach of any person.

What a stigma. What a dreadful state to be in. To be a leper in those days. And the blind too. They were left often to be guided by their own blind.

Neglected. Cast aside. Tossed aside on the human scrap heap if you like. The demoniac must suffer humiliation and rejection.

Yet Jesus answered the need of all these. The Lord Jesus the Lord our shepherd answered the need of these ones as the lepers cried out. He did not turn aside his ear as the lepers cried out to be healed with his touch.

That touch of power and of compassion he did not turn away from them. He gave healing to the hurting and needy that came to him. He knew compassion.

[9:40] He knew compassion as many examples where we see the Lord our shepherd of his great compassion. As we read in Matthew 14 verse 14 it says and Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion toward them and he healed their sick.

He knew compassion for the sick. He knew compassion for the widow as her son had just died. Luke 7 verse 13 and when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her and said unto her weep not and he raised her son from the dead.

He had compassion for the widow. He had compassion for the leper. In Mark 1 41 it says and Jesus moved with compassion put forth his hand and touched him and saith unto him I will be thou clean. Compassion for the leper. Compassion for a father as he was concerned for his son. Mark 9 verse 22 it says the father explaining oft times it hath cast him this spirit hath cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him but if thou canst do anything have compassion on us and help us. he cried out to the Lord have compassion on us and help us. And verse 23 of Mark 9 it says Jesus saith unto him if thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believe it.

[11:20] And straightway the father of the child cried out and said with tears Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief.

The Lord Jesus had compassion and set that boy free. In Mark 5 19 it says Jesus suffered him not this man who had been healed but saith unto him go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee and hath had compassion on thee.

The Lord had compassion for those who came unto him. The Lord our shepherd knows how to show tender sympathy to our need.

His tender compassion is everywhere. To touch a leper at that time was a forbidden thing. It was something that was taboo.

It was something that was forbidden. It meant ceremonial defilement for a man to be touching a leper. They would be declared unclean themselves.

[12:30] Yet when the leper declared that Jesus could heal him if only he were the Lord Jesus put forth his hand and touched him. The Lord Jesus did not hold back from extending his hand.

He demonstrated his power and his authority and his sympathy even breaking religious tradition if need be to touch and to show compassion to those rejected by the society of the day and how easily we too can categorize people as if somehow there's different scales or different levels or different castes or different layers in society that are somehow not worthy of him and yet we're all on the level at the foot of the cross aren't we?

we're all on the level at the foot of the cross there's no one above another in terms of deserving it we're all equally undeserving of it and we see how the Lord Jesus came and who are the people that he chose the everyday run of the mill people sometimes the rejects of the society for example even Matthew as much as Matthew might have been an intelligent man you would consider being a tax collector a publican for the Roman government he was hated by the populace of the land he was hated by the people of this occupied land a tax collector for the occupying Roman government publicans were classed with open sinners with hatred and when the Lord Jesus came he came to Matthew he says follow me and Matthew followed him and then as we see the Lord Jesus he goes to the houses of such of publicans and the

Pharisees the religious types were horrified that he was breaking their rules and he said why eat earthly your master with publicans and sinners the Lord Jesus was not afraid to go and beware such as these publicans and sinners his answer was the doctor must go to the sick the Lord our shepherd he cares he truly cares some ways that he cares the Lord cares about his sheep and for their provision as we read in Psalm 23 the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want the Lord our shepherd cares about provision for his sheep in so many ways for example we could consider the sheep of an earthly shepherd they look to the shepherd for their feed they look to the shepherd for their water they depend upon the shepherd for the everyday water and green pastures that we read of in Psalm 23 without the shepherd the sheep would struggle and hunger not able to find those

green pastures the sheep would ordinarily be quite dependent upon the shepherd and we likewise as his sheep the sheep of the good shepherd depend upon our Lord for our sustenance for our spiritual food and our water as well as our daily physical needs sheep it's been said can over graze to get in a sheep paddock with sheep they're grazing they can sometimes just stay in the same spot and they can over graze and eat the grass down to the dirt such that it can't grow back anymore and such sheep will starve to death the Lord our shepherd cares about our diet the Lord our shepherd is like that sheep farmer that will go out and scour the field as I know I went to brother Nathan's place lately and saw how he walked around and he surveyed the fields and he was telling me all the details of where the water was and where the springs were and where the water would flow when it rained and how they wanted to capture that and use that for the livestock and he pointed out some plants that were thorny plants plants that would be not good for the sheep and how he would take effort to remove such plants and the shepherd a good shepherd will want to make sure that the field is freed from plants that could harm the sheep the good shepherd will want to feed the sheep with good food with good feed that will bring them to health and help them grow and so too our shepherd the Lord our shepherd his care is constant and we are complete in our needs being met in him in him we find our contentment in him we find true nourishment it says godliness with contentment is great gain and the

Lord our shepherd he cares for us he wants us to find that place of contentment the Lord our shepherd cares he cares about his sheep and their health like humans sheep are at risk in their health they are at risk for many different diseases and the shepherd treats and tends to his sheep now sheep left untended can get infested with parasites and sheep cannot clean themselves this is an important consideration sheep cannot clean themselves we know that cats clean themselves as other animals can but sheep cannot clean themselves and we likewise as unbelievers are not able to cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of sin the filthiness of our sin it must be addressed by the Lord our shepherd as he comes and tends us he washes us he cleanses us he takes away those things that will make us prone to the fires to lay maggots and injure us and ultimately kill us that filthiness of our sin the Lord our shepherd cares for these practical things of the sheep and spiritually we can consider the great filthiness that is our natural inclination we cannot point a finger at any other here without pointing some back at us because that filthiness of the flesh the filthiness of the spirit we need the Lord our shepherd to cleanse us as sheep need his cleansing sheep can be fearful they're helpless timid easily panicked it can be hard to get a sheep to lie down we know in psalm 23 it says the sheep lie down he makes them he facilitates that laying down of the sheep in green pastures he leads them beside the still waters but a sheep ordinarily is not readily minded to lay down a sheep will not lay down unless it's free from all anxieties the

[20:05] Lord our shepherd makes his sheep to lie down in green pastures a sheep will not lie down except it is free from all anxieties freedom redemption freedom liberty being set free our great liberator our emancipator our redeemer the Lord Jesus the Lord our shepherd gives us freedom freedom freedom from fear freedom from friction from other sheep freedom from pests from hunger he takes all those anxieties and he addresses them so that we can be free from all anxieties as we read that we can cast all of our care all of that anxious thought all of that careful thought we can cast all of our care upon him because he cares for us sheep can get scared easily you get a sheep flock and a little rabbit pops up his head and suddenly they're all stampeding like it's some great big tiger!

running the whole flock bolts in blind fear not even looking at what they're running from it's that kind of herd mentality and the main reason why sheep are so easily frightened is because they are so vulnerable they're so vulnerable and like sheep we are vulnerable brothers sisters we are helpless without our shepherd we are helpless when we face a spiritual attack on our own in our own strength we're helpless without the Lord our shepherd yet as sheep we can be calm under his watch we can knowing his watch over us we can lie down in peace free from fear and anxieties knowing that our Lord is our shepherd because the safest place to be is under his watch fullness the safest place for you and me brother sister is to be under his watch under the watch of the shepherd no matter what danger surrounds us if we're in the care of the shepherd we can be confident and know that comfort it says in

John 10 we can read further about the good shepherd of course our Lord speaking of himself in John 10 it says verse 27 my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand we're under the care of his protection and we can lie down and be assured of that but when he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd the Lord our shepherd cares he cares about his sheep and their guidance sheep can be prone to wander restless easily losing their way in Isaiah 53 verse 6 it says all we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all the Lord hath laid on him our sin in the vileness of it in the corruption of it in the ugliness of it the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all all we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to his own way sheep tend to stray they tend to wander and drift to go astray and ultimately to perish we know the Lord Jesus spoke of that parable of the shepherd and the sheep and of the one that went astray that he did not rest until he sought it and brought it back the Lord guides his sheep he doesn't want us to wander and drift and perish the Lord our shepherd guides us and we can be like sheep directionless lost and leaderless disorganised and scattered yet the

Lord our shepherd goes before and he leads the way we just have to listen for his voice my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me if we'll just hear his voice if you know him hear his voice hear his voice it's here we can hold it in our hands the voice we can hear it and he leads the way but we must obey follow him now sheep are not intelligent now I don't know about you but I know that I am very inadequate I see my inadequacy every day and my life reminds me of it every day but no she's such a blessing really but no sheep are not intelligent pastors are not intelligent churches church people are not intelligent sometimes we need his direction we need his voice as believers we need to hear

[25:51] God's word we need to hear his voice and depend upon him and his spirit helps us to have those spiritual things made understandable they're spiritually discerned it's not by having letters after your name that you get any more understanding of it it's spiritually discerned the Holy Spirit is what we depend upon upon him the Holy Spirit and to hear his voice it's interesting that word John 10 27 when it says they hear his voice I heard put that you could put it they are in the habit of listening to my voice that's an interesting way of thinking of it isn't it my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me you could put it they are in the habit of listening to my voice we can get out of the habit of listening to his voice whether it's through bible study whether it's through personal study whether it's through fellowship we can neglect the habit of listening to his voice let us hear his voice when we have opportunity to tune in to some good gospel preaching through DVDs through MP3s through whatever means in person hear his voice be in the habit of listening to his voice and he will guide us to those pure still waters he will guide us to those green pastures where we'll be nourished and nurtured away from the murky waters to those pure still waters those restful places where we can trust him our shepherd cares he cares about his sheep he cares about their protection as again

I say a sheep can be quite vulnerable shepherdless sheep aren't quite defenseless shepherdless sheep sheep that can't defend themselves from predators it's a fact that many animals have a defense system we've seen skunks have a defense system porcupines have a defense system blowfish have a defense system but sheep do not have a defense system and we as believers as the sheep of the Lord our shepherd must rest upon his protection upon his defense from the evil one and from ourselves we must trust the good shepherd the great shepherd of the sheep be a part of the local sheep fold be a part of his flock sheep can be defenseless and vulnerable if a sheep falls on its back they can scarcely get up especially if their wall is wet they can fall on their back and they struggle kick and struggle helpless and many sheep die like that the shepherd sees them and it's not like they've been eaten by a fox or some wolf or something they've just fallen on their backs and they're defenseless many sheep die like that as their wolf gets waterlogged as it's drenched with rain they need someone to lift them up again the good shepherd is watching the good

shepherd though I fall

I will not be cast down when you're struggling lying on your back defenseless about to cark the Lord our shepherd is watching over and he will step in he is the one who sleeps in the threshold of the gate to protect the sheep he wards off the predators that would steal the sheep or injure the sheep and he calls each of us by name that's amazing isn't it I've heard it said I know brother Kevin will talk about it in that session how the shepherd knows each one even though there might be a hundred he knows each one by name and we know his voice we that are his sheep there may be some here you might think you're a sheep you might go but you're not a sheep you're not safe yet that's important to get that right the sheep know his voice and he calls them by name and he leads us through this world with many challenges to face us with many dangers yet we need not fear because he is here with us and he empowers us he helps us to overcome he helps us overcome the things that would hurt us!

he calleth his own sheep by name one by one by one each one of you each person here today that know him he calls you by name!

is his protection comes he tends our need he sees the filth that we're inclined to the filth that is prevalent he cuts it away he cleanses us he takes away the maggots that filthiness how like sheep we can be prone to wander prone to leave the

[32:50] God I love what lessons can we learn from the sheep are we like sheep gone astray going our own way doing our own thing endangering ourselves potentially to get caught in a thorn bush and lose our way what can we learn from the sheep their helplessness their dependence their defenselessness the care of the shepherd his watchfulness his love his compassion his guidance sheep by nature are proud inclined to think they're always right confident they can take care of themselves our lord the great shepherd the good shepherd of the sheep he says the sheep hear his voice and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out verse 4 of

John 10 and when he put forth his own sheep he goeth before them and the sheep followed him for they know his voice he's not someone who drives the sheep when some cattle dog or sheep dog or wants to scare the sheep or bully the sheep he goes before them and the sheep followed him for they know his voice John 10 11 he says I am the good shepherd the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep John 10 14 I am the good shepherd and know my sheep and are known of mine let's listen for his voice and follow him in the context of Matthew 9 it says!

the harvest truly is plenteous there's plenty of harvest but the labourers are few pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send four labourers into his harvest do he stop and see the people lost and shepherdless wandering directionless aimless ultimately to their doom do we see the disheartened do we see the people as it were scattered and fainting do we see the world that we live in and see it as it were in these pictures of a sheep of a shepherd of a harvest of a harvest field of which he is the master do we see the people around about as it were as sheep without a shepherd you know some of them follow different shepherds you could consider some of the greats that our world would call the talk show hosts and the film stars some would follow

Oprah Winfrey they would tap into her wisdom into her humanistic philosophies maybe they'd see Dr.

Phil as their spiritual leader it's not to say everything he says is wrong but some look to worldly figures and worldly sources to worldly diet and they wonder why they're not spiritually alive some would seek after such people as that you know Dr.

[37:07] Phil Oprah Winfrey and on the list of the most influential they were topped by some other people people like Lady Gaga I scarcely know who she is but I'm sure some of you would or Justin Bieber they think he's the greatest thing since sliced bread or Elton John Elton John don't want to speak his name these are the people at the top of the list the world's most influential people maybe they look to them as their shepherds as the ones they would follow they want to hear their voice what's the latest hit song what's the latest goss they want to follow those shepherds but friends those shepherds are going the wrong way they're not going the right way think about it today of the shepherdless

sheep think about it today so easily misled by their own sinful human nature following a world that thinks right is wrong and wrong is right as they follow these false shepherds to their doom friends the world is dying our neighbours are dying the community is filled with sheep with people as it were as sheep without a shepherd because they don't know him they don't know the lord our shepherd and the devil is snatching them one by one the only truth is the voice of the shepherd they must have the voice of the shepherd the shepherd's voice calls still let us be moved he calls out he says there's plenty of harvest lift up your eyes and look on the fields there's plenty of harvest out here there's a problem though the labourers are few pray ye therefore the lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest!

awakened to action move to action move to pray move to go are you ready are you ready to be a labourer for Christ to use your time to share him to point people to the Lord is my shepherd he is my shepherd your shepherd if you know him today he is the Lord is my shepherd that means he's sufficient I shall not want he is sufficient for your every need for your every circumstance today let us pray dear Lord we glorify you the Lord our shepherd Lord we know as sheep we're inclined to stray as sheep inclined to go astray to go our own way help us

Lord to recognize when we fall in our own sinful condition help us to see the filthiness that sticks to us that displeases you that you want to cleanse us from all unrighteousness Lord help each believer here today to be stirred to be stirred to see the time is short the time is short there's no time to play the game we must be real we must be real dear Lord I pray if there's any here today yet to trust you that each one young and old might see the great critical need of not being a sheep that will follow any voice but will hear your voice and follow that help us Lord to hear that voice to follow you to know you to know you are the one the great shepherd of the sheep who laid down your life for us that we can be saved we thank you Lord for the great awesome love that held you to

Calvary's cross that love that held you there that blood that you shed for us there that love that you extend still when we fail you Lord help us to know you to follow you to obey you help us to be laborers in this great harvest field that is ready it's right now there's plenty of harvest Lord and we know you're the Lord of the harvest it's in your control it's in your hands it's not something we can really do scarcely much to yet Lord you call human laborers into this harvest field call us Lord send us send others Lord help us to be responsive to be moved with compassion to be moved to action for your glory we pray in Jesus name Amen