

Acts Lesson 6 HANDOUT

Phillip Keller - "A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23

A "cast" sheep is a very pathetic sight. Lying on its back, its feet in the air, it flails away frantically struggling to stand up, without success.

Sometimes it will bleat a little for help, but generally it lies there lashing about in frightened frustration.

If the owner does not arrive on the scene within a reasonably short time, the sheep will die.

The way sheep become "cast" is very significant to us as Christians. As the sheep lies down, it may roll to one side to relax. But when the center of gravity in the body shifts, and its feet no longer touch the ground, it becomes helpless. It cannot bring itself back to its feet. Gases begin to build up in its stomach which retard the blood circulation.

This alone could bring death, but there is another worry.

The "cast" sheep is an easy prey for any predator. It lies with its spindly legs straight up in the air, helplessly waiting to be found, hoping it will be found by its shepherd.

Many people have the idea that when a child of God fails, when he is frustrated and helpless in a spiritual dilemma, God becomes disgusted, fed up and even furious with him. This simply is not so.

One of the greatest revelations of the heart of God given to us by Christ is that of Himself as our Shepherd. He has the same identical sensations of anxiety, concern and compassion for cast men and women as I had for cast

sheep. This is precisely why He looked on people with such pathos and compassion.

Mark 6:31 And He said to them, "Come with Me privately to a solitary place, and let us rest for a while."

Mathew 14:13 When Jesus heard *about John*, He left there privately in a boat and went to a secluded place...

1 Peter 1:6–8 (NIV84)

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

7 These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,

Acts 1:12–14

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.

13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 1:15–18

15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty)

16 and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—

**17 he was one of our number and shared in this ministry."
18 (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out.**

19 And all the residents of Jerusalem became acquainted with the facts, so that they called the piece of land in their own dialect—Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.

20 For in the book of Psalms it is written," Let his place of residence become deserted and gloomy, and let there be no one to live in it; and [again], let another take his position or overseership." (Psalm 109)

21 So one of the [other] men who have accompanied us [apostles] during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 From the baptism of John at the outset until the day when He was taken up from among us—one of these men must join with us and become a witness to testify to His resurrection.

23 And they accordingly proposed (nominated) two men, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed and said, You, Lord, who know all hearts , indicate to us which one of these two You have chosen

25 To take the place in this ministry and receive the position of an apostle, from which Judas fell away and went astray to go to his own place.

26 And they drew lots [between the two], and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to and counted with the eleven apostles.

"The lot is cast into the lap, but the decision is the Lord's alone" (Prov 16:33).

Joshua 18:6 (NASB95)

6 "You shall describe the land in seven divisions, and bring the description here to me. I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.

1 Chronicles 25:8 (NASB95)

8 They cast lots for their duties, all alike, the small as well as the great, the teacher as well as the pupil.

Mark 15:24 (NASB95)

24 And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take.

Luke 1:9 (NASB95)

9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

Philip Yancey: I joined the chess club, and during lunch hour could be found sitting at a table with other nerds poring over books with titles like Classic King Pawn Openings.

I studied techniques, won most of my matches, and put the game aside for 20 years.

Then, in Chicago, I met a truly fine chess player who had been perfecting his skills long since high school. When we played a few matches, I learned what it is like to play against a master. Any classic offense I tried, he countered with a classic defense. If I turned to more risky, unorthodox techniques, he incorporated my bold forays into his winning strategies.

Although I had complete freedom to make any move I wished, I soon reached the conclusion that none of my strategies mattered very much.

His superior skill guaranteed that my purposes inevitably ended up serving his own. Perhaps God engages our universe, his own creation, in much the same way.

Proverbs 21:1 (NIV84)

1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.

Habakkuk 2:1 "I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me."

1 Corinthians 14:33 for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

****Days and dates emphasized for a reason...watch how amazing and FAST God works:***

Wednesday, 7/20/16 - First day back

Wednesday, 8/17/16 - Have a mentally exhaustive breakdown, can't stop crying (this is 8am by the way). Saw my life coach at a women's networking breakfast. Told her I had an Overwhelming sense God telling me it's time to leave...(so for next 2 days, I'm praying and asking when???) "He said Friday!"

Friday, 8/19/16 - Put in my two-week notice (after back and forth battle with God all day - but 7pm he assured me - LOL)

**Friday 9/2/16 - Last day at work
(In meantime....not at peace with any job leads/offers....praying and praying for God to search me, lead me, send me....)**

Monday, 10/31/16 - Got a call from fellow Chamber Ambassador/marketing rep at the ServiceMaster franchise in Oklahoma City, asking if I would ever consider moving to Tulsa

Wednesday, 11/9/16 (election day - never forget this one haha) - ServiceMaster made me an offer I couldn't refuse and help with relocation to Tulsa, OK.

Mon-Fri 11/14/16 - 11/19/16 - took course to become a Certified Peer Recover Support Specialist (PRSS) from the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (going back to my 20+years of living with mental illness, I decided to get certified to facilitate support groups and speak on behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) during 2015 and 2016. - Which my new boss 100% supports and allowed me to start training after I finished the course.

Wednesday, 12/28/16 - Officially moved to Tulsa.

Needless to say....6 months later; I NEVER thought I would have uprooted my life after 36 years to move 1.5 hours away to a city where I don't know anyone, to start a new career in an industry I have no knowledge in yet.

The Oklahoma Mental Health Association, Depression Bipolar Support Association and NAMI are all reaching out to me (heard I moved) and want me to get involved in the Tulsa area.

The ONE thing I have had consistent peace about is God moving me to Tulsa.

He's gone before me; preparing all of this back in July 2016 (and before that obviously).

He was already at work. It's so incredible to know He's been with me, before me, behind me and beside me....the WHOLE ENTIRE TIME. GOD He's good! :-)

