

Shepherds must Shepherd God's Sheep Well

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Part 2

The Gospel According to Mark

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Bible Text: Mark 6:34; Ezekiel 34:10

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Take your Bibles, please, and turn to Mark chapter number six and Ezekiel 34 as the orchestra is coming down. Turn to Mark six and Ezekiel 34 and stand once you have found your place.

Here is our sermon title for this morning. "Shepherds must Shepherd God's Sheep Well."

Guests and visitors, we are preaching through the book of Mark chapter by chapter verse by verse. When I came to verse number 34 I saw a cross reference back to Ezekiel 34. Going back and looking at that cross reference has prompted me to preach through the entire chapter.

So let's read verse 34 of Mark chapter number six and then I want to go back and read the first 10 verses of Ezekiel 34.

Verse number 34 of Mark chapter number six.

"And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people..."¹

So this is Christ looking at a multitude of people who have assembled because he is there. And I want you to notice these words. Christ was:

"...moved with compassion toward them."²

Think about the masses of people that you see at football games, the masses of people that you see in the mall during the Christmas shopping season, people that are going about with no relationship with Christ, no shepherd in their life, no one guiding and directing them.

Christ was:

¹ Mark 6:34.

² Ibid.

“... moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them.”³

This is Christ’s response, speaking to them is his response.

Now go back to Ezekiel 34.

Ezekiel the prophet writes beginning in verse number one of chapter number 34.

“And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man...”⁴

I reminded you last week that 80 different times Christ is referred to as the Son of Man.

Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.⁵

Let’s pray.

Father, you know my voice is weak. You know that I am struggling physically, but I know that your Holy Spirit can make up for all that, that your Word is sharper than any two edged sword and that it can pierce asunder and make a difference in the hearts and

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ezekiel 34:1.

⁵ Ezekiel 34:2-10.

minds of people today. I know, dear God, that someone can get saved today because of the preaching of your Word. I know that lives can be changed today because of the preaching of your Word. I know that marriages can be put back together. I know that relationships can be built. I know, dear God, that folks can repent. I know, dear Lord, that hearts can be turned to you because of the preaching of your word. I pray, oh God, that you do a miracle today in this place in Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated.

Last week I showed you and I cannot preach last week's message again, but I want to show you that the word "shepherd" is found in the Greek New Testament and in Strong's concordance, G4466 as a noun and then there is a verb variance to 4165 to feed or to rule or to feed cattle, shepherd, shepherd or pastor.

So the point of this is that when Christ looked out and saw sheep not having a shepherd, no men were feeding the flock. Men weren't caring of the sheep the way they were supposed to. They were not doing their jobs. Pastors were not taking care of people. Leaders were not taking care of people. People were not being shepherded the way they were supposed to be shepherded. And he looked out and he saw thousands of people who needed a shepherd and there was none. There was no one from the Israeli religious group, no Sadducees, no Pharisees, none of that group were doing what they were supposed to be doing and the God almighty in the form of Jesus Christ was moved with compassion because there were sheep not having a shepherd.

And I drew your attention that Ephesians 4:11 says that God gave the Church apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and that the word pastors there is the same word as shepherds in the other places in the New Testament.

So what I communicated last week and I want to reinforce is that Christianity is not Judaism 2.0. It is all new. The shepherd is Jesus Christ. The religious leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel are no longer in charge. Twelve apostles are leading the Church. Paul comes in, additional apostles are selected. They in turn select elders or pastors or deacons, elders or pastors or evangelists or this teaching ministry. Deacons come as part of that team and that what we have is a collection of under shepherds today with one shepherd, King Jesus. Not the Pope, King Jesus. And that every shepherd should see himself as under shepherd working to feed God's sheep, collectively ruling, guiding, encouraging, pointing, pushing, prodding in the shepherding act.

So our three week game plan is this, one more week next week. I thought we could do it in two, but we can't. There is too much. We are going to examine the rest of the middle of the chapter 34. We are going to go to our New Testament as much as possible and grab Scriptures in to show you this morning, those of you that aren't grounded in the Word of God, how the Old Testament and the New Testament are knitted together. I want you to see that. I want to pull that together in your minds. And then I am going to do as much as I can to draw application for us today.

So last week, verses one through 10 was a tremendous indictment against who? Against who, church? These shepherds, the leaders, the Israelite leaders who were not doing their jobs. And God almighty was looking down from heaven knowing all things and seeing that his sheep were being neglected, that the shepherds weren't doing what they are supposed to do. And the prophet Ezekiel had the message to go find those shepherds and to say unto them, "I am against you. I am against you."

"Why? Why are you us against us, Jehovah? Why are you against us, Lord? Why are you against us?"

"Because you are feeding yourself and you are not feeding the flock."

That is the message.

Verse 10 says it like this.

"Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more."⁶

And God did that. He grabbed the people of God and jerked them away from the Israeli leaders and now the under shepherds are Gentiles, leading the people of God. That is where we are at right now.

Verse 11.

"For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out."⁷

What an amazing statement. What an amazing statement that the Creator God of the universe would say to us this morning, "I even I." I is enough. We get the idea. That is me. But when you add even I it is emphasis. I am going to do it. Me personally.

I could say, "I am going to do this," and I can be representing the entire Berean Baptist Church meaning that anyone in this church could do it. But if I say to you this morning, "I even I am going to do it," then you know he is going to move that table. He is going to do it. And so you have got the creator God of the universe. This is mind boggling. Don't allow yourself to drift off this morning. The creator God of the universe says, "I am going to go looking for sheep."

Nobody is doing it so I will go do it. Don't miss this point. You weren't looking for God. You weren't looking for God. Remember your moment of conversion. Remember that day when you came to Christ. You weren't looking for him. He was looking for you. He was.

⁶ Ezekiel 34:10.

⁷ Ezekiel 34:11.

You say, “When, when, pastor? When did Yahweh come and search for his sheep? When did that happen? When did Jehovah come and search for his sheep? When did the I am that I am come and search for his sheep? When did that happen? When did that happen. When in the world did I am that I am come and search for sheep? When?”

Well, in John chapter 10, which is an amazing chapter, have you got there yet Joey? You are in six still, right? So you haven’t got there yet. It is an amazing chapter.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”⁸

That sounds like a shepherd. That sounds a lot like a shepherd going after sheep. That sounds like a shepherd looking for his sheep and bringing them to himself.

Now look at verse 30. I have got it in red for you so you get it.

“I and my Father are one.”⁹

Ah, so when then did Yahweh go looking for his sheep? When did that happen? In Jesus Christ, in the incarnation of Jesus Christ Yahweh came looking for you. Glory to God.

Jonathan was exactly right when he was standing up here saying, “No Humanism in this church.”

He was exactly right. No humanism in this church. It is all about Jesus. Him doing this work in our lives.

Verse 12.

“As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep.”¹⁰

I am going to seek them out. I know who are mine. I know who they are. I am going to go find them. I know where you are at. I know where you are hiding. I know the darkness you are living in. I know the trial that you are living in. I know the struggle you are living in. I will come find you.

“And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.”¹¹

⁸ John 10:27.

⁹ John 10:30.

¹⁰ Ezekiel 34:12.

¹¹ Ezekiel 34:13.

I know where you are at. I know [?] the hills of West Virginia. I know where you are at in Wyoming. I know whether you are in Russia. I know whether you are in New York City. I know what address you live in. I know who you are. I made you. I formed you. I have got a plan for your life.

Worth getting excited about or not?

Verse 14.

“I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold.”¹²

Notice that please. I want to pull reference back to John 10:16 for you. Notice this parallel. Jesus said:

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.”¹³

Aren't you glad because if you are not a descendant of Abraham, you had better be thankful that he said that.

Unless you can trace your lineage back to Abraham, you better be thankful that he said:

“...them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold.”¹⁴

The people of God.

What do they share in common? They live by faith. That is what they share in common, the people of God. One fold.

Do you not find it interesting that fold and fold is there? Do you not find that amazing? Don't dismiss that. You see it in your English Bible in the same book.

May I remind you that when that prophecy was spoken it was 700 years, 600 years before John wrote what John wrote? May I remind you that John and Ezekiel never met each other? May I remind you that they wrote in two different languages? It wasn't an accident. That is not a coincidence. That is a sovereign book, a sovereign book, a special book, a unique book.

Verse 15 says:

“I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.”¹⁵

¹² Ezekiel 34:14.

¹³ John 10:16.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ezekiel 34:15.

I am going to cause them to lie down. And what do you have happening in Mark chapter number six? He assembles them on the hillside and puts them in hundreds and fifties and they lie down for lunch or dinner, rather. They lie down. They lie down. They have been hearing Jesus teach all day long. They have been there all day long receiving good teaching. And now they are starving. The 5000 are starving and Jesus says to his disciples, "Feed them."

And the disciples say back, "Are you kidding? It would take a year's wages to feed this group."

And he says, "Organize them in hundreds and organize them in fifties."

And what do they do? You know exactly what they do. If you have been standing up all day, you lie down. They lie down on green pastures.

Accident? Accident? Coincidence? Yes or no, church. Coincidence? It is ridiculous to suggest it is a coincidence. In my view the feeding of the 5000 was a partial fulfillment of the promises found in Ezekiel 34, a partial fulfillment, a snapshot, if you will, not the complete fulfillment.

You say, "Why in the world do I care about this, preacher? Why should this make any difference in my life?"

I am going to get to that.

Verse 16.

"I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick."¹⁶

What a promise? What an individual and personal promise? Not some creator God up there far, far, far, far, far away that has no clue who you are, not the Thomas Jefferson creator that wound up the universe and then set on its course. That is not the God that we have. We have a God who knows the number of hairs on your head or, well, I guess you have a few.

Ok.

We have a God who knows your struggles. We have a God who cares about you when you wake up in the morning and you are exasperated and your life is miserable and you don't know how you are going to take another day. There he is saying, "I will strengthen you. I know when you are broken. I will bind up that wound. I will take care of you. I love you. I am crazy about you. I died for you."

¹⁶ Ezekiel 34:16.

If that doesn't mean anything to you, if you are like... can you... then something is the matter. You haven't been healed. You haven't been fixed.

Let me compare Ezekiel 34:16 to Luke four. Please turn to Luke four. You have got to get this. I need to drive this home so you have got to get it. Make your teenagers turn over and see this. They have got to see this this morning. I want to draw a parallel between Ezekiel 34 and Luke chapter number four and I want to drive it home.

I don't want anyone in the church to miss this. I want you to see this amazing parallel between God, Jehovah God, the sovereign God, the Lord God saying what he is going to do.

“I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy.”¹⁷

I want you to see this. I want you to compare it. So now go to Luke chapter four in your own Bible. Put a little margin next to you to write down Ezekiel 34:16. That way you will be able to remember this in the future.

Verse 14.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written.¹⁸

You have got to see this now. Please look at your Bible. Please look.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”¹⁹

Now what an amazing statement for them to make

“...because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”²⁰

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Luke 4:14-17.

¹⁹ Luke 4:18.

²⁰ Luke 4:18-19.

Do you see any parallel between Ezekiel 34 and Luke four or not? Do you see that with me? Do you see the similarities, yes or no this morning?

Look what he says there he is going to do in verse 16 from Ezekiel. It is almost identical in spirit to what he says.

I am going to... he says:

“I will seek that which was lost...”²¹

Preaching the gospel to the lost people. Do you not see that parallel?

Ok. He says:

“...and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will...”²²

Wait a minute. There is more. There is something more there. Hold on. There is something more in that verse. Look at the last part of 16. There is an additional statement. There is conjunction there, “but.” Do you see the conjunction “but” in verse 16 of Ezekiel? Do you see that conjunction? He says:

“...but I will...”

And there is more. He is going to destroy something. Let me show you how amazing the Bible is. Go back, Art, go back, please. Thank you.

This is Isaiah 61, right?

So when they gave him the book, when they gave him the book, he walked into the synagogue and they gave him the book. And he opened up to Isaiah 61. So I have got Isaiah 61 on the screen for you on our next slide. Here it is. He began reading. I want you to see this.

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”²³

Wait a minute. He doesn't finish. At that very moment you can't miss this. Please listen. At that very moment as he is reading this the Bible says he closes up the book and he hands it to them. He doesn't even finish the sentence. This is not a complete sentence.

²¹ Ezekiel 34:16.

²² Ibid.

²³ Isaiah 61:1-2.

“To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD...”²⁴

That is not a complete sentence. There is more to say here. He stops decisively, pauses, closes the book and hands it back to the. This is an amazing thing. You can't miss this, this morning. Well, I guess you can miss it. I can't keep you from missing it, but I want you to see how cool this is. I want you to see how this is exactly the difference in Ezekiel 34.

Notice verse 16. I want you to get this. Verse 16. What do you have there in verse 16?

The word “but” is a conjunction.

“...but I will destroy the fat and the strong.”²⁵

Notice what this says.

“...and the day of vengeance of our God.”²⁶

What an amazing parallel. Two different authors. One is Ezekiel, one is Isaiah. Same author, God the Holy Spirit, same Spirit, the Spirit of Christ.

What was Jesus showing us? This is my first coming and I am coming again. There is coming a time when I am coming back to finish the verse. The whole story hasn't been told yet. There is more to tell. There is more to do. In this coming in Christ's first coming you have read Matthew, you have read Mark, you have read Luke, you have read John. Did he destroy anybody? Did Jesus go around destroying anybody? Anybody get destroyed? No.

But there is a promise here of a day of what? Vengeance. There is a promise yet to be fulfilled in Ezekiel 34:16.

“...but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.”²⁷

You heard about drinking from a fire hose before. Have you ever heard that expression? It is like drinking from a fire hose? The fire hose is going to be judgment.

Jesus stopped short in the synagogue on that day because he was not coming to destroy the fat and the strong and to execute judgment. That is why he stopped. This is not an accident. This is an amazing symbolic miracle in which he closes the book, hands it back to them.

Now notice the change in verse 17. I want you to see this going back to Ezekiel 34. I am

²⁴ Isaiah 61:1.

²⁵ Ezekiel 34:16.

²⁶ Isaiah 61:2.

²⁷ Ezekiel 34:16.

here this morning to do my best to teach you the Word of God. This is a time for us to learn.

So verses one through 16 are an incredible indictment against the shepherds for their failure to shepherd God's people. And you wonder why I get so passionate. Because I am one of those shepherds who will have to stand before God for my failure to feed the people that he has given us in this flock.

Now look at verse 17.

“And as for you, O my flock...”²⁸

You have got to love it. You have got to love... do you see the change there? So first he has been very focused. Shepherd, shepherds, shepherds. Now what do you get in verse this?

“And as for you...”²⁹

Everybody listen up. That is the idea here. Do you see it?

“And as for you, O my flock...”³⁰

So he has been wearing the shepherds out and all the sheep have been going, “Yeah, tell him, tell him, wear those shepherds out.”

You have been there before. Yeah, yeah.

Wait a minute. There is more here. There is more.

“And as for you, O my flock...”³¹

The whole entity, the entire entity. He is no longer talking to shepherds.

“Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats.”³²

You are not going to get off scot free. You are not going to get off scot free. Yes, the shepherds are not doing what shepherds are supposed to do, but there is accountability for you. There is accountability for you. I will judge between sheep and sheep. I will judge between goats and rams.

Jesus said it like this.

²⁸ Ezekiel 34:17.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”³³

What do we have going on in the collective flock today? The collective flock, you know, oh my flock, the church. What do we have going on? Do we have any wolves in sheep’s clothing? We looked to that last week, did we not look at Joel Olsteen living in a 10.5 million dollar home? What is that all about? Who in the world can say, “I am shepherding God’s people”?

Sure you are. I am driving a Rolls Royce. Sure you are shepherding God’s people. And they sure can tell you are shepherding them in that Rolls Royce. What an indictment. Not any different, folks, not any different.

Jesus said in Matthew 25:32:

“And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.”³⁴

Do you not see parallels between that? Is that not amazingly identical?

The Lord charges the shepherds for their neglect of the flock. What fault, then, does he find with the sheep? If we went after the shepherds the way we have, is there any fault amongst the flock? Is there any fault in the sheep? Let’s see what the Word of God says in verse number 18.

“Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture?”³⁵

Does that seem like a small thing to you? Do you see that as a small thing to you that you have eaten up the good pasture?

“...but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures?”³⁶

Now the reason this doesn't resonate with us right away is because not too many of us are raising sheep so we don't immediately get it. But you can be sure when Ezekiel said this in Hebrew 2600 years ago they got it right away. They knew exactly what the charge was.

So let’s talk about it. The green [?] on the circles and oblong fingers are green pastures. The red arrow is sheep. Sheep have got to eat. There is nothing wrong with sheep eating. It is a good thing for sheep to eat. They need to eat.

³³ Mathew 7:15.

³⁴ Matthew 25:32.

³⁵ Ezekiel 34:18.

³⁶ Ibid.

So they go into the first green pasture and they eat, wonderful. They have eaten in the green pasture. Then what should they do to their pastures? Should they trample through those pastures? Should the sheep herd through those chapters? Should they run through there and trample down all of the grass so that when the new sheep or another day comes by that all the grass has been matted down and no one can eat it because it is so matted down, it is so tore up by the number of sheep gone through there that someone say, "Can't get any food out of that pasture"?

You all are getting it? Do you see it? Do you see what is going on here? It is selfishness.

Now let's remember. Why are they doing this? Because the shepherds aren't doing their job. Let's not forget about this, because if there was a shepherd there, what would the shepherd do? Well, the shepherd will know on Monday we are going to eat here. On Tuesday we are going to eat here. The shepherd would know. He knows where he is going to feed his flocks. He knows what they are going to eat.

So the shepherd would make sure that they don't trample the grass that they are going to eat tomorrow. So when it is time to leave it at the end of the day the shepherd would direct them down this path or over this path right over here and if there was enough light sheep out there that started to get in the green pasture, the shepherd would reach out with his stick and give them a good whack and the sheep would go, "That didn't feel so good. Maybe I need to turn."

Because you know and I know that sheep are what kind of animals? Stupid. Dumb is much nicer. Thank you. They are stupid animals. They need a whack. They need a hook.

In case you didn't get it, here is the next example.

"...and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue."³⁷

Psalm 23 takes us to the still waters. We need to get something good to feed us.

But here is how we are as stupid sheep. And may I add selfish, stupid sheep? We get what we want out of that still clear water and then we decide, do you know what? There is something on the other side that I would like to see, so we trample through the water. And when we trample through the water what happens to that water? It becomes very muddy and every other sheep behind that now has to drink muddy water. That is not very pleasant to drink muddy water. Who wants to drink muddy water? Do you like drinking muddy water? Anybody like to drink muddy water? No.

Now if there was a shepherd standing by there doing what shepherds are supposed to do, you would see a man right around here, right about where my red mark is. Wake your husband up so he can see the red mark on the screen.

³⁷ Ibid.

And then the shepherd when he saw the first little sheep stepping in beyond what he needs to, would reach out with that 10 foot stick and he would give him a good pop. [?] talk to him. These are stupid animals.

And then that sheep would learn, ah, I am not supposed to be in that water.

Do you see what is going on here? Now I want you to see what happens in this verse 19. You have got to see this this morning.

“And as for my flock...”³⁸

Now this is the second time he uses flock. Oh, my flock, verse 19.

“And as for my flock...”³⁹

He narrows it down a little bit. This is unique. I want you to see this pronoun usage. You have got to see it. I have got a plural pronoun here and another plural pronoun here, but they are not the same.

“...they eat what ye have trodden down with your feet.”⁴⁰

Two groups. Don't miss this. This is so important for us to see. Everybody in the church is not in the church. Everybody in the church is not in the church. Oh, you might be in the church, but you might not be in the church.

You say, “Preacher, you are talking out of both sides of your mouth. In the church and in the church is the same.”

No. No.

“O my flock...”⁴¹

“And as for my flock, they [one group] eat that which ye [a different group] have trodden with your feet.”⁴²

Paul said it like this.

“For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.”⁴³

Pick a pew. This is a big crowded pew. They are not all Israel that are Israel.

³⁸ Ezekiel 34:19.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ezekiel 34:17.

⁴² Ezekiel 34:19.

⁴³ Romans 9:6.

Time out, preacher. I have been going to church all my life.

So? What does that mean? And? Are you born again? Can you articulate the gospel and how God did a work in your life?

George Eller sent me an email from California. Do you remember Joe was our youth pastor here, Gary. And Joe said it is amazing the number of people that are applying for full time job with the ministry and can't even articulate the gospel. Can you articulate the gospel? If I handed you a blank piece of paper this morning and I said, "Write out the gospel," could you write out the gospel? Could you tweak the gospel this morning? I'd give you 140 characters. Could you communicate the good news in 140 characters or less? Could you email me the gospel this week? Let's see how you do.

Well, I am converted.

How do you know? If you can't even articulate the gospel, how do you know you are converted? Come on. Give me a break. Could you explain God's plan of salvation to anybody? Anyone at all? Rudimentary understanding of the gospel?

"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."⁴⁴

What fault does God find with some. Here it is. They are not following Leviticus 19:18. What does Leviticus 19:18?

"...thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."⁴⁵

Thou shalt love thy sheep as thyself. Sheep that love other sheep don't trample the water when there is more sheep to drink, more sheep behind. It is like the selfish person uses all the hot water up in the house fully knowing that there is three more people to get a shower and you are in there just letting it run. Do you know what that is? That is not loving your neighbor as yourself.

When a sheep tramples on grass that others will eat and muddies the water that others will drink, he is not loving his fellow sheep as himself. Why are the sheep trampling? We said that because God's shepherds are not shepherding. So I want to shepherd for a minute.

Steven Joyner sent this to me and his timing was impeccable. It is amazing the way God sovereignly brings things into a preacher's life and if he will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit God will deliver illustrations into your lap. This person who God died for professor Bart Erman teaches at UNC at Chapel Hill. Are you ... all you Tarheel fans listen up. This man is a distinguished professor. And I want you to understand what he lives to do by his own profession. He lives, Joey, to destroy the faith of freshmen in their

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Leviticus 19:18.

first year at UNC. He teaches New Testament survey. And he was actually in a speech bragging about the fact that he has lots of Baptist kids from North Carolina who sign up for his New Testament survey class and then for the next semester he blows them out of the water. He shows them discrepancies. He shows them difficulties. He loves to destroy their faith in the Word of God. And do you know why he is able to do that? Because God's shepherds are not shepherding.

So they go to 12 years of Sunday school and it is when it has been David and Goliath 1400 times in three different directions on five different flavors and they step into his freshman class on New Testament survey and he is able to blow them out of the water because they are not grounded. They are not prepared. They haven't been taught.

He brags about how he gives a pop quiz and to three or 400 students and he asks them questions like how many books are in the New Testament and he says very few are able to say 27. He asks them what language was the Bible written in, the New Testament written in and he says most say Hebrew and some say Latin and a few say English and very seldom do they ever get to Greek. Do you know why? Because Sunday school teachers are not doing what Sunday school teachers are supposed to do. They are giving watered down, mamby pamby, little tiny devotionals or sermonettes at best. And then when we send them off to college and we say, "Fend for yourself," and it is like taking a little lamb and throwing them in and wolves are everywhere on UNC Chapel ready to rip them apart.

Is this resonating with anybody or am I preaching to myself this morning? So this is what the says.

He sent in the conditions for those quote.

Bart lived and grew up in a fundamental home said he left Fundamentalism to go to Evangelicalism, left Evangelicalism to go to liberal Christianity, left liberal Christianity to go to Agnostic. And if we are not careful the same thing will happen to our children in this church. They will walk away from Fundamentalism and go into Evangelicalism and walk away from Evangelicalism to liberal Christianity and from liberal Christianity they will go into Agnostic. Wake up this morning. Wake up this morning. There is wolves out there that are seeking to destroy you. They want to tear your faith apart. They want to rip your children apart limb by limb.

I ended up leaving Christianity to become Agnostic because my... not because of my scholarship, but because I simply couldn't understand how there could be a good and powerful God who is in control of this world and all of the pain and misery in it.

The man calls himself an expert on the Word of God and what he doesn't realize is the very Word of God that he is calling into question shows that God does care, that God does care about misery in this world. He does care about pain in this world. He knows the agony that you are going through. He cares about you. He is a shepherd seeking you out. All he has got to do is read one chapter, Ezekiel 34, and you will see that God does care t

that his people are not being properly shepherded. He doesn't want people starving to death. He doesn't want sheep eating sheep. He doesn't want them trampling down the grass. He doesn't want them being selfish. God doesn't want this.

But what the liberal Agnostic wants is a god who fixes everything while maintaining our free will. We want a sovereign God when we want a sovereign God and we want a free will when we want a free will and we always want it to work to our advantage. You can't have it both ways.

But the fact of the matter is either our college students are ill equipped and so a guy like this blows them out of the water. Sit up and pay attention this morning high school kids. I love you. I want you to go to UNC and blow the guy back out.

It is crazy what we are dealing with.

He goes on to say. I am just going to preach this part and then be done. We are out of time again. I hate that stupid clock. Listen. He goes on to say. Please listen.

I am not against religion. I want everyone to have some kind of religion. But what he would really prefer, rather, is that we have assemblies of people on Sundays that work to solve the worlds problems. So instead of coming together to worship King Jesus this morning, we would come together in focus groups this morning and we would concentrate how we can fix this problem.

Now wait a minute. On the surface, you know, ok, let's have some focus groups. Let's see if we can fix some problems. But wait a minute. Time out. Hold on. Mr. Bart D. Erman, I though you subscribed to Darwinianism. I mean, you don't believe that we came from a creator God. You call yourself an Agnostic, so you believe we came from an evolutionary process. Hey, listen to me. Don't miss this. I thought in an evolutionary process it sucks to be weak. Yes, I said that very harshly. Yes. I thought that is what Darwin is all about, the strong survive, fittest of the strong, right? Isn't that Darwinism or am I wrong?

So, hey. Don't tell me I need to come together on Sunday mornings to focus on helping the weak. Who are you to tell me anything? Hey, if there isn't a creator God that I have to answer to, if there isn't a moral law implanted in my heart by a creator God then I am not coming to church on Sunday. I am going to the lake. Right? Exactly. Live for myself. Don't jam two philosophies down my throat which clearly contradict. Jam one, Darwinism down my throat which is the strong survive. Too bad for you. And then to somehow suggest that what we should be doing is assembling in focus groups in which we work on taking care of your neighbor. Who cares about my neighbor?

I am not going to give up any of my cash so that he doesn't have to work. It is their problem. I was born in America. They were born in Africa. Too bad on you. Better luck next time in the next life.

Yes or no, church?

You have got to learn to think. You cannot allow some college professor who has got a PhD behind his name to act as though he is some genius and we are stupid fundamentalists. Wrong answer. No way. Let's argue about this.

If we don't subscribe to King Jesus, let's close the church down, save your 10 percent and I am driving a new car this year, brother.

I have always wanted that red Mercedes convertible. I would drive that thing from June to July and then I would get in my [?] like Michael Dion has, that one that I envy after right there and I would drive that one in the fall and then I would ski the whole winter. I mean, I would just ski. Every Sunday would be skiing. Amen. There is no accountability in his theory. I don't have to worry about a thing.

So here is what you have got to decide this morning. Is there a creator God that you have to answer to or not? That's it. That is the answer for you this morning. If there is a creator God that you have to answer to, then you had better beware of one thing. He separates his sheep from the goats. He separates the fat from the lame. He separates the sheep from the sheep. So you better figure out whether you are sheep or not. Because all sheep aren't sheep. All sheep aren't sheep. You better figure it out, because I can't figure it out for you and you can't figure it out for me. But you can be sure of one thing. Either I am right or he is right, but we both aren't right. One or the other. And the difference is I have got the testimony of the Word of God on my behalf. Yes, yes, amen. Forty authors, 1500 years, thousands of words, preserved in hundreds of languages, thousands upon thousands of lives changed to the glory of God.

Show me an Agnostic that has been changed by anything.

Let's pray.