

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Numbers 27:12-23

July 17, 2016

Yahweh knows that *sheep without a shepherd* is disastrous!

❖ 2 foolish extremes:

- *Belong to the right church, go to church = saved, no matter what I believe*
- *All that counts: That I have saving faith in Jesus. It's an individual matter. I don't need to go to church to be a believer/saved.*

❖ Those who follow Jesus the Good Shepherd belong to his flock/church

Yahweh knows that *sheep without a shepherd* is disastrous!

- *...so that the LORD's community won't be like sheep without a shepherd.* HCSB
- *When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.* Mark 6:34

❖ Having *sheep without a shepherd* is disastrous! Why?

- *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.* Matthew 9:36
 - ♦ **Harassed** - Greek word: *hassled, troubled, wearied, worn down*
 - ♦ **Helpless** - Greek word: *lying down, exhausted, no energy to go on*
 - ♦ Directionless, lacking clear and common goals and plans
 - ♦ Confused. Longing for fulfillment - feeling empty
 - ♦ **Lacking** wisdom and knowledge - **opinions** abound, divide - foolishness has **equal standing** with wisdom.
 - ♦ Individuals straying in every direction. Divisive. Arguments.
 - ♦ Accountable to no one. **Chaos**. No justice. No security.
- The individual sheep **do not do well** - unhealthy, hazardous, no peace
- There is **no flock**, family, community. No unity. No identity. **No security**.

❖ Yahweh creates his flock/community - he gathers people into his flock

- He created his flock, the church, **when he created Adam and Eve**
- Yahweh **gathers** to himself - **Sin scatters** from being gathered to him
 - ♦ Self-willed ways, dissension, **sin** that **calls** our foolishness *wise*
 - ♦ *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*
 - **Astray from what?** The Shepherd and his flock, of course!
 - Jesus paid for our foolish evil - to gather us back into his **flock**
 - Called back to Jesus, **under his authority/safety** of his Church/**flock**

❖ Yahweh our Shepherd provides shepherds for his people

- Men with his spirit, humble themselves to his shepherding word
- Men who **love** God's flock - **individuals** and **community**
- Who live to seek: God's flock **thrive** - **individually** and as **community**
- Who feed with the **forgiving love** of God that gathered us to him
- Who **teach** to grow in grace and wisdom - putting off sin
- Who know love serves in relationships/community - encouraging one another
- God's love/will is both taught and caught - model in spirit and life
- Yahweh cultivated such shepherds for his people in Moses and Joshua
- Yahweh provides under-shepherds to gather his flocks

❖ Pray for Christ's church

- Pray for shepherds - there's always a lack of workers
- Pray for people - be willing to **be shepherded** - challenge of our times
 - ♦ Christians who *want* Jesus, but not his church - refuse to be gathered
 - ♦ Christians who avoid their pastor - not wanting to be shepherded
 - ♦ *Gospel rain shower* is moving to lands that want to be shepherded
 - ♦ *Submit = subordinate* = put yourself under the word/instruction
 - ♦ Rejecting the message of a faithful shepherd is rejecting Christ
- Pray we grow: *I believe in the Holy Christian Church* - God's design

Yahweh knows that *sheep without a shepherd* is disastrous!

So Yahweh saves us - gathering us in faithful flocks to be safe/saved and thrive.

Do you see? Moses' prayer for a shepherd knows Yahweh saves people in his church, by making people part of his flock, keeping them safe together forever.