

# A Word to Shepherds and Sisters

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of shepherds and sisters embodying God's heart through selfless service and genuine motives.*

**Duration:** 17:32

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 3:13

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Godly Living"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being shepherds and sisters after God's own heart, focusing on acknowledging iniquity, seeking to serve selflessly, and living with a heart that reflects God's love and generosity. It challenges individuals to examine their motives, prioritize God's glory, and make choices that align with His will, rather than legalistic interpretations. The message encourages self-reflection, humility, and a genuine pursuit of God's heart in all aspects of life.

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## Transcript

So there was a word there for shepherds and a word for sisters, you know in the Old Testament there is a verse I want to read to you in Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 3 and verse 13. This is what the Lord says to his people, to only acknowledge your iniquity and return, verse 14, let me be your master and the people who respond to that, one from one city and two from a family, that's what the Lord has done in our midst through these 41 years.

He's picked up one from here and one from there. Some people in the family are left behind. He just takes out two.

Many others in a city are left behind. He takes out two and I will bring you to Zion. That's the church, the local church.

And how do you know you've come to Zion? There you will find verse 15, shepherds after my own heart, the tremendous expression. Everyone who serves God's people in a church must seek to be a shepherd after God's own heart. So then we have to study God's heart.

God so loved that he took? No. God so loved that he gave. The devil is always stealing.

He's a thief. Man is always selling or taking. God is always giving.

That's God's heart. He's not selling anything. Look at the oxygen you get free.

You go to a hospital, you have to pay for oxygen. Look at the water he gives in the river, free. You pay the corporation of water.

Man is always selling. He wants money. He wants money and the preachers are selling their sermons for money.

It's like that. You can see that that is not the heart of God. What did God sell to you? Preachers sell.

They take a salary. Jesus never took a salary. None of the apostles took a salary.

That is all a modern invention. It's like infant baptism. Many have got light on infant baptism in some churches, but they haven't got light on salary.

Infant baptism and salary and all these things came at the same time and rituals and traditions. People have got rid of some of the things, but some things remain. You want to know whether you'll come to Zion? See if you've got a shepherd after God's own heart.

Don't see whether it's connected to CFC or connected with Brother Zag. No, no, no, no, no. The Jews said we got Abraham for our father.

John said, John the Baptist said, forget it. God can raise up children for Abraham from the stone. Not every shepherd in the churches the apostles planted were shepherds after God's own heart.

You know who planted the church in Ephesus? Paul. He was there for three years, but see the condition of the elder in Revelation chapter 2. He has no love for Jesus. He's just loving his own honor and the Lord says, I'm taking away the anointing from you.

Who planted all those seven churches in Revelation? The apostles. John must have planted some of them. In one church, John says there's an elder called Diotrephes.

You read that in third letter of John. I appointed him as an elder, but he thinks so much of himself now, he won't even listen to me. And if I send somebody, he won't accept him.

And you know what John said, I'll come there and teach him a lesson. John was not going to sit back and say, okay, let him take over that church. No, no, no, no.

You read third John. He says, I'll come there and teach him a lesson. These apostles had authority.

They were not afraid of other people thought he's a hard guy. John's being very hard. I thought he was the apostle of love.

Yeah, it's the apostle of divine love. The love that sends people to hell. The love that disciplines people with sickness.

The love that disciplines people with financial difficulty. That's the love that God has. That's the love that John had.

And so shepherds after God's own heart and I say, if anybody here, I don't only talk about the elders. God's given you a responsibility to care for younger sisters, the younger people. You're a shepherd.

Seek to be a shepherd after God's own heart. Study God's heart. God so loved that he gave.

He gave the best. He didn't give stingily. A lot of people who give stingily.

There's a beautiful expression in Luke chapter 12, which says about Jesus said, so will it be verse 21 for a man who is not rich towards God. Have you heard that expression? Luke 12 and verse 21 rich towards God. When one day the books are opened and the videotape of your life is played out, will it be seen that you were a man, a woman, was rich towards God? However, men, whatever people thought about you, are you trying to give an impression to people that you're rich towards God? Or have you been rich towards God in sacrificing your time? Rich towards God in sacrificing what you earn, your time and your energy.

You ever say, I'm too tired to serve God? You say, it's raining. I'm sick. So far to go.

I'll never forget once I read in the Gospel of Jesus traveled from Galilee all the way to Tyre, 70 kilometers. It must have taken him two days. There were no chariots walking.

He went there for one demon-possessed girl, whose mother said, please heal. You're not even an Israelite. Please heal my demon.

Jesus said, I can't give food to the dogs just to test her. She said, okay, give me the crumbs. One crumb is enough to heal my daughter.

Jesus' disciples were with him. And he took the disciples to teach them a lesson on faith. Woman, great is your faith.

Your daughter is healed. You know that story. The next morning, Jesus gets up with his disciples, walks 70 kilometers back.

I say, Lord, make me like that. That I'll be led by the Holy Spirit to inconvenience myself so much to help one person. And that person may be a non-Christian who has to come to the Lord.

Pray like that. That is God's heart. I thank God for some few elders like that we have in CFC.

I praise God for that. For by the heart of God, I have seen Zion. And then to the sisters.

You heard a word to the sisters from Esther. One, Peter, chapter three. We read, you sisters, verse three, let not your adornment be external.

In the New American Standard Bible, they have added the word merely. You know why? Because it is American Bible. They don't want to offend the American people who want to decorate them.

But they are honest to say that's not in the original. In italics means it's not in the original. I mean the Holy Spirit didn't put it, but the American translators put it.

Otherwise nobody would buy this Bible. But that's one of the few places where the NASB is bad. Otherwise it's generally good.

Why do they put that? Because you use that in America. They'll get upset. You don't want this Bible.

Get us another Bible which says not merely external. That's better. That means it must be external.

Plus, in addition, number two, some internal also. That's not what the way Holy Spirit wrote it. That's not the way Peter wrote it.

Let not your adornment be external. Braiding the hair, wearing gold jewelry, putting on expensive clothes. You can be a legalist here.

Somebody who wants to wear gold jewelry will say, Brother Zach, it says here you should not put on dresses. Are we to go naked? Okay. I never argue with legalists.

Can I tell you? All things are lawful for you. You want to live at the lawful level? Live. I'd like to see what God accomplishes through your life.

The greatest men of God are the people who never lived at the lawful level. They lived at what is profitable. 1 Corinthians 6.12. What is profitable? 1 Corinthians 10.23. Lawful but not edifying.

They lived at the level of profitable and edifying. I remember one sister told me, Brother Zach, you're looking at my jewelry. I said, no, I don't look at these things.

I don't waste my time looking at people's jewelry. In fact, sometimes I come away from a sister and somebody says they're wearing jewelry. I say, hey, I didn't even notice that.

I'm not looking for it. Did she wear a ring? Did she wear a earring or gold chain? That's not what I'm looking for. I'm not interested.

That's between her and God. So she said, see, she was trying to teach me scripture. Brother Zach, man looks on the outward appearance.

God looks at the heart. Jewelry and all is not important. So I said, sister, you are 100% right.

God is looking at your heart to see why you're wearing this jewelry. Is it for the, it says 1 Corinthians 10.31. Whatever you do, do for the glory of God. Are you doing it for the glory of God? You can convince God you're wearing this for God's glory.

Wear it. I'm not here to judge you. It's your choice.

Now parents choose for their children. I hope you will choose what is profitable, not just what is lawful. There are many ways you can argue around that verse.

You can look at the Greek and look at other translations which are more suited. It's true. God looks at the heart.

He sees the motive. It says in the Bible in 1 Corinthians 4.5. God will reveal the motive. There will be no record in the final day of any sister who wore jewelry or expensive clothes or the way they did their hair.

God will see the motive of men's hearts, women's hearts. Why did you comb your hair like that? Because you didn't want it flying around like some mad woman. Good motive.

You braided your hair so that it didn't fly around like a mad woman. That's what God sees. And God sees why somebody else did it some other way.

I'm not here to judge anyone. We have a lot of sisters in CFC who wear jewelry and we have some who don't. There was one brother who came to me and said, what shall I tell my young daughter when she says, why can't I be like that sister? I wear jewelry and dress like her and I told that brother, what shall I tell my daughter? I'll tell you what to tell her.

In the Garden of Eden, paradise, there were two trees. Adam had to make a choice. In CFC there are two types of sisters.

Those who are modestly dressed. Those who are worldly stylishly dressed. Both are there.

Your daughter walks in like Adam walked into the garden. You can turn left or you can turn right. There's a choice.

In paradise there was a choice. Why not in CFC? Dear brothers and sisters, I believe we have heard a prophetic word today for the shepherds and the women. And there's only one thing to say.

Don't judge others, judge yourself. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. She who has ears to hear, let her hear.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we bow before you. We don't want to be legalists, finding excuses in scripture to do what we want.

We can fool others, but we can't fool you. For you know the motives of our heart. And as shepherds and leaders of your people, we're not judges.

We have to proclaim your word and your command to us is, judge not. We do not judge. You are the judge.

Who is a good shepherd? Who is a good sister? You judge. But we have to proclaim your word faithfully and we will do that till the end. Give us grace, Lord, to judge ourselves first and to keep on judging ourselves and not to judge others.

Let the word we heard today go home to everybody's heart and that there will be people who have ears to hear. Not to please men, not to impress anyone, but to live before your face and to become men and women of God. Shepherds after your own heart, women after your own heart, with a meek and a quiet spirit that is of great value in your eyes.

Thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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