

FALSE SHEPHERDS
THE GOOD SHEPHERD - PART 4

John 10

JOHN 10

(V. 1-2), “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ²But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.”

(V. 5), “And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”

(V. 10), “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.”

(V. 12-13), “But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. ¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.”

(V. 19-20), “There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. ²⁰ And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?”

(V. 31), “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.”

BY WAY OF REVIEW:

(1) **Chapter 10** paints a **SHARP CONTRAST** between **the way Jesus treated** the blind man that He healed, and the way the **religious authorities** treated him. Jesus pursued him the way a *shepherd* pursues a lost sheep. He brought the blind man into God’s sheepfold. **In contrast**, the religious authorities **excommunicated** the blind man.

(2) JESUS USED **PICTURE WORDS, ALLEGORY, to communicate** God’s way of shepherding his people. That stands in contrast to Satan’s

way of scattering people. Each **detail** in John 10 relates a **specific meaning** and depicts a **real fact**.

(3) THIS IS **THE FOURTH MESSAGE** in a series of messages from John 10. **The first message** gave **an overview** of those **specific details** from a **historical** and **spiritual** perspective. **THOSE DETAILS ARE:**

C **“SHEPHERD”**

A Person who watches sheep.

C **“SHEEP”**

Sheep are those animals that are watched by shepherds.

C **“SHEEPFOLD”**

A sheepfold is **the pen** where sheep were sometimes kept overnight. The **walls** for the sheep pen were often made of **rocks** and stood **high enough** to keep the sheep from jumping over them. It was common for several shepherds to herd their sheep into the pen for protection overnight.

C **“DOOR”**

In one wall of the sheep pen was an opening called a “door,” or “gate.” The gate was used so the sheep could **enter** and **exit** from the pen.

C **“PORTER”**

The **GATEKEEPER** (or “porter”) was responsible for watching the sheep pen at night. He often did so by lying down and sleeping in the “gate.” Sometimes the shepherd served as the **“gate keeper.”** At other times the “gate keeper” was a hired person.

C **“THIEVES” and “ROBBERS”**

The shepherd had to watch his sheep because there were people who loved to steal sheep. Sometimes they would sneak over one of the walls of the sheep pen at night and pluck up a sheep.

C When the shepherd would come in the morning to gather his sheep from the sheep pen, he would **"CALL"** out for his sheep. His sheep would **"HEAR"** his voice, and they would **"FOLLOW"** him out of the pen. If a **"STRANGER"** called out to them, they would not follow him because they did not recognize his voice. They responded only to the voice of their shepherd.

C Once the shepherd had gathered his sheep, he would take them out to **"PASTURE."** In the pasture the sheep would find grass to eat. Occasionally the shepherd would **HIRE** someone to watch his sheep. THE PROBLEM WITH THE **"HIRELING"** WAS he would **FLEE** when the **WOLF** came because the sheep were not his own. The *hireling* would not put his life in danger for animals that belonged to someone else.

S The details from John 10 can be viewed from **THREE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES.**

(1) **The first perspective** is that of the **GOOD SHEPHERD.** The *Good Shepherd* depicted Jesus himself. Jesus revealed **FIVE FACTS** ABOUT HIMSELF:

- #1. HE IS **GOD'S MESSIAH**
- #2. HE IS **THE SUBJECT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WITNESS**
- #3. HE IS **THE DOOR TO LIFE**
- #4. HE IS **GOOD**
- #5. HE **IS GOD**

(2) **The second perspective** from John 10 focused on the word **"SHEEP."** The word *sheep* occurs seventeen times in John 10 and depicts those people who are truly members of God's eternal family. Jesus revealed **four facts** about *true sheep*:

- #1. TRUE SHEEP **"HEAR"** JESUS
- #2. TRUE SHEEP **"BELIEVE"** JESUS
- #3. TRUE SHEEP **"KNOW"** JESUS
- #4. TRUE SHEEP **"FOLLOW"** JESUS

(False sheep do not *hear, believe, know* nor *follow* Jesus.)

(3) **THIS THIRD MESSAGE** looks at John 10 from the perspective of **FALSE SHEPHERDS.**

In Jewish O.T. thinking, a "shepherd" was more than just a caretaker of sheep and goats. The word *shepherd* was used to indicate **ANY KIND OF LEADER,** whether **political** and **religious.** Leaders were considered *shepherds* because they had oversight over people the way a *shepherd* had oversight over sheep. **KINGS** were sometimes called *shepherds* because they had to oversee the nation. **RELIGIOUS LEADERS** were sometimes referred to as *shepherds* because they had oversight over God's people in spiritual matters. (Is 56:9-12; Jer. 17:16; 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Eze 34; Zec 11:4,7).

EVIL SHEPHERDS were those leaders who **misused** their oversight of people for evil purposes. They did **not care** for their sheep because they were so busy caring for themselves.

(V. 13), "The **hireling** fleeth, because he is an **hireling,** and **CARETH NOT** for the sheep."

A false shepherd IS LIKE a **drug dealer** who cares nothing for his client. All the drug dealer wants is **his money.** There are people who peddle religion for the same reasons drug dealers peddle their drugs. They do not care for the *sheep.* All they want is power, influence and money. To them **religion is little more a business.**

Jesus warned against such *False shepherds.*

(Mat 7:15-20), "**BEWARE** of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. {16} Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? {17} Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. {18} A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. {19} Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. {20} Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

THE WORD "**BEWARE**" means to "pay attention to," "be on guard against." If Jesus told us to *beware* of someone, we ought to take that to heart and *beware* of them. That is precisely what this message is about. We are making ourselves aware of *false shepherds*.

Based on John 10 there are **FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE SHEPHERDS**:

- I. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **DECEPTIVE**
- II. FALSE SHEPHERDS **HAVE STRANGE VOICES**
- III. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **EVIL**
- IV. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **SCRIPTURALLY INACCURATE**

I. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE DECEPTIVE

(V. 1-2), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ² But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."

S JESUS USED THE WORD "**DOOR**" **FOUR TIMES** in John 10, but He also used it in **TWO DIFFERENT WAYS**. IN **VERSE 2** Jesus walked through the "DOOR" of **God's Messiahship**. By walking through the "door" of God's Messiahship, He offered **confirmation** of His Messiahship to every sincere seeker of God.

S SCRIPTURE HAS PROMISED **ONLY ONE MESSIAH**. God did not promise two, five, or ten Messiahs. Twice Jesus used the word "one." JESUS SAID:

(V. 16), "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be **ONE FOLD**, and **ONE SHEPHERD**."

S GOD'S **ONE MESSIAH IS JESUS CHRIST**. Jesus' Messiahship was **confirmed** by virtue of His having walked through **God's ordained "gate" of Messiahship**. Jesus **didn't jump over** the fence in order to get into God's sheep pen. Jesus **walked through the "gate"** ordained by God. Jesus **met the prophetic description** of God's Messiah in every detail as revealed in Scripture.

S IN CONTRAST, **false messiahs** have not walked through the "gate" of God's Messiahship. *False messiahs* do not **meet the prophetic standard** of God's One Messiah. *False messiahs* get to the sheep **by crawling over the wall**.

S **FALSE SHEPHERDS POINT PEOPLE IN ONE OF TWO DIRECTIONS**:

- 1) **False shepherds** sometimes **point** to **THEMSELVES**. They **claim to be** God's *shepherd* and insist that people follow them. As outlandish as that may seem, **every generation** has its examples of those people who have made such outrageous claims. We have them in our day, too.
- 2) **False shepherds** sometimes **point people** toward **OTHER FALSE MESSIAHS**. They tell people to follow some other self-proclaimed false messiah. They would never claim to be the Messiah themselves. They simply serve as **spokesmen** for other *false shepherds*.

S Whichever direction *false shepherds* choose to point people, they are **ILLEGITIMATE SHEPHERDS**. They have **climbed over the fence**. They have not walked through the "gate." They are **DECEPTIVE** in that they try to convince people that they have walked through the "gate." Jesus called them "**FALSE**" ("pseudo-prophets"). Jesus was telling us that they are **deceitful**, i.e., they are **liars**.

S SCRIPTURE USES **MANY NAMES** TO DESCRIBE *FALSE SHEPHERDS*

C **(2 Cor 11:13)**, ". . . **DECEITFUL WORKERS**, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."

C **(2 John 1:7)**, "For many **DECEIVERS** are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. . ."

SATAN does not appear on the scene wearing a **red suit**, **horns**, **pointed tail** and a **pitchfork**. He comes **as an angel of light**.

(2 Cor 11:14-15), "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. {15} Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; . . . "

C (Mat 26:60), ". . . FALSE WITNESSES,"

C (1 Tim 4:1), ". . . SEDUCING SPIRITS, . . . "

C (Acts 20:30), ". . . SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS, to draw away disciples after them."

C (Acts 20:29-30), "For I know this, that after my departing shall GRIEVOUS WOLVES enter in among you, not sparing the flock."

AN EXAMPLE:

JIM JONES was a former San Francisco clergyman who led his followers to move with him to Jonestown, Guyana. As his religious conspiracies began to unravel, he led 914 of his followers to drink Kool-Aid laced with cyanide in. Those who refuse to drink were either shot or forcibly injected with cyanide. Jones shot himself in the head or was murdered.

MEL WHITE wrote regarding JIM JONES in his book DECEIVED.

"He knew how to inspire hope. He was committed to people in need; He counseled prisoners and juvenile delinquents. He started a job placement center; He opened rest homes and homes for the retarded; He had a health clinic; He organized a vocational training center; He provided free legal aid; He founded a community center; He preached about God. He even claimed to cast out demons, do miracles and heal."

"But on the other hand we find all the marks of a false prophet. He promoted himself through the use of celebrities, a very common vehicle for false prophets to gain credibility. He manipulated the press; he wanted certain favorable stories; he was big on playing the press. . . . And he used the language and the forms of faith to gain his power."

S Because false shepherds are deceivers, Jesus said, "BEWARE." We are to "be on guard against" such people. We are to "watch out."

I. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE DECEPTIVE

II. FALSE SHEPHERDS HAVE STRANGE VOICES

(V. 5), "And a STRANGER will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the VOICE of STRANGERS."

S When Jesus said that His sheep would not follow a "STRANGER," He used what is called a double negative. Greek has a unique way of communicating intensity in the negative by twice stating the negative. Jesus stated that His sheep would "not not" (οὐ οὐ) follow false shepherds. His sheep would not follow false shepherds because His sheep do not know the voice of the false shepherd. To the sheep the voice of a false shepherd is the voice of a "STRANGER." By definition A STRANGER is a person with whom we are unacquainted.

S Someone might ask, "If true sheep do not recognize the voice of false shepherds and do not follow them, then why do so many sheep follow false shepherds?" Perhaps one explanation is that they follow false shepherds because they are not true sheep. They follow false shepherds because of their opinion of regarding who they think Jesus is. To many of them, Jesus is not the one and only true shepherd. To them Jesus is not Lord. To them Jesus is just another good religious person. In other words, those folks:

- #1. DO NOT "HEAR" JESUS
- #2. DO NOT "BELIEVE" JESUS
- #3. DO NOT "KNOW" JESUS
- #4. DO NOT "FOLLOW" JESUS

S O, they might give a token nod to Jesus' name, but they do not follow Him as Lord. Since they do not follow Jesus as the One and Only Lord, then they are susceptible to following any religious person that crosses their paths. When any religious wolf

in sheep's clothing shows up, they are inclined to follow him. To them, Jesus is just another **religious** person. To them Jesus is not **the True Shepherd**.

SOME EXAMPLES.

- (1) Some years ago, **LIBERAL CHURCH SCHOLARS** met at a seminary in **Indiana** and actually voted on which sayings of Jesus they were going to exclude from the Bible. They accepted less than one half of his teachings as authoritative.
 - (2) Some years ago, **LIBERAL WOMEN THEOLOGIANS**, gathered at **A RE-IMAGING GOD CONFERENCE** and called upon women to dig deep into their imagination and create new images of God. One of those women, a leader of the World Council of Churches, said God had nothing to do with the crucifixion; that the cruel and violent death of Christ on the cross sanctions violence against the powerless in society and God would not do that.
- ☞ Does any of that sound **"STRANGE"** to you? If it sounds *strange*, that is good! None of that emanates from the voice of the Good Shepherd.
- (3) Perhaps you have read the following statements on car **BUMPER STICKERS**.
 - ☞ One reads, **"The Earth is our mother, treat her with respect."**
 - ☞ The other sticker reads, **"The earth does not belong to us, we belong to the earth."**
- Don't those statements sound a bit "strange" to you? Don't they sound like an attempt to get people to worship something which God has not ordained?

- I. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **DECEPTIVE**
- II. FALSE SHEPHERDS HAVE **STRANGE VOICES**

III. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE EVIL

S Jesus used **THREE WORDS** in John 10 to describe the evil of the *false shepherd*.

#1. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE "THIEVES"

(V. 1), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a **THIEF** . . . "

(V. 8), "All that ever came before me are **THIEVES** . . . "

(V. 10), "The **THIEF** cometh not, but for to **STEAL**, . . . "

S This Greek word for **"THIEF"** (klep^htace) means **to take by subtlety, or by trickery**. The **"thief"** (klep-tace) works in **secrecy** to carry out his misdeeds. He moves in the **shadows** to accomplish his evil deeds.

S **ENVISION** for a moment, a Middle Eastern sheep pen in Jesus' day. The sheep have settled down for the night. The gatekeeper is asleep blocking the entrance through the gate. With great **stealth** a thief approaches the pen in the dark of night and crawls over the fence. He is so quiet that the shepherd never hears him. At just the right moment he grabs one of the sheep and with all the speed he can muster, he runs and jumps the wall of the sheep pen. He has just stolen a sheep. You know he is a thief because he didn't come through the gate of the sheep pen. He climbed over the wall.

S This Greek word for **"thief"** could be used to describe an **EMBEZZLER** who takes money from his employer by stealth. **JUDAS** is an example of a **"THIEF"** (klep^htace). He was so secretive in pilfering from the disciple's money that no one suspected him of doing it.

S This past week the RBC website received the following email. The message line read, **"YOUR CREDIT CARD HAS BEEN CHARGED \$234.65."** The message that followed read:

~ IMPORTANT NOTICE ~

“We have just charged your credit card for money laundry service in the amount of \$234.65. If you feel this transaction was made by our mistake, please press "No.” If you confirm this transaction, please press "Yes" and fill in the form below.

Enter your credit card number here: _____

Enter your credit card expiration date: _____

Some unsuspecting person probably filled out the credit card information and emailed it back to those thieves thinking they were protecting themselves. If they filled it out, what they did was give a thief access to their credit card.

S FALSE SHEPHERDS OPERATE LIKE THAT! Because they are *thieves*, they deceive so that they might steal.

S What do *false shepherds* steal? What did Jim Jones steal? They steal **GLORY** that belongs to God. They steal **HONOR** that belongs to God.

#1. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **THIEVES**

#2. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE ROBBERS

(V. 1), “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a THIEF and a **ROBBER.**”

(V. 8), “All that ever came before me are THIEVES and **ROBBERS.** . . .”

S The Greek word for "**ROBBER**" (lacel-tace) is **more intense** than the Greek word for "**thief**" (klep-tace). The word for *robber* implies taking by **violence**. It means to **plunder**, or to take by **force**.

S Envision a Middle Eastern shepherd out on the hillside at dusk. A man approaches the shepherd and begins a conversation. Unbeknownst to the shepherd, another robber approaches the herd of sheep. When the shepherd hears the commotion amongst his

sheep, he turns to see what is happening. With head turned, the man with whom he was talking hits him and knocks him out. The two men rob the shepherd by use of force.

S Jesus was talking about *false shepherds* who take their position by **force** and by **violence**. In other words, God had nothing to do with them taking their position. They took their position by *robbery*.

S One of RBC’s past senior adults told an interesting hunting story. He gave personal testimony of a man who downed an animal while hunting in the mountains. As he began to dress the animal, some other men approached him and, at gun point, told him to walk away from the animal because it belonged to them. They took that animal by force.

S Years ago I was told the story about some lady in the Northwest who goes by the name "**ELK LADY.**" She loved to hunt elk. Out in the mountains one day she downed an elk. As any good hunter would do, she began to dress it in the field. While cleaning the elk, some men held her up. They took her gun, thanked her for shooting their elk and told her to take a hike. She made the journey back to her vehicle and discovered that the vehicle parked next to hers belonged to the men who had held her up. She got another gun out of her vehicle and waited until the men arrived with her elk. Upon their arrival she took their guns and put them in her vehicle. She thanked the men for cleaning and carrying her elk and insisted they load it into her vehicle. Before driving off, she told the men they could pick up their guns at her husband’s office back into town as soon as they arrived. She was the wife of the local sheriff.

S **In the same way** that those men tried to take the ELK LADY’S elk, so *false shepherds* try to steal God’s sheep. Their attempt is often carried out **BY FORCE**. For example, THE MODERN DAY **SUICIDE BOMBER** says, “Either you believe what we tell you to believe, or we kill you.” **They** possess a spirit of **murder** and **destruction** that says, “Believe, or die.”

S How different that spirit is from the Spirit of the True

Shepherd. Jesus said,

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly” (Jn 10:10).

Rather than crying for the destruction of those that didn’t believe in Him, Jesus cried from the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). The *false shepherd* comes to take life, whereas Jesus came to give life. **Jesus came to die for** those who had failed so that they might be forgiven.

#1. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **THIEVES**

#2. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **ROBBERS**

#3. **FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE DESTROYERS**

(V. 10), “The THIEF cometh not, but for to STEAL, and to **KILL**, and to **DESTROY**: . . . ”

S The Greek word for “**DESTROY**” is “**APOLLUMI**” (pronounced: ap-ol'-loo-mee). It is translated in the Authorized Version as “**perish**” 33 times, and as “**destroy**” 26 times. It means:

C to put out of the way entirely,

C to abolish,

C to put an end

C to ruin

C to kill

S The religious leaders who opposed Jesus in **John 10** were attempting to **destroy** Jesus. They sought to **murder** Jesus right on the spot.

(V. 31), “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.”

They were telling Jesus to believe either what they told him to believe, or they would kill Him. They **matched** the description of the *thief* that Jesus gave in John 10.

(V. 10), “The THIEF cometh not, but for to steal, and to **KILL**, and to **DESTROY**: . . . ”

They **also matched** another description that Jesus gave in **JOHN 8**.

(Jn 8:42-45), “Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, **YE WOULD LOVE ME**: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. ⁴³ **WHY** do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. ⁴⁴ **YE ARE OF YOUR FATHER THE DEVIL**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was **A MURDERER** from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for **HE IS A LIAR**, and the father of it. ⁴⁵ And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.”

S **All the false shepherds** throughout history are but A FORETASTE OF **THE ULTIMATE FALSE PROPHET** that will someday walk across the pages of history. He is called the **ANTI-CHRIST**. He will possess a spirit of murder. Scripture gives a glimpse of this coming *false shepherd*.

C **(Zec 11:16)**, “For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.”

C **(Da 7:21, 25)**, “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; . . . 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

S **THE GOOD NEWS IS**, if a person truly belongs to God, they cannot be stolen away from God. Jesus clearly teaches that in John. **(V. 28)**, “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.”

S So, **don't despair**. God's sheep are secure. **GOD WINS!**
(**Da 7:22**), "Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."

- I. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **DECEPTIVE**
- II. FALSE SHEPHERDS HAVE **STRANGE VOICES**
- III. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE **EVIL**

IV. FALSE SHEPHERDS ARE SCRIPTURALLY INACCURATE

(**V. 19-20**), "There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.²⁰ And many of them said, **HE HATH A DEVIL, and IS MAD; WHY HEAR YE HIM?**"

S *False shepherds* **listened** to the perfect, pure and holy Son of God and they **declared Him** to have a devil. They were no different from those who earlier saw Jesus' miracles and claimed that He did those miracles by the power of Satan. Jesus told them that such a charge was so serious that if they made it against the Holy Spirit, they would be guilty of committing the unpardonable sin (Mark 3:29).

S Jesus matched what Scripture had to say about God's Messiah. Our earlier examination of John 10 from the perspective of the *Good Shepherd* presented several O.T. Scriptures that revealed what God's Messiah would be like. We discovered that Jesus matched every one of them.

S **WHY** were the religious leaders of Jesus' day unable to realize that Jesus was God's true Messiah? Why could they not tell that Jesus had truly walked through the gate of God's Messiahship?

Scripture reveals why.

C (**2 Co 4:3-4**), "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴In whom **the god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious

gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (The "god of this world" is Satan).

C (**2 Th 2:10-12**), ". . . Because **they received not the love of the truth**, that they might be saved. {11} And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: {12} That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but **had pleasure** in unrighteousness."

Not only does Scripture reveal how to recognize the *True Messiah*, it also reveals how to recognize and identify *FALSE SHEPHERDS*. Jesus spoke of *FALSE SHEPHERDS* when He said:

(**Mat 7:16**), "Ye shall **KNOW** them **BY THEIR FRUITS . . .**"

S The word Greek word for "know" is "epignōsesthe."

C The word "epi" means "fully."

C The word "ginosko" means "to know."

C "Epiginesoko" means "to fully know."

S Just as **TREES** fully reveal what kind of tree they are by the fruit they bear, so shepherds reveal what kind of persons they are by the fruit they produce.

S I want to conclude this message by listing the **SIMILARITIES** and the **DIFFERENCES** between *false shepherds* and *true shepherds*.

S **Distinguishing** between a *true shepherd* and *false shepherd* can be **VERY DIFFICULT** because both *true* and *false shepherds* possess **many similarities**. Jesus said that "false prophets" dress in **sheep's clothing, . . .**" (Matt 7:15). That means they pretend to be genuine, but in reality they are *wolves*.

THE SIMILARITIES:

#1. *True* and *false shepherds* are both **RELIGIOUS**. Satan is in the business of religion. He is in religion up to his eyeballs.

#2. *True* and *false shepherds* are **DEDICATED and SINCERE**. Both would earn perfect attendance pins for Bible study and worship.

#3. Both *true* and *false shepherds* can **QUOTE SCRIPTURE**. Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus while Jesus was in the wilderness. (Mat 4)

#4. Both *true* and *false shepherds* **CLAIM TO SPEAK IN GOD'S BEHALF**. Jesus revealed what some of the *false shepherds* will say on their day of judgment,

Ⓒ “. . . Have we not **prophesied in thy name?**” (Mat 7:22).

#5. Both *true* and *false shepherds* **MAY MANIFEST GREAT POWER**. Jesus revealed some of the powerful activities carried out by *false shepherds*.

(**Mat 24:24**), "For there shall arise false Christs, and **false prophets**, and SHALL SHOW **great signs and wonders**; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Jesus revealed some of the powerful activities that will be carried out by the coming *ultimate false shepherd* – **THE ANTI-CHRIST**.

(**2 Th 2:9-10**), "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with **all power and signs and lying wonders**, {10} And with **all deceivableness** of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

Listen to some of the things *false shepherds* will say to Jesus on their day of judgment,

(**Mat 7:22**), ". . . In thy name [we] have **cast out devils?**

(**Mat 7:22**), ". . . In thy name [we have] **done many wonderful works?**"

S Do not think for one moment that **the difference** between a *true shepherd* and a *false shepherd* is that a *true shepherd* can show powerful signs, but *false shepherds* cannot. One of the best ways to **get sucked into** the web of a *false shepherd* is to base acceptance of that person on the basis of power that might accompany them.

S THE MAGICIANS OF EGYPT PERFORMED MIRACLES (**Ex 7:11-12**), ". . . The magicians of Egypt . . . cast down every man his **ROD**, and **they became serpents**: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." (**2 Tim 3:8**)

Having examined **the similarities** between *true* and *false shepherds*, **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE EXAMINE THEIR DIFFERENCES**. What are the differences between *false shepherds* and *true shepherds*?

JESUS SAID:

(**Mt 7:16-17**), "Ye **shall know them** by their **FRUITS**. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."

S The proof is in the fruit. Just as there is a difference between "**thorns**" and "**thistles**," and "**grapes**" and "**figs**," so there is a difference between "**TRUE SHEPHERDS**" and "**FALSE SHEPHERDS**."

S SOME OF THOSE DIFFERENCES ARE:

#1. False shepherds REJECT THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST.
True shepherds ACCEPT THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST.

False Shepherds may give a **token nod** in the direction of Jesus, but Jesus is not Lord of their life. Jesus said: (**Lk 6:46**), "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

#2. False Shepherds USE RELIGION FOR SORDID GAIN
True shepherds DO NOT PEDDLE THE WORD OF GOD

True Shepherds
(**2 Co 2:17 NKJV**), "For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ."

False Shepherds

(Jer 6:13-14), ““Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone *is* given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely. ¹⁴They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ When *there is* no peace.”

#3. False Shepherds STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF EVIL DOERS ***True Shepherds STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS***

False Shepherds

(Jer 23:14), "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: **they strengthen also the hands of evildoers**, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah."

Jesus said:

(Lk 6:26), “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”

#4. False Shepherds EXUDE PRIDE, RATHER THAN HUMILITY ***True Shepherds MANIFEST HUMILITY***

God hates pride (Prov 6:16-17). Satan is filled with pride (Isa 14:12-15).

#5. False Shepherds RULE BY THEIR OWN MEANS ***True Shepherds ARE LOYAL TO THE WORD OF GOD***

True Shepherds

(John 8:31), ". . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;"

False Shepherds

(Je 5:31), “The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love *to have it* so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?”

#6. False Shepherds PROCLAIM FALSE WAYS TO HEAVEN ***True Shepherds PROCLAIM GOD’S WAY TO HEAVEN***

True Shepherds

(Jn 14:6), “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

False Shepherds

(Mat 23:15), "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him **twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.**"

JESUS SAID:

(Matt 7:16), "Ye shall **KNOW** them **BY THEIR FRUITS** . . .”

S THE PROOF IS IN THE FRUIT

S WHAT ABOUT OUR FRUIT? THAT IS A SERIOUS QUESTION AND IT DESERVES A SERIOUS ANSWER. What does our *fruit* say about who we are spiritually?

S JESUS SAID MUCH ABOUT FRUIT

C (Luke 13:6-9), "He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. {7} Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? {8} And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: {9} And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

C (Mat 3:10), "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

C (John 15:2), "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."