

“Jesus the Pastor”

Summary

In this powerful exploration of Jesus as our Good Shepherd, we're reminded of the profound love and care God has for each of us. Drawing from John 10:10-11, we see Jesus' declaration: 'I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd.' This pastoral heart of Christ isn't just about leading; it's about nurturing, protecting, and deeply caring for His flock. The beautiful imagery from Psalm 23 reinforces this, showing us a God who provides, restores, and walks with us through our darkest valleys. As we reflect on this, we're challenged to embody this same pastoral grace in our own lives and communities. How can we, like Jesus, bear one another's burdens and show genuine care? This message invites us to move beyond surface-level Christianity into a deeper, more authentic expression of faith that truly impacts those around us.

Main Points – Jesus the Pastor

Title: Jesus the Pastor: Cultivating God's Heart for His People

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the pastoral aspect of Jesus' five-fold ministry, emphasizing the importance of cultivating a shepherd's heart within the church community. It draws parallels between the creation of Eve as Adam's suitable partner and Christ's relationship with the church. Pastor Rob highlights the need for believers to grow in love and care for one another, reflecting Jesus' pastoral nature and preparing the church to stand as a mature bride alongside Christ.

Key Points:

- The five-fold ministry of Jesus includes the pastoral grace, which is essential for the church's maturity
- God's design for marriage reflects Jesus' relationship with the church
- The pastoral heart of Jesus is meant to be cultivated in all believers, not just church leaders
- Caring for one another is crucial for the church's health and witness to the world
- Understanding and practicing the pastoral grace helps fulfill the law of Christ through bearing one another's burdens
- The church is called to grow in maturity to become a suitable partner for Christ in restoring kingdom order

Scripture Reference:

- Genesis 2:18-24
- Ephesians 5:22-32
- John 10:10-16
- Psalm 23

Stories:

- Pastor Rob's personal story of writing a journal for his wife during courtship
- Anecdote about being pulled over by a police officer while driving tired after visiting his fiancée
- Video of a sheep repeatedly jumping into a ditch, illustrating the challenges of pastoral care
- Moses' conversation with God about the burden of leading the Israelites (Numbers 11:11-17)

Small Group Study Guide – Jesus the Pastor

Small Group Guide: Jesus the Pastor - Understanding the Shepherd's Heart

Opening Prayer:

Begin by thanking God for His pastoral heart and asking for His guidance in your discussion.

Key Takeaways:

1. The pastoral grace is one of the five-fold ministry gifts given by Jesus to equip and mature the church.
2. God's pastoral heart is about committed, covenant love that cares for people's needs.
3. The pastoral grace should be expressed corporately, not just through designated leaders.
4. Understanding Jesus as our Good Shepherd helps us grow in love and care for one another.

Discussion Questions:

1. The message emphasizes that we are called to be Christ's bride. How does this perspective change the way you view your relationship with God?
2. Pastor Rob mentions that sanctification can be challenging. How does seeing it through the lens of love for Christ change your approach to personal growth?
3. What stood out to you about the description of Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John 10:10-16? How does this impact your understanding of God's care for you?
4. The sermon highlights that pastoral care is meant to be a corporate responsibility. What are some ways our group can better care for one another and others in the church?
5. Reflect on a time when someone in the church cared for you in a meaningful way. How did that impact your faith or sense of belonging?
6. Pastor Rob mentioned that some people have a stronger inclination towards pastoral care than others. Do you feel this might be an area of gifting for you? Why or why not?
7. How can we balance caring for others while also allowing space for personal growth and not enabling unhealthy behaviors?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, reach out to someone in the church who might be going through a difficult time. Offer to listen, pray, or help in a practical way.

2. Reflect on areas where you might need care or support. Practice vulnerability by sharing a need with the group or a trusted friend in the church.
3. Make a list of ways you've experienced God's shepherding care in your life. Use this as a guide to extend similar care to others.
4. Practice active listening this week, really seeking to understand others' perspectives and feelings, even if you disagree.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for His pastoral heart and ask for His help in growing in this grace as individuals and as a church community.

Discussion Questions – Jesus the Pastor

How does understanding Jesus as the 'Good Shepherd' impact your view of His care for you personally? How might this perspective change the way you approach challenges in your life?

What are some practical ways we can cultivate a 'pastoral heart' in our daily lives, even if we don't have an official leadership role in the church?

How does sanctification as described in the message relate to our preparation as the Bride of Christ? What might this process look like in your own life?

Pastor Rob mentions that it takes one grace (evangelist) to bring people into the kingdom, but four graces to keep them there. How does this insight change your perspective on discipleship and spiritual growth?

In what ways can we as a church community better embody the idea of 'bearing one another's burdens' as mentioned in Galatians 6:2?

How does the imagery of Jesus as both Bridegroom and Shepherd inform our understanding of His love and leadership in our lives?

The sermon emphasizes the importance of all five ministry gifts working together. How might recognizing and valuing different spiritual gifts strengthen our church community?

What does it mean to you personally to be 'a suitable partner for Christ forever'? How does this calling influence your daily choices and priorities?

How can we cultivate a deeper sense of love and care for one another in our church community, as exemplified by Jesus' pastoral heart?

Scriptures – Jesus the Pastor

Here are the [scripture references](#) mentioned or alluded to in the sermon:

1. Genesis 2:18-24
2. Ephesians 5:22-32
3. Ephesians 4:7, 11-16
4. Psalm 23
5. John 3:2
6. John 10:10-16
7. Jeremiah 3:14-15
8. John 21:15-17 (alluded to, not directly quoted)
9. Numbers 11:11-17
10. John 13:34-35
11. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26
12. Galatians 6:2
13. Luke 11:46
14. Galatians 5:13-14

Additional themes discussed without specific references:

1. The Church as the Bride of Christ (Revelation 19:7-9, 2 Corinthians 11:2)
2. God's love and care for His people (1 Peter 5:7, Isaiah 40:11)
3. The importance of spiritual growth and maturity (Hebrews 5:12-14, 2 Peter 3:18)
4. The five-fold ministry gifts (Ephesians 4:11-13)
5. The body of Christ working together (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27)
6. Bearing one another's burdens (Romans 15:1-2, 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Devotional – Jesus the Pastor

Here's a 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide:

Day 1: The Good Shepherd's Love

Reading: John 10:1-18

Devotional: Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep intimately and lays down His life for them. This powerful image of God's love reminds us that we are never alone or forgotten. Reflect on how Jesus has demonstrated His shepherding love in your life. Where have you felt His guidance, protection, or comfort? Consider how you can respond to His love by listening more closely to His voice and following His lead today.

Day 2: Created for Partnership

Reading: Genesis 2:18-25

Devotional: God created us for intimate relationship - both with Him and with others. Just as Eve was created as a suitable partner for Adam, we are being prepared as the Bride of Christ. How does this perspective change the way you view your relationship with God? Take time to examine your heart. Are there areas where you're holding back from full partnership with Christ? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you open up more fully to God's love and purpose for your life.

Day 3: Transforming Grace

Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33

Devotional: Paul uses the mystery of marriage to illustrate Christ's relationship with the Church. Jesus is working to present us to Himself as a radiant bride, without stain or blemish. This process of sanctification isn't about harsh rules, but about love transforming us from the inside out. Where do you see Christ's transforming work in your life? Thank Him for His patient, purifying love. Ask Him to show you the next step in your journey of becoming more like Him.

Day 4: Bearing One Another's Burdens

Reading: Galatians 6:1-10

Devotional: As members of Christ's body, we're called to care for one another. This passage challenges us to bear each other's burdens, fulfilling the law of Christ. Reflect on your relationships within the church community. Are you aware of others' struggles? How can you practically show Christ's pastoral heart to someone today? Ask God to give you eyes to see needs around you and the courage to step in and help.

Day 5: Abundance in the Valley

Reading: Psalm 23

Devotional: David's famous psalm paints a beautiful picture of God's constant care, even in life's darkest valleys. The Lord doesn't just lead us through difficulties; He prepares a table of abundance right in the presence of our enemies. Where do you need to experience God's

shepherding presence today? Take time to visualize yourself as that sheep, completely trusting in the Shepherd's care. Ask God to deepen your trust in His goodness and to help you rest in His provision, regardless of your circumstances.