

# SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

## “Deliver Us from Evil”

Scripture Reading: MATTHEW 6:13

- ) **SLIDES 1-6.** Bible Jeopardy!
- ) Read today’s Scripture text.
- ) **SLIDE 7.** We are in a sermon series “*Shepherd the Flock.*” I have titled today’s message “*Deliver Us from Evil.*” I’m thinking this will be the final message in this series. We’ll see.
- ) **SLIDE 8.** 1 PETER 5:1-4 instructs the elder (pastor) to shepherd the flock. The man who serves as an elder (pastor, overseer) 1) is WILLING to do so (not HESITANT or RELUCTANT); 2) is eager to SERVE the flock; 3) does not usurp his AUTHORITY over others; 4) does not do this for DISHONEST GAIN (filthy lucre). These are some of the characteristics of the man who shepherds the flock.
- ) But what about the shepherd’s duties? He must care for the people in the congregation. He must care for them physically, but more important is to care for them spiritually.
- ) There are spiritual dangers out there that want to come in here. I will simply define those threats as evil. They have already infiltrated pastors, churches, and denominations which, in turn, have corrupted their gospel impact in society. Today I want to conclude this series with identifying the many forms of evil that the shepherd is responsible for keeping out of the church.
- ) In what we call “*The Lord’s Prayer*” found in MATTHEW 6:9-13 and in LUKE 11:2-4, we are told to pray that the Lord deliver us from evil (or the evil one). “*And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.*” We all know this prayer. Do we also pray that the Lord deliver us from evil within the church?

- ) **SLIDE 9.** The worst form of evil comes in the form of a **FALSE** gospel. There are many other forms of evil that can radically disturb and diminish our walk with Christ. But a false gospel will never lead anyone to Christ. A false gospel will never save anyone. A false gospel damns people to the pits of hell. Paul tells the Galatians in chapter 1:6-9 that if anyone preaches a false gospel, let them be accursed.
- ) There is nothing the enemy loves more than when the shepherd presents a false gospel or any part of the Word of God that is contrary to the truth. And too many unqualified people want to assume the preacher/teacher position. JAMES 3:1 tells us, "*that not many of you should become teachers knowing that we will incur a stricter judgment.*" Explain.
- ) 1PETER 5:1-5 speak about the shepherd shepherding the flock. Just after that that, in verse 8, we are told this: "*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*"
- ) **SLIDE 10.** Satan does not want to **FIGHT** the church; he wants to **JOIN** it. He does his best destruction from **WITHIN**. The enemy wants this church and every other church to self-destruct. And he wants to use me, and he wants to use you to do that. What are some of the other tools beside false teaching does he use to make that happen?
- ) He wants to pit us against each other. He wants us to be upset about issues that are really of no consequence. He wants us to disagree about the color of the carpet, or the paint on the wall, or the size of the parking lot, or the exterior lighting, or issues about the cemetery, or where we get the fried chicken for a church meal, or who helps and who doesn't.
- ) I'm pretty sure you know where I am going with this. Even with Christ as our Savior, our human condition still wants its own way. And we allow the enemy to use trivial issues like these to bring discontent and division into the body.

- ) **SLIDE 11**. When we allow the enemy to devour **ONE** of us, it has the potential for devouring **ALL** of us. GALATIANS 5:15 says this: *“If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”*
- ) Have we asked the Lord to deliver us from evil? Have we asked God to intervene in those times when we feel we just might get ugly with a brother or sister in Christ? And there are times when the shepherd needs to step in and bring us all back on a path of righteousness. Personally, I’d prefer to nip this issue in the bud right now before it ever happens. That’s why I’m speaking this message today.
- ) We have seen the worst kind of evil in the form of a false gospel. We have talked about the evil church people can do to each other if we allow the enemy to take control. So, that’s evil from the pulpit (false gospel), and evil among the people. We have one more direction. And that is evil from the world.
- ) In JOHN 10 verses 1 through 21, Jesus speaks of Himself as the Good Shepherd. It’s one of His seven “I AM” statements. And we can read that text and understand His position as that Good Shepherd.
- ) In verse 12, He speaks about a hired hand. The context of His talk is referencing this *“hired hand”* as someone who does not perform his job correctly. Jesus says the hired hand is not a shepherd, so he leaves and allows the wolf to attack the sheep.
- ) Satan is the author of evil. Right? In JOHN 8:44, Jesus tells us that Satan is the father of lies. Question. Does the world attempt to influence the church with evil? Absolutely! Can the world be the wolf? Absolutely!
- ) Would we agree that if there was evil in this world that the shepherd, the elder, (me) should let you know about that evil? The answer is yes.

- ) If not, then I am just like the hired hand in JOHN 10:12 who leaves when the wolf comes around and leaves the flock unprotected.
- ) That it not what the shepherd has been called to do. The shepherd needs to be able to recognize evil and the shepherd better be able to guard the sheep against it.
- ) As I was growing up, my mother would tell me not to associate with certain other children in the neighborhood because they would be a very bad influence on me. Why? Because she wanted to deliver me from evil. And if you have ever been a parent, you did the exact same thing.
- ) So, what is in the world that I need to caution you on? Well, just about everything. We must be careful when surfing the internet. There are tempting sites out there. We must be careful of the places we visit. Don't go to a bar if you struggle with alcohol. We must be careful at our place of employment. Don't let another man or woman who is not your spouse steal your heart. And whatever you do, show some discernment with what you watch on TV and read in books.
- ) I am going to finish here this morning by going in a direction that some would rather I do not go this morning. But if we are all in agreement that the shepherd must protect the flock from evil, then let me introduce you to one of the biggest evil threats in America today. And that evil is coming from our government and politics.
- ) There was a time in America when politics concerned itself with things like foreign policy, taxation, immigration, healthcare, global defense, the environment, our space program, the military, and whether there is such a thing as global warming or not. But today it has gone far beyond those issues. Today our government is now walking on God's turf. The government is meddling in moral issues and telling us what is right and what is not.

- ) **SLIDE 12.** It is evil when any **GOVERNMENT** system legislates laws contrary to the Word of God. And some of what our government is proliferating is Satanic and pure evil.
- ) The government is telling us that there is no such thing as absolute truth. There is actually a city in Texas who wants to pass legislation that every sermon preached in that city on a Sunday must first be approved by the city council.
- ) The government condones sex outside of marriage by issuing condoms to school children. The government approves and defends the LGBTQ agenda and behavior, and it is a hate crime if we do not comply.
- ) And the government has been telling us since 1973 that abortion is no longer murder. It's a choice and the right of every woman. The government preaches tolerance but are intolerant to Christians and their Bible.
- ) That, my friends, is evil. It, and the people who are behind these matters, must be brought to light. No, I will not be doing any name-calling this morning. And I don't care if they are democrat or republican or something in between.
- ) But we are all educated citizens with the resources to find out who these people are who are behind these evils that go against the Word of God. We, as Christians, cannot support evil and those who condone and promote it.
- ) So, what are we to do? We say the same thing the apostles did in ACTS 5:29. "*We must obey God rather than men.*"
- ) One more. 2COR 11:14 tells us that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. He looks clean. He looks acceptable. He looks inviting. He looks wonderful on the outside. But on the inside, he is the wolf seeking someone to devour.
- ) **SLIDE 13.** Sometimes evil looks so good on the **OUTSIDE.** Beware of the smiling faces. Beware of the wink of an eye. Beware of the smooth talk.

- ) In 1971 there was a song out titled “*Smiling Faces*” by a one-hit wonder group called “*The Undisputed Truth*.” The words go like this:
- ) “*Smiling faces sometimes pretend to be your friend; Smiling faces show no traces of the evil that lurks within; Smiling faces, smiling faces sometimes they don’t tell the truth; Beware, of the handshake that hides the snake; Beware of the pat on the back, it just might hold you back; Jealousy, Misery, Envy I tell you, you can’t see behind smiling faces; Smiling faces sometimes they don’t tell the truth.*” From 1971.
- ) Beware of the many people and the entertaining worship bands. Beware of the promises of a better you or a better life now. Beware of the promised monetary reward for sewing your seed money into that ministry. Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.
- ) Evil. It comes in the form of a false gospel. Evil. It can come in the form of any one of us. Evil. It can be legislated by a government. Evil. Sometimes it looks so good on the outside.
- ) I have been charged as the pastor of this church to shepherd the flock. Beware of evil and where it comes from. Because the devil is out to get me and to get you. We cannot allow him to win. Remember ... there are just certain kids in the neighborhood we shouldn’t be playing with.

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