

Why Sheep Leave the Fold

by Dan Jenkins

God's people were destined for the Babylonian captivity, and the prophet Ezekiel continually reminded them of the consequences of all they were doing. In Ezekiel 34, he shows why some sheep leave the fold.

Many people think of the twenty-third psalm as the "Shepherd's psalm." There is another chapter we could rightly think of as the "shepherds' chapter." Ezekiel 34:1-6 addresses the responsibility of Israel's shepherds—if I were an elder I would read this chapter every month—but it helps us all see why some Christians (sheep) leave the church (fold).

Some sheep leave the fold because they are sick. The cause of the sickness is not given, but people leave the Lord because of personal problems which makes it so hard to grow spiritually. It can so easily happen to new Christians, but it also impacts those who have been in the church for years. That's the nature of sin. It brings sickness and ends with death.

Some leave the fold because they are broken. This is much like those who leave because of sickness, but the word "broken" may indicate a more sudden onset of the "sickness." Jesus described the seed on the stony ground as the person who "...hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet...when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles" (Matt. 13:20-21). Sin is powerful, and it can easily break the spirit of any of us.

Some leave the fold because they are driven away. Every sheep in His flock has a responsibility toward every other sheep. It is so tragic when older Christians' words and actions actually drive people away from the church. Ezekiel described them as those who "...have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns and scattered them abroad" (34:21). While thinking their actions are justified, many Christians come under the judgment of Christ who said, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea" (Mark 9:42).

Some leave because they love goats. While this is not specifically mentioned by Ezekiel, this truth is shown simply by seeing the attraction sin has to those who have returned to the sinful world after their salvation (2 Pet. 2:20). Paul speaks of how evil companions (goats) corrupt the godly. Some are not willing to seek new friends in His fold.

Each of us has a God-given responsibility to the rest of us. Whenever you see a brother or sister beginning to stumble, you cannot sit idly by and watch it happen. We have the great Shepherd who leads us and watches over us, but we must each feel a personal obligation to all of those in His fold.

God of All Blessings

by Tim Dooley

For a basic understanding of the letter to the church at Ephesus one can simply divide the book in half:

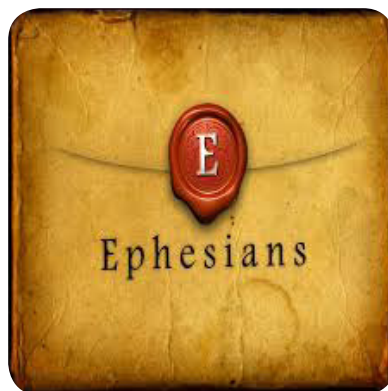
In the first three chapters consider what God has done for you. He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings (1:3); predestined us (1:5); made us acceptable, redeemed, and forgiven (1:6–7); made known to us the mystery of his will (1:9); gave us an inheritance (1:11); made us alive from the dead (2:1); gave us a place to sit with Christ (2:6); brought us near to Him by the blood of Christ (2:13); made us citizens of His kingdom (2:19); and gave us knowledge through the written, inspired word (3:4).

In chapters four through six Paul then enumerates what our response to God's love should be. We

should walk worthy of our calling (4:1); keep the unity of the Spirit (4:3); put off the old man and put on the new man (4:22–24); work to give in serving those

in need (4:28); be kind (4:32); have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (5:6–12); be understanding of God's will and be filled with the Spirit (5:15–18); be thankful and submissive (5:20–21); and conduct ourselves as faithful Christians in every earthly relationship (5:21–6:9).

Finally brethren, be strong and put on the whole armor of God. Considering what God has done for you, how should you respond to Him?



How Great is Your Love?

by Tim Dooley

We hear a lot about the greatest command. We sing about it, pray about it, preach about it, but it seems that few Christians really practice it. Selfishness, envy, pride, arrogance, anger, hatred, vengeance, laziness, and indifference abound...sadly, even in the Lord's church!

Paul warns those who have been grafted into the vine to not be high minded and think that they can't also be removed (Romans 11). The Spirit also reminds us that we need to not think of our-selves more highly than we ought to think, but to be living sacrifices. This takes a transformation of our minds from worldliness to godliness (Romans 12:1–3).

Paul wanted all men to be saved and if that meant he would be lost so they all would be saved, then so

be it (Romans 9:3). Shouldn't we love each other that much? Thanks be to God that he loved us that much! Thanks be to God that Christ paid the price for our sins so that all could be saved. What a sobering thought to behold "the goodness and severity of God" (Romans 11:22).



Let each of us love good, hate evil, be kind, be busy, be joyful, be patient, pray, give, be hospitable, bless, and overcome evil with good. Humble

yourself and be a servant to God and others, no matter who they are! Being a Christian and going to heaven is not a passive pursuit. Be active, be loving, and be faithful!

Correspondence/Encouragement

Inmate Correspondence:

Zachory Cabano #01886823

Beto Unit
1391 FM 3328
Tennessee Colony, TX 75880

Caleb Ivie #01946171

Hutchins Unit
1500 E. Langdon Rd.
Dallas, TX 75241

Paul Jones #01934698

Roach Unit
15845 FM 164
Childress, TX 79201

Missions Correspondence:

Cherokee Home for Children

Director: Delton McGuire
PO Box 295
Cherokee, TX 76832
Email: chc@centex.net

New Zealand Harvest Missions

James & Emily Cammock
PO Box 412
Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand
Email: church-of-christ-cammock@hotmail.com

La Poynor Prison Ministry

Steve & Carrie Handley
11353 CR 4345
La Rue, TX 75770
Email: shandley56@gmail.com

WVBS Online School

Director: Russell Haffner
25 Lantana Ln.
Maxwell, TX 78656
Website: school.wvbs.org

Southwest School of Bible Studies:

Corey Tackett (1st Year Student)

1215 W. Slaughter Ln. #1424
Austin, TX 78748

Encouragement:

James & Yvonne Ainsworth Neta Marshall

100 E. Jonquil Ave.
McAllen, TX 78501

Aline Barrett

296 FM 2555
Corsicana, TX 75110

Don & Shirley Bowen

1100 Woodcastle
Corsicana, TX 75110

Melba & Eleanor Bower

2011 Fairfax
Corsicana, TX 75110

Wanda Brown

3002 W. 2nd Ave. #206
Corsicana, TX 75110

Joann Chambers

3002 W. 2nd Ave. #400
Corsicana, TX 75110

Mary Crews

3002 W. 2nd Ave. #514
Corsicana, TX 75110

Gayle & Christine Garner

915 N. 26th St.
Corsicana, TX 75110

Meagan Gould

800 Medinah
Corsicana, TX 75110

Paul Loosier

3210 W. Hwy 22 #211
Corsicana, TX 75110

1308 Woodland Ct.
Allen, TX 75002

Thelma Martin

1201 Ficklin Circle
Corsicana, TX 75110

Bud & Barbara Moore

441 NWCR 2160
Barry, TX 75102

Ruth Moore

213 W. Grady St.
Blooming Grove, TX 76626

James & Martha Olsen

1613 Woodcrest
Corsicana, TX 75110

Amy Parrish

770 FM 55
Barry, TX 75102

Jewel Rutherford

3004 W. 2nd Ave. #623
Corsicana, TX 75110

Lynn & Melissa Webster

2909 W. 4th Ave.
Corsicana, TX 75110

Pat Wheat

328 Wesley
Corsicana, TX 75110

Louis & Patty Williams

1201 Ficklin Circle
Corsicana, TX 75110

Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org

House to House, Heart to Heart

In Search of the Lord's Way

Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies

The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv

WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

Four Seas Bible College, Singapore - Peter & Pooi Fun Chin

New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

Leadership

Elders

Percell Milton - 903.673.1819

Paul Slaughter - 903.872.1228

Paul Stewart - 903.872.3464

Darwin Thomas - 903.695.0176

Deacons

James Ainsworth - 903.872.1390

Scott Barham - 903.641.0133

David Baumgartner - 903.654.4057

Zach Drain - 903.521.6055

Dan Gibson - 903.641.9587

Joshua Haden - 903.602.9645

Micah Haden - 903.673.1177

James Horn - 903.599.9114

Michael Jones - 214.803.5984

Roy McCullough - 903.872.2069

Greg Olsen - 903.654.1406

James Olsen - 903.874.8918

Rusty Owens - 903.695.0095

Billy Roughton - 903.654.4032

Dickie Russell - 903.874.4457

David Shastid - 903.257.6464

Brent Stewart - 903.641.9052

Justin Williams - 903.875.8288

Ministers

Sam Dilbeck - 903.229.8415 (Pulpit)

Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)

Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Yvonne Ainsworth had knee surgery last Tuesday. They are in McAllen with their daughter. Address is on page 3.

James Olsen's knee replacement surgery went well. He is recovering in room 216 at Navarro Regional.

Amy Parrish has been suffering complications from diabetes. Please, keep her in your prayers.

Continue to Remember: James Ainsworth, Gayle Garner, Velma McDougald, Bud Moore, Henry & Eula Parrish, Patty Williams, Johnny Fullbright, Meagan Gould, Connie Ivie, Iris Ramsey

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart

Announcements

5th Sunday Today! Everyone is invited to stay for a meal and fellowship followed by our second service, led by the young men. No 6:00 PM service.

SYS Here this Tuesday at 7:00. Everyone is invited to join with us and area youth groups as we worship God together and enjoy a time of fellowship afterward.

We Need Cookies & Brownies for Tuesday night! We're expecting approximately 500 people. Please sign up at the back if you plan to bring some.

We Need Help setting up for the Summer Youth Series. Anyone who can help set up tables & chairs and prep food is welcome to help us out Monday evening around 6:30.

Discipleship University is this weekend, Aug. 5-6. Register online and sign up at the back.

Our Benevolence Program is providing school supplies to families in need this year. We are excited to be able to help families from **two schools** this time, Carroll Elementary & Navarro Elementary. If you'd like to join us August 13 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm to meet the families we are assisting, we would love to have you. (All supplies have been taken care of, no donations needed.)

There is Still One Room (4 spaces) Available for our yearly ladies retreat at Summers Mill in Belton September 23-24. Cost is \$65, and the t-shirt (optional, but always cute) will be \$12. See Lanette

Stewart, Vicki Ivy, Lee Owens or Julie Dilbeck to sign up. **Payment is due to Lanette ASAP!**

Save the Date! Back to School Promotion Weekend starts Saturday afternoon, September 3rd, at the church building. Youth (6th-12th grades) will be hosted in members' homes overnight. This weekend is designed to welcome incoming 6th graders to the youth group and start the 2016-2017 school year off right!

Save the Date! Fall Lectureship - October 9-12

Birthdays This Week

- August 2 - Kailey Kinkade, Ann Wylie
- August 3 - Charlette Stewart
- August 4 - Amy Haden
- August 5 - Ellen Earles
- August 6 - David Shastid

Next Week's Adult Class

The Crucifixion
(Mat. 26:2-27, 38; Mark 15:24-38; Luke 23:32-46; John 19:16-30)

Records for July 24, 2016

Bible Class	158
AM Worship.....	227
PM Worship	144
Wednesday	146
Contribution	\$7,481.75

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	Leadership Initiative
Opening Prayer	Leadership Initiative
Communion Leader	Leadership Initiative
Communion Servers	Leadership Initiative
Closing Prayer	Leadership Initiative
Nursery	Brenda Sosa & Charlotte Weaver
Security	Mike Drain, Zach Drain, Billy Roughton
PM Song Leader	Young Men
PM Opening Prayer	Young Men
PM Closing Prayer	Young Men
Wed. Song Leader	Jimmy Horn
Wed. Summer Series Speaker	Carl McCann
August Contact Elder	Paul Stewart - 903.872.3464