

SHEPHERD THEOLOGY



Much of the original research and writing of this course took place in 1992. I had been living in London, England for several years as a missionary when I received word from a church in Florida that they would no longer be able to send me their regular monthly monetary support. I was already living on a very low income, so this was of some concern. A few days later I was meeting for prayer and discipleship with Sucha, a young convert from the Sikh religion. I shared with him about the lost support from Florida but told him that somehow God would provide for me. Within a few minutes a phone rang in the church hall which Sucha went to answer. He then informed me that a Dr. Browne would like to speak with me. Although I did not know Dr. Browne, I would soon find out why he had phoned me on this Wednesday afternoon. He asked me if I would be willing to teach a course on Pastoral Theology at a Bible School on the other side of London. He informed me that the course would start the following Monday and that I would have to write my own course material. Although it seemed to be quite a challenge, it seemed that this was a divine assignment from God that I must accept. Over the next four days and well into the nights I searched the whole Bible for teachings about shepherds and sheep.

Little did I know that this experience would open more opportunities for me to teach several other courses, and two years later I was asked to write several correspondence courses. That would be a great catalyst which launched me into a **ministry of writing** many years later which has now led to our website of **jesusreigns.net** which began in February 2021. While in India for 3 months in 1998 teaching at a new Bible School, God inspired me to do more writing, based on the fact that the apostle Paul's most lasting ministry was not his sermons but the letters that he wrote, for they have inspired the church for nearly 2000 years. The following messages are an updated version of my original course on Pastoral / Shepherd Theology.

Theology is the study of God. It is about a God who believes in **relationships** for He is a **God of love**. Throughout the Bible we see His relationship to mankind in various ways. **Creator** /creature, **Potter** / clay, **Captain** / army, **Vine** / branch, **Bridegroom** / bride, **Head** /body, **Husbandmen** / vineyard, **Father** / child, **Master** / servant, **Teacher** / disciple, **Shepherd** / sheep. The latter analogy is a term of warmth, love, care and tenderness.

Down through history church leaders have been described as ministers, preachers, priests, fathers or pastors, which is best described by the word shepherd. Any of our theology should always remain Christ-centered, since He is the best revelation of God to mankind. All teachings must pass through the Jesus filter, otherwise it may become distorted or unbalanced. Jesus has been described in many ways, but one of the most beloved is as shepherd.

- **The Good Shepherd** - John 10:11, 14 (there have been many bad shepherds in the church)
 - **The Great Shepherd** of the sheep - Hebrews 13:20 (Jesus is the only 'great one')
 - **The Chief Shepherd** - 1 Peter 5:4 (Jesus must always have priority over all others)
- (to be continued in future messages)