

# Gentle Leadership Versus Wounded Sheep

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*Isaiah 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*

*Jeremiah 10:21 For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.*

The difficulty for the sheep when any of us shepherds wound them is the dilemma of having received so much good from us and yet to be treated by the very same leader in an inconsiderate manner. Having to drink both bitter and sweet water from the same fountain is both unpredictable and exhausting. The two antithetic behaviours thoroughly confuse the sheep as to the nature of God and what course of action they should take: Loving the leader on the one hand for all the good they have received from him or her, yet needing to take action on the other, to disconnect from repetitive cycles of abuse. The sheep feel that they are in a Catch-22 when this happens. Plus they feel divided between their loyalty to the people versus their loyalty to the shepherd. To divorce a church from oneself is to go through two divorces at minimum, one from your pastor, and one from your friends. The sheep feel these things more than us shepherds realize, and they don't like to be put in this position... by anyone! Most sheep will only tolerate being put in this position once or twice in their lifetime before they finally decide that the risk of pain is too high. They vow to never darken the doors of a local church again. This is a tragedy; but it happens everyday. God help us all as leaders to represent Him accurately and consistently... this will take a deep continuous work of the Spirit.

**Prayer:** O God, help us to feed our flocks like a shepherd, to gather the lambs in our arms and to carry them in our bosoms and to GENTLY lead those that are with young. Please, Lord, help us be considerate of others, kind, winsome, compassionate, merciful, and gracious. Please, Lord do a thorough work in our hearts, that will prevent us from burning the sheep, the very people who You have entrusted to our care. And please, Lord, we beg You to get our attention when we are on the brink of yielding to our flesh; confront us, correct us and calm us. Father, please give us our own personal experiences and Divine dealings that will keep us submissive, humble, broken, soft, and gentle! Lord do whatever it takes to keep us tender. In Jesus name!