

THE *Good Shepherd's Heart*

LIVING PARABLES

The Voice of My Beloved Ministry Publication



Welcome back to the The Good Shepherd's Heart: Living Parables!

These parables are an account of my real life encounters with the Good Shepherd, which are by His divine design, and contain the heavenly jewels of revelation, wisdom and priceless lessons in leadership and stewardship that He has graciously taught me. These encounters take place on the countless prayer walks we have done, walking the beautiful farmland and coastal shores in County Kerry. They are what I call Living Parables where the Master Teacher has me walk something out in the natural, then makes me very aware He is there to teach me a spiritual lesson, wanting me to see another facet of His beautiful Good Shepherd's heart. The parables began soon after I arrived in Ireland in late September 2015.

It is my humblest honor to share the Good Shepherd's heart with you. I pray these accountings will bless you, strengthen you and encourage you as you run to finish the race that is set before you. May You hear the Good Shepherd's voice calling you closer to His bosom wanting to strengthen and restore you!

In His loving Mercy,

Tracy Hogan



Living Parable: There Is No Fear In Love!



It was another beautiful spring morning walking the hills of Kerry with the Lover of my soul. I was deep in thought and prayer as I approached a familiar sheep pen that was on my right. It was one that I had passed many times before. As I got closer I noticed the sheep were at ease – meaning they were not startled by my approach and did not move away. Some were lying down; others were grazing near the fence that separated us by just a few feet.

I stopped for a moment to greet them with my usual greeting, “Kisses right between the eyeballs and hugs forever to each and every one of you seen and unseen.” As I stood there, enjoying their beauty, glancing around their field I observed that some seemed quite comfortable lying against a large rock, others were content to graze either by themselves or in groups of two or three. Some faced the road that I was on, while others had their back to it. But all seemed content and at peace, not bothered by me in the least, even though I was quite close to them.

One ewe, in particular, caught my attention and I would speak loving, kind words of affection to her. The more I spoke, the more her gaze became fixed on me as she stood across from me. After a few moments, some of the other sheep stopped what they were doing and were now staring at me. They amused me – I had not encountered this before. So I told them all how beautiful and special they were and how much the Lord loved them for He created them. I marveled at the beauty of each one and how uniquely different He had made them, so different, yet still from the same flock.

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I continued to stand there speaking loving words to them. The more I spoke, the more intently they seemed to gaze at me. Soon, even the sheep that were quite comfortable lying down, and the ones that had their backs to me, were now gazing at me. I marveled and could not understand

what was going on! They had now surely gotten my attention – taking my heart hostage!

I did not want to leave them. Everywhere I looked I saw these beautiful eyes gazing into mine, watching my every move – making me feel like I was the most exciting and important being on earth, which I knew I was surely not! I could have cried! I felt so loved and honored by them. Their undivided attention made me feel so special. And, it was not feeding time, nor did I have anything to offer them but love!

I cannot explain in words what was being released into the atmosphere all around me in these given moments. I know that may sound crazy to some – how can sheep in a field make someone feel loved, honored and so special? But that was what was being released tangibly into the atmosphere around me and what my heart was absorbing. I was overwhelmed by what I was feeling and could not stop the tears that were quickly welling up in my eyes.

It caused me to cry out to them all saying, “I feel so loved and honored by you. You make me feel so special.” I stood there looking at each and every one of them – my eyes meeting their gaze. There was nothing in me that wanted to leave them. They had melted my heart and I just wanted to stay with them forever, giving them hugs and kisses! How could I tear myself away from them? My heart was torn to leave but time could delay no more and we had to part ways.

It was hard to turn away and continue on without them – nothing in me wanted to. It was in that moment that the Good Shepherd started speaking to me. Making me aware He was there with me allowing my heart to feel His ever so noble heart of love that He has towards His own.

There is no fear in love. He is the Good Shepherd – His perfect love casts out all fear. When His sheep have matured in love, they do not fear Him, they are not afraid to let Him get close, no matter how intimate it may feel. In that place of love that is matured, our gaze meets His – gaze for gaze. We are no longer afraid to gaze upon the Lover of our soul no matter how inadequate, broken or weak we may feel. We no longer run from Him, or try to keep a comfortable distance between us.

Instead, we do not fear His gaze upon us – His scrutiny into every detail of our lives, correcting and perfecting those things that concern Him and us, no matter how painful it can seem to us at times. That perfect love causes us to run to Him even faster with our gaze solely upon Him, His every word – His every move, even more intently. For we learn to trust in His ability to prevent us from stumbling, to present us blameless before the presence of His glory in triumph joy.

When our gaze is solely upon the Good Shepherd, where He has our undivided attention – meaning no other lovers but Him, we need to know it stops our Bridegroom King right in His tracks! Our undivided heart gets His attention and melts His heart. It makes Him feel so loved, honored and special as He alone deserves. When in that place there is nothing that can cause His heart to move away from us. Instead, we get to feel how deep His love is and the joy our relationship brings Him.

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In that position of love – that place of intimacy, when our eyes meet His gaze, it captivates His high and lofty, noble heart bringing Him great joy! Causing Him to want to shower us with His love and affection, reassuring us of the peace and security that can only be found in an intimate relationship with Him. We feel His fiery, burning, jealous love calling us deeper into His eternal plans and purposes. We feel the Good Shepherd's heart not wanting to move on without us! He sees our end. He says it is good, very good, if we will let Him take our ashes and make beauty out of them.

When we face seasons of heartache and afflictions, if we stay in that position of love, becoming perfected in love – being conformed to His character in our words, thoughts and deeds – no matter what our eyes see or our flesh may feel, we will feel the heat of His gaze leading and guiding us in the way we are to go. He will gird us with strength and make our way perfect.

Beloved if that is you – feeling pressed, shaken in ways that are making you feel uncomfortable, suffering losses that seem unbearable, be of good cheer and know that the Lover of your soul is fighting for you! No one cares more about your destiny being fulfilled than our Great King. Keep your gaze upon Him. Abide in love. And be encouraged, in that place of suffering, a transformation is taking place. For our suffering was always meant to transform us until

Christ is completely conformed within us. Why? So He can qualify us to be the Overcomer – the Bride of Messiah.

And to His Bride, He will be faithful to provide every access, provision and protection that she needs to navigate the dark days that are only getting darker. She will be filled with His glory and clothed with His Light pushing back the darkness, so that His Kingdom can come and His will be done in the nations. The Bride of Messiah maturing in love is the Lord's answer for the difficult days that are coming. Those who will rule and reign with Him over all of creation for all of eternity.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart [1 John 4:18, Jeremiah 29:13].
AMEN!



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