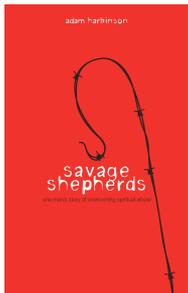




## PRESS RELEASE

### 'When you leave, they kill you.'

Adam Harbinson's shocking new book, *Savage Shepherds*, is the story of one family's bruising encounter with a heavy shepherding church of the 1980s. When he finally decided to take his family out of the church, he was warned 'When you leave, they kill you.' **This book has already been withdrawn from a major conference in Northern Ireland following protests from members of the church that so damaged Adam and his family.**



Adam Harbinson had a reputation as a hard-nosed, hard-drinking businessman before he was dramatically touched by the Holy Spirit. Immediately, he left behind a life of alcohol, partying and adultery and joined a Christian group, and looked forward to a new start with his wife and young family.

However, this Christian testimony is different. Adam was to encounter problems within his church that would exceed any difficulties he'd ever faced on the outside. Over the next few years he was to suffer abuse of a most serious kind – spiritual abuse.

*Savage Shepherds* (ISBN: 978-1-86024-574-9, price: £7.99) tells the story of Adam's shocking experiences at the hands of a church belonging to the Shepherding Movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Under this system, church members were controlled by a rigid hierarchy of leaders (the shepherds) who directed every aspect of their lives. Thinking for yourself was not only discouraged, it was almost seen as blasphemous.

Adam and his family initially reveled in the new life his church offered. However, he became uneasy with the hierarchical and authoritarian structure of the church. Shepherds controlled nearly every aspect in the lives of their 'sheep', with some sheep expected to tend their shepherd's garden or cancel their own plans to offer childcare. One man was forced out of the church when he refused to give up a successful business to take up commission-only sales work within his shepherd's company. But despite his misgivings, for a long time Adam felt unable to leave, knowing that these men had been praying for him while he led a life of excess.

When he finally decided to confront the shepherds, he was rebuked strongly and labelled a rebel. But eventually, Adam was invited to become a shepherd himself. However, he stunned the leadership by announcing his intention to leave. A concerted attempt began to persuade him to stay, and ominously, a friend gave him a stark warning: "When you leave, they kill you." Church members began to delve into his financial services business, and Adam was investigated by the police. As his clients drifted away, he was forced into bankruptcy. The relentless witch-hunt plunged his life into deep crisis.

However, Adam had found a deeper relationship with God, and began to rebuild his life. Eventually he decided that he needed to truly eradicate his fear. Adam revisited the community that had treated him so badly twelve years previously, and amazingly found the strength to win his struggle to forgive his abusers.

Adam ends the book with advice for those who may be suffering spiritual abuse, and tell-tale signs that may indicate abuse. Now a Christian writer, broadcaster and editor of the [www.faith4life.com](http://www.faith4life.com) web site, Adam's story reminds us that despite evil in the world, God's love is extravagant, and can heal us in even the most extreme of circumstances.

**Editor's Notes:** Adam Harbinson is available for interview. To arrange, please contact Adam on 07841 297 153

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