

The Good Shepherd (Part 1)

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John 10:1-10

May 7, 2023

Jesus says in John 10:11 – [11] *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

- This is one of those GREAT “I AM” statements.
- Jesus is IDENTIFIED with YAHWEH HIMSELF.
- Yahweh is the SHEPHERD of ISRAEL.
- Psalm 23:1 – [1] *The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.*
- Isaiah 53:6 – [6] *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

To understand the GOOD SHEPHERD, you MUST understand the IMMEDIATE context. That is JOHN 9.

John teaches us the QUALITIES of “The GOOD SHEPHERD.”

1) The Legitimate Shepherd

John 10:1 – [1] *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.”*

- The Sheepfold represents ISRAEL. Verse 16.
- Rom 9:4 – [4] *and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.*
- However, the Pharisees of the DAY. The ones that Jesus is speaking to.... “Truly, truly, I say to you”
- They had come into ISRAEL ILLIGITIMAGELY.
 - The THIEF – STEALS.
 - The ROBBER – SOMEONE who steals VIOLENTLY.
 - The PHARISEES steal the SOULS of MEN. They do violence do men’s souls.
- Jesus says that the CREPT in over the WALL.
 - Jude 4 – [4] *For certain people have crept in unnoticed...*
- That’s what the Pharisees had done in ISRAEL. They had crept in illegitimately outside the WORD of GOD.

John 10:2 – [2] *“But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.”*

- The DOOR symbolizes the requirements of the OT SCRIPTURES.
- A. W. Pink – Christ presented Himself to Israel in a lawful manner, that is in strict accord with the Holy Scriptures.
 - He Fulfilled the OT Law.
 - He Fulfilled the OT Types.
 - He Fulfilled the OT Prophecies.
- John 5:39 – [39] *You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness about me.*

- Luke 24:27 – [27] *And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

John 10:3 – [3] *“To him the gatekeeper opens.”*

- Gatekeeper (means a ‘porter’ – the ‘keeper of the door.’).
- John the Baptist was the FORERUNNER of the MESSIAH.
- He was sent to prepare the way for the MESSIAH. So all of ISRAEL would know who the MESSIAH was.
- John 1:29 – [29] *Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. [30] This is he of whom I said, “After me come a man who ranks before me because he was before me.” I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”*
- John the Baptist’s mission was to reveal the MESSIAH.
- *The Good Shepherd is the Legitimate Shepherd.*

2) The Pursuing Shepherd

10:3b – [3b] *The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.”*

- JESUS came to HIS SHEEP in Israel.
- His own SHEEP by name. And He calls them out of the institution of Israel. Out of the sacrificial system. Out of the Old Testament ritual... out of the dietary laws and feasts.
- And into the Kingdom of God.
- But He only CALLS a REMNANT.
- This is the doctrine of the EFFECTUAL CALL.
 - The effectual call is the inward, spiritual call of the sheep that brings them from unbelief to faith.
 - Sproul – “The effectual call of God is an inward call. It is the secret work of quickening or regeneration accomplished in the souls of the elect by the immediate supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit. It effects or works the inward change of the disposition, inclination, and desire of the soul.”

But notice something else. *The sheep don’t start becoming sheep when Christ calls them. Christ calls them by name because they are His SHEEP.*

This is the doctrine of *sovereign election*. If you are a SHEEP, it’s because God chose and appointed you to be a sheep.

- The doctrine of *sovereign election* - the doctrine that God the Father sovereignly chose His sheep for salvation before the foundation of the world. He chooses not on the basis of foreseen merit but on the basis of His mercy and grace.
- John 15:16 – [16] *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit.*
- When did God choose you to be a sheep? Eph 1:4, 5 – [4] *even as he chose us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love [5] he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of His glorious grace.*
- Christ preached to everyone, but it is only the sheep who respond.
 - Look @ verse 26 – [26] *you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. [27] My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*

- This means that you cannot boast that you are a SHEEP.
- No BOASTING.
 - 1 Corinthians 1:26 – [26] *For consider you calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. [27] But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; [28] God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, [29] so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.*
 - You can't boast if YOU ARE a SHEEP, because GOD CHOSE YOU and GOD CALLED YOU.

3) The Leading Shepherd

10:4 – [4] *When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*

- In ancient times in the East, shepherds would not drive the sheep from the rear, they would lead them from the front.
- LEAD by CALLING the sheep with their voices.
- Christ LEADS His SHEEP by CALLING them with the WORD of GOD.
 - Psalm 119:60 – [60] *I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments.*
 - Psalm 119:47 – [47] *for I find my delight in your commandments, which I love.*
- What the LORD does, throughout the entire LIFE of a BELIEVER is that He calls them and beckons them through the WORD of GOD.
 - Hebrews 4:12 – [12] *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

10:5 – [5] *A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”*

- The true Christian will ultimately flee from IMPOSTERS and FALSE teachers.
- They don't recognize the voice of STRANGERS.
- Sheep know when they hear a STRANGERS voice.

10:6 – [6] *This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.*

- Surely they would have recognized the symbolism of the Shepherd Imagery.
- How could they not remember that God is the SHEPHERD of His People.
- What probably confused them is the remnant theology... that God only brings out a remnant of Israel.
 - Amos 5:15 – [15] *it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.*
 - Micah 2:12 – [12] *I will gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like a sheep in a fold, like a flock in pasture.*

4) The Exclusive Shepherd

10:7 – [7] *So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.*

- He switches METAPHORS so that the Pharisees can understand what he's saying.

- Jesus is the exclusive way of SALVATION to the SHEEP.
- John 14:6 – [6] *I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*
 - Ephesians 2:18 – [18] *For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.*
- But this is what true Christians come to understand.
- John 1:16 – [16] *For from His fullness we have all received grace upon grace.*

And the sheep know it. 10:8 – [8] *All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.*

- Jesus is talking not about the Prophets. Not about John the Baptist...
- He's talking about the religion of the Pharisees.
 - The sheep don't listen to the thieves and robbers.
 - Luther – “These thieves and robbers form at all times the great majority of the world.”
 - Isaiah 56:11 – [11] *The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough; But they are shepherds with no understanding; they have all turned to their own way; each to his own gain one and all.*
 - The false teachers are about their own WEALTH. Their own GAIN. Not the well-being of the SHEEP.

5) The Saving Shepherd

10:9 – [9] *I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.*

- This is a one-verse SUMMARY of CHRISTIANITY.
- Jesus says those sheep who enter through Him will be “SAVED”
- Here he is speaking in terms of salvation.
 - John 3:16 – [16] *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal LIFE.*
 - Once you are SAVED, can you stop being SAVED.
- He will go in and out and find pasture.
 - That's the LIFE of the CHRISTIAN. You live with the freedom.
 - Galatians 5:1 – [1] *For freedom Christ has set us free.*

6) The Life-Giving Shepherd

10:10 – [10] *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

- The end result is completely different.
- The DANGER was in the damning LEGALISM of the PHARISEES.
- LEGALISM is deadly.
- It is SUFFOCATING.
 - Christ came to free us from PERFORMANCE religion.
 - We obey His laws from the HEART. But we don't obey to EARN salvation.
- Christ CAME that we may have LIFE. And not just LIFE. But *perissos*.
 - An extraordinary life. An extravagant life. The BEST LIFE.
 - The CHRISTIAN LIFE is the best life.