

# The Gospel of John

## I Am the Good Shepherd

### John 10:11-21

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

In our text this morning Jesus explains how He fulfills the identity of the Good Shepherd prophesied in Ezekiel 34, the Good Shepherd that God Himself would send.

Jesus used this figure of speech because the religious leaders of Israel were known as the "shepherds" of Israel, but Jesus makes it clear that they were actually false shepherds. He distinguishes the false leaders from Himself. He is the True Shepherd of the sheep. They were spiritually blind to the truth of God. They couldn't lead anybody anywhere because they couldn't see where they were going themselves. They are hirelings, hired hands who do what they do for money and have no concern for the sheep. They are thieves, they are robbers who want to fleece and kill.

The false leaders were only concerned in protecting themselves. They are not about to risk their lives for the sheep. They want the money, and if need be, they will become thieves and robbers to get it. They are strangers, not shepherds. The true shepherd, however, is described here as one who loves and cares for and nourishes his sheep. He loved them so much that He even dies for the sheep. And that, of course, is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **All Stand and Read Scripture**

#### **John 10:11-21 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters *them*. <sup>13</sup> *He flees* because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, <sup>15</sup> even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup> No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

<sup>19</sup> A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. <sup>20</sup> Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" <sup>21</sup> Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"

## Prayer

This shepherd, the good one, is marked by three particular ministries to His sheep.

1. He dies for them.
2. He loves them.
3. He unites them.

## BODY:

### **I. THE GOOD SHEPHERD DIES FOR HIS SHEEP.**

#### **John 10:11-13 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters *them*. <sup>13</sup> *He flees* because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.

As opposed to the Pharisees, whom Jesus also calls "thieves and robbers", Jesus owns the sheep. In **verse 14**, Jesus says, " **I know My own and My own know Me**". These are the bought and paid for sheep. They are **His** flock.

Jesus purchased the church (His sheep) with His own precious blood. In contrast, Jesus is warning that the other shepherds are the "hirelings". They would say, "Are you kidding, I am not messing around with any danger. I am not risking **MY** life for a mangy bunch of sheep. They are not even mine."

Why did He voluntarily lay down His soul? He did it for the benefit of the sheep. From a natural standpoint, if this happened to the shepherd, that's the end of the sheep. If something is coming after the sheep and kills the shepherd, the sheep are going to be in serious danger. They are likely to be scattered and killed. Whether it's an animal or a robber or a thief, the death of the shepherd could really spell the end of the sheep.

But this shepherd? No!

Although Jesus laid down His life for the sheep, **verse 18** says He had the power to do what? "**Take it up again.**" And on the third day, He came out of the grave and re-gathered His scattered sheep. Were they scattered? Yeah, they were. Zechariah promised that if you smite the shepherd, the sheep will scatter. But Jesus came back from the grave and re-gathered them, and He said this:

#### **John 6:39 (NASB)**

<sup>39</sup> **This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.**

The true shepherd cares about the sheep. It is not a job for him. It is his very life. He has developed relationships with those sheep. They are known to him. They are loved by him.

The sheep become victims of anyone who is not the owner of the sheep. They make no attempt to gather the scattered sheep. The flock of God world has always been attacked by these false leaders who fleece and destroy the sheep, and who flee when real trouble comes.

And who is the wolf? The wolf is anything that attacks the sheep. There have been many false pastors and false teachers throughout history.

### **Matthew 7:22-23 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'

## **II. THE GOOD SHEPHERD LOVES HIS SHEEP.**

The second characteristic of the shepherd's relationship to the sheep is: He loves His sheep.

### **John 10:14-15 (NASB)**

<sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, <sup>15</sup> even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

You might ask, where do you get love? The word is "know". It is used four times. Let me give you a hint. **Verse 14:** " I know My own and My own know Me". **Verse 15:** " the Father knows Me and I know the Father". Then look at verse 17.

### **John 10:17 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father **loves** Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.

The word "know" here has the idea of a loving relationship.

### **John 14:21 (NASB)**

<sup>21</sup> He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

So when you see the word "know" in this context, it's the idea of loving, intimate relationship.

**John 3:16** says, "For God so loved the world that He" - What? - "gave His only begotten Son." That is why the Father gave the Son; that is why the Son gave His life. He loves His sheep.

The individual sheep in a flock all look alike to the untrained eye. A good shepherd, however, can tell them apart--often because of their defects and peculiar traits.

It is amazing that after thousands of years since man was created and after nearly two thousand years since the church was started on the day of Pentecost, Jesus knows ALL of His sheep. He knows them by name. [I can't even remember the names of everyone who attends here.](#) He knows them intimately. He knows every strength and every weakness.

He knows every joy and every burden. He knows every mountain and every valley. He knows every victory and every battle and He stands ready to help you in your times of need.

I am sure that all of us have some pretty nasty skeletons in our closet. We don't even want to think about them, let alone, have others know about them. But Jesus knows everything about you. We couldn't hide our sins from Him even if we wanted to. And here is the amazing thing: He still LOVES you! He **loves** you so much that He **willingly** died for you and carried off all of your nasty skeletons so you could have your relationship with God restored and become one of His sheep! Jesus is watching over you ensuring your well being. The relationship that we have with Him is a personal one. This is the picture that we have of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. This picture is in stark contrast to the false shepherds who are proclaiming a message other than the truth of Jesus.

### **III. THE GOOD SHEPHERD UNITES HIS SHEEP.**

Christ's love for His sheep leads to a third aspect of the relationship. He unites the sheep. First with Himself, and then with each other.

#### **John 10:16 (NASB)**

**<sup>16</sup> I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd.**

The fold in verse 1 is Israel. Jesus came to Israel (the Jews) first, but, He also has sheep which are not of the fold of Israel. I have to bring them also.

Who are they? They are Non-Jews. Anybody outside Israel. The Gentiles, the nations. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would bring salvation to the nations.

#### **Isaiah 49:6 (NASB)**

**<sup>6</sup> He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."**

That is why Jesus gave the disciples and us the Great Commission.

#### **Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)**

**<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

Here, we can again, shout "THANK YOU JESUS FOR INCLUDING ME"! In addition to the lost sheep of Israel, there is the whole world of the Gentiles. (Men, women, boys and girls, every tribe and every nation, every language and tongue on this earth).

We have **all** been included in God's plan of salvation. That is GOOD NEWS for you and for me! The gathering of His flock also includes us! Jesus knows each and every sheep that will ultimately be in His fold. He **MUST** make sure that they are gathered. It is a must because such helpless, stubborn, foolish, and sinful sheep as we are would never

make our way to Him unless we were gathered. We know this about ourselves. "All we like sheep will go astray".

### **Galatians 3:28-29 (NASB)**

<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

### **John 10:17-18 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup> No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

Jesus is beginning to speak more and more about His coming death on the cross. This will not be a tragedy! The cross was not an unfortunate incident that happened. NO! It was a commitment. It was a work of **love** on Jesus' part.

The blessing, of course, is that unlike when the earthly shepherd who is killed and leaves the sheep to fend for themselves and then face their own certain death, Christ's death was not the end. Jesus was going to follow His death with His resurrection.

This is why Jesus is the Good Shepherd. It should be understood that Jesus is **THE** good shepherd, not simply **A** good shepherd. No other religious leader has ever risen from the dead. They are still buried in the ground. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead required divine intervention from God, His Father.

Jesus also revealed His resurrection to His disciples and many others before His death, so that when He DID rise from the dead, they would remember what He had told them and have full assurance that He was Who He claimed to be. The Son of God, the prophesied Messiah, our Lord and Savior, the "Good Shepherd".

Christ could have chosen not to give His life for us. But He was here to do the Father's will and His Father's will was that He would "Seek and to Save those who are lost". Jesus gave His life willingly. His death was not just a tragic accident. No one could have taken His life without His consent. As the song goes "He could have called ten thousand angels, but He died alone for you and me."

Jesus unites His sheep, however, the unbelieving Jews were divided by His words.

### **John 10:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words.

A division occurred among the non-believing Jews because of what Jesus had said.

### **John 10:20-21 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup> Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?"

<sup>21</sup> Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"

The division was between those who thought that Jesus had a demon and was insane and those who knew that demons cannot open eyes.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Toward the end of this chapter, chapter 10, John goes on to inform us that Jesus returned to the discussion with the Jews some time later and told them my most favorite verse in the Bible.

### **John 10:27-28 (NASB)**

**27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.**

These sheep do not listen to the voice of strangers. But they will listen to the Good Shepherd. Jesus says, "**They hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give them eternal life, and they will NEVER perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand.**" WOW!!! What a PERFECT Shepherd! What confidence we can have that He will protect us night and day. He is both the DOOR and the Shepherd who owns the sheep.

**Jesus says, I AM the Good Shepherd**". He purchased us with the blood that He spilled on the cross. We are His, He KNOWS us, and He LOVES us! And **IF** we are **His** sheep, we will **follow** Him! He will not have to drive us.

Listen Carefully! If you want to be a part of His flock, you must be IN His fold and following Him.

Jesus is the True Shepherd. He does not jump over the fence. He does not come without authority. He doesn't acquire His sheep by snatching and stealing. He simply walks through the door with the approval of the gatekeeper, calls you by name, and leads you out. He lets us follow Him all day. We can have life abundantly.

We no longer fear death. Jesus has made us righteous before God. He comforts you and gives you His life so you can live. He knows you intimately. He is the One Who puts you in the fold. He does not allow anyone to remove us from the fold.

You and I, as God's sheep can have total confidence in our salvation. It is not dependent upon me. Jesus **GIVES** me eternal life. I just listen to His voice and follow Him.

There is no question that Jesus is the Good Shepherd. The only question that remains at this point in the service is this: **Do you know the Shepherd?**

How you answer that question determines where you can expect to spend eternity. If you know the Shepherd, then you can rejoice in the fact that He will always be with you and watch over you.

We offer an invitation every Sunday for anyone who does not know the Lord. If you do not know Him, then I invite you to walk to the front during the this invitation and accept Jesus in your life. Or talk to me after the service. Jesus will place you in the flock of God. He will save you from the wrath of God. He will give you a new life and a new birth. Will you come to Him this morning?

**This is the Day.**