

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:1-31 (ESV)

I Am the Good Shepherd

10 “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. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

¹⁹ There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” ²¹ Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

I and the Father Are One

²² At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but 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. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.” ³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

DISCUSSION:

1. What happened immediately before this passage, in Chapter 9?
2. If someone were to refer to you as “sheepish” or “sheep like” would you view that as a compliment or an insult?
3. This is a symbolic passage and sometimes people can push the meaning of the symbols too far. (Note: If you ever find yourself with a symbolic interpretation that contradicts the rest of scripture...backup and start over). However, some of the symbols here do seem straightforward:
 - a. Who are “the sheep” / “the flock”?
 - b. Who are the “hired hands” that don’t care for the sheep?
 - c. Who are the “other sheep?”
 - d. Who are the “thieves and robbers?”
4. What can we learn about Jesus from his description of himself in these verses?
5. Why is it important for the sheep to know the voice of the shepherd? What can happen when the sheep do not recognize the shepherd? What applications are there for us today?
6. What can you do to better recognize the voice of the shepherd?
7. How have you seen the thief “kill, steal and destroy” the life of people that you know?
8. What is the abundant life that Jesus wants to give (John 10:10)?
9. Who are the false shepherds that we need to be on the look out for today?
10. Is it an important point that all of Christ’s sheep are part of one flock?
11. T/F. A sign of being part of Christ’s flock is that I listen to his voice and follow where He leads.
12. Is there such a thing as a counterfeit sheep?