

# Jesus is the Good Shepherd

John 10:7-30

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## Introduction:

1. The beautiful words of our Lord, "I am the Good Shepherd," should evoke comfort and confidence in every child of God.
2. It is one of the seven bold "I AM" statements found in the gospel of John which asserts the Savior's Deity (Exo. 3:14; Jn. 8:58, 6:35, 8:12, 10:7, 10:11, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1).
3. The context is one in which Jesus contrasts His humble, others-oriented leadership with the arrogant, self-serving Jewish leadership which the people were accustomed to observing.
4. By way of an allegory, the Lord sets forth His love and care for those who hear His voice and would enter His fold by obedience.
5. Understanding the illustration requires some knowledge of sheepfolds in first century Jewish life. Usually they were composed of a rock wall with brush or thorns on the top in which the sheep would be gathered up at night for protection. They would have only one entrance, and the shepherd would sleep in that opening to prevent the sheep from wandering into danger, and to prevent the intrusion of any predator. Jesus likens Himself to a caring shepherd of sheep, and contrasts Himself with those who prey upon the sheep for their own benefit.
6. Why does Jesus call Himself the "Good Shepherd"?

## Discussion:

### I. Because He Acts Out Of Pure Motives

- A. The false teachers of the day acted out of selfish motives.
  1. They wanted *personal glory* (Mat. 23:1ff, esp. 23:12, 20:20ff, 6:1-5).
  2. They desired lucrative positions which would provide *personal gain* (Jn. 2:13ff; 2 Pet. 2:3). Jesus called them "thieves and robbers" (Jn. 10:1).
  3. Their view of leadership had to do with *personal ambition* rather than helping the sheep.
- B. Contrast the leadership style of Jesus with that of contemporary Jewish leaders.
  1. Jesus desired to lead sheep for their benefit, not His own!
  2. Jesus had a true shepherd's concern for the sheep (Mat. 9:36-38).
  3. Jesus was not self-appointed, but was given the Shepherd's role by the authority of His Father (Jn. 10:1). Jesus knew that His work was given by the Father (Lk. 2:49), and that the sheep ultimately belonged to the Father (Jn. 10:17-18; 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:22-23).
  4. Jesus cared for all men and desired to save them all; whereas the Jewish leaders were only interested in their own ethnic group (Jn. 10:16)
- C. Elders and preachers must guard themselves from selfish ambition, and aim at leading by serving (Ezek. 34; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Jn. 13:15; Lk. 22:27).

### II. Because He Offers Protection For The Sheep

- A. Unlike the false teachers (depicted as "hirelings"), Jesus would give His life to save the sheep (v. 11-13).
  1. David is an example of good shepherding (1 Sam. 17:34-37).
  2. We admire the selfless dedication of the soldier who will take a bullet for a buddy, or is willing to die to protect innocent Iraqi or Afghan lives.
  3. But, Jesus would not die for the innocent, but for the guilty (v. 17-18; Rom. 5:8).
  4. By doing so, He protects us from Divine wrath (Rom. 1:18, 5:9).

- B. He also protects us from the self-seeking motives and errors of the "hirelings" (Jn. 8:31-32). His truth frees from error and grants life.

### III. Because He Is The Door To Eternal Blessings

- A. Jesus is the door into the blessings God would provide the sheep (v. 7).
1. He is pictured as the Shepherd gathering into the fold, and guarding the entrance into the enclosure. Thus, ingress and egress is by means of the Shepherd (all activities under the authority of the Shepherd).
  2. He alone is the means of accessing those blessings (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:16-18).
  3. All spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3).
  4. Figuratively described as finding pasture (1:9; Psa. 23:1-6).
- B. Following Him in obedience we receive:
1. Remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
  2. Full joy (Jn. 15:11; 1 Pet. 1:8).
  3. Fellowship with the Godhead (1 Jn. 1:5ff).
  4. Fellowship with those "of like precious faith" (2 Pet. 1:4).
  5. Engagement in God-ordained work (Eph. 2:8-10).
  6. Personal development and betterment (1 Pet. 2:21ff; Gal. 5:21-23).
  7. Enrollment in Heaven (Rev. 20:12, 21:27).
- C. Christ's offer is made to "any man" (v. 9; Mat. 11:28-30; Rev. 22:17). All of every nation or ethnicity are welcomed (Acts 10:34-35; Mat. 28:19). But to receive what He offers, we must "enter in" (v. 9; Gal. 3:27).

### IV. Because He Is A Personal Friend To The Sheep

- A. He has intimate knowledge of His sheep (v. 14-15; 2 Tim. 2:19; Psa. 1:6; 1 Pet. 3:12).
1. He does not "know" those who refuse to enter in (Mat. 7:21-23).
  2. But He calls His own by name (v. 3), and places them in His one fold, the one church (v. 16; Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4). He knows Christians by name and writes their name in His Book. The Father knows us as His children whom He desires to bless (Mat. 7:9-11; Jn. 16:23-28).
- B. As Christians, we must "know Him."
1. Paul's aim should be ours (Phi. 3:8-11, 1:21).
  2. To know Him is to hear ONLY His voice, not false teachers (2 The. 1:6-9). *Security is ours as long as we keep following Him* (v. 27-29; Jude 21).
  3. We confirm that we hear Him by following Him "whithersoever He goeth" (v. 4, 27; Rev. 14:4; 1 Jn. 2:3-6). He calls His sheep and leads His sheep by means of the Word, and when we fail to obey it we stray from Him and break fellowship with Him (2 Jn. 9-11). But, even then, He will graciously "restore" the penitent fallen (Gal. 6:1; Jms. 5:19-20).

### Conclusion:

1. An old hymn by W. A. Ogden breathes the message of John 10,

"Jesus, the loving Shepherd, Callesth thee now to come

Into the fold of safety, Where there is rest and room;

Come in the strength of manhood, Come in the morn of youth,

Enter the fold of safety, Enter the way of truth.

Jesus, the loving Shepherd, Gave His dear life for thee;  
Tenderly now he's calling, 'Wanderer, come to Me;'  
Haste! For without is danger, 'Come' cries the Shepherd blest;  
Enter the fold of safety, Enter the place of rest.  
Lingering is but folly, Wolves are abroad today,  
Seeking the sheep who're straying, Seeking the lambs to slay;  
Jesus, the loving Shepherd, Calleth thee now to come;  
Enter the fold of safety, Where there is rest and room.  
Lovingly, tenderly, calling is He, 'Wanderer, wanderer, come unto Me.'  
Patiently waiting, there standing I see Jesus, my Shepherd divine."

2. Whether you are one who has never come to Christ, or a fallen Christian who has wandered from the fold, He is still calling you! Don't delay. He stands at the door and knocks (Rev. 3:20). He wants to be your Shepherd. Open now to Him, for He will not knock always! (1 Pet. 3:10ff)