



Looking back over our posts this year I realized that we missed posting the notes from the Bible Study on Sunday November 30. These notes took us through the end of chapter 10 in our study of the Gospel of John.

INTRODUCTION:

Sheep are completely dependent upon their shepherd. Someone once said jokingly that sheep are an animal that make a case for why evolution cannot be true - if it were sheep would not have survived as a species.

Sheep are remarkably helpless animals!

Sheep can find themselves in a situation where they are “cast”. This is when the sheep is fat or has a lot of wool and lies down in small depression their center of gravity shifts and their feet come off the ground. The sheep will panic and roll further, if not rescued they will die in that position.

Sheep have limited intelligence. They will follow the same path and walk right past a field of green grass. If not led into it they will starve.

Sheep are timid and easily frightened. Sometimes it takes nothing much to frighten them terribly.

Sheep can be annoyingly stubborn. They require the most work in animal husbandry.

And here is the point... God chooses this animal and the relationship between the sheep and shepherd to help us visualize God's relationship to us!

Psalm 100:3 "We are the sheep of His pasture."

So what do we learn about this Good Shepherd who loves and cares for His flock?

THE GOOD SHEPHERD LIVES FOR THE SHEEP (11)

The shepherd gives his entire life for his sheep

Psalm 23 - A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters.

3 He restores my soul;

He leads me in the paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil;

For You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

My cup runs over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

All the days of my life;

And I will

It is a life-consuming commitment - this is not a 8-5 job for the shepherd, it is a 24/7 life commitment. My Grandad was a dairy farmer - Milking the cows 7 days a week. Never took a day off, never went on holiday, never took off Christmas. He was up in the night to help with birthing calves, he was preparing the hay in the summer, he shoveled the gutters, He treated the wounds, and he did the milking.

Taking care of sheep requires even more effort and energy! It is a commitment that consumes all of you!

- It involves loving provision - green pastures, still waters (Ps. 23:2a)
- It involves providing leadership - He leads His sheep to external provision (Ps. 23:2b). He leads His sheep in internal righteousness (Ps. 23:3).

Application: What are you living for? What is “your life?” For some it is sports, some it is their business, for others their children.

The shepherd lives for the sheep because there are predators (12)

Wolves are after the sheep

Mt. 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits.

The sheep exist in the midst of wolves

Mt. 10:16 “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. 26 Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. 27 “Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The shepherd gives his life for the sheep because there is none else who cares the way he does! (13)

This is seen most clearly the well-being of the flock is threatened by an enemy. David killing the bear and lion. (1 Sam 17:34-37)

Hired help (hireling) abandons the flock when the wolf comes (12). Hired help flees when danger approaches. Why does the hired help flee? He is a hireling and does not care for the flock.

Jesus is referring to the religious leaders that he has been sparring with! Clearly they didn't care as evidenced by the way they were willing to throw the blind man under the bus (9:30-34). Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites...

THE GOOD SHEPHERD KNOWS HIS SHEEP (14-15)

A good Shepherd has close relationship with his sheep (14)

He knows them by name (3). In Scripture knowing someone by name involves a personal, intimate knowledge. Jesus know everything about you!

Think about this! He cares for you individually - Jesus knows every hair on your head (Mt. 10:30). He knows your fears and tears. He knows what makes you happy and what makes you sad (Ps. 56:8). Jesus knows everywhere you go (Ps. 139:3), and every time you sit and stand. (Ps 139:2a). Jesus knows your every thought (Ps. 139:2b) and he knows the words on your tongue before you speak (Ps. 139:4).

Jesus' thoughts toward you are so numerous that they cannot be numbered (Ps 40:5)

A Good Shepherd is working out what is best for his sheep based upon his intimate knowledge of them.

Our Shepherd created us and He created us for a purpose! His will for us is based upon His character and nature - He is a "Good" Shepherd!

- He is sovereign

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

- He is love

1 John 4:8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. Eph 2:3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- He is all-knowing - his direction and instruction is always right
- He is all-powerful - He can enable you to do His will.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS SHEEP (15,17)

He laid down his life

Why did He lay down His life? First because the wages of our sin is death (Ro. 6:23). Second because the justice of God demands punishment for sin!

Rom. 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

He laid down his life willingly

Jesus Christ was always in control of the outcome of His life when it appeared that he was out of control. He willingly laid down his life because He LOVES His sheep! He willingly laid down His life because it fulfilled the plan of God the Father who knows His Son and loves His Son and at the same time LOVED us! (Ro. 5:8)

He laid down his intentionally

He had the power to lay His life down. He also had the power to take his life back. He arose victorious from the grave: over Death, Satan and Hell!

THE GOOD SHEPHERD IS ACTIVELY BRINGING OTHER SHEEP UNDER HIS CARE (16)

The Salvation provided by the Shepherd is for the World (16a,17)

Jews looked at Judaism as the way into the Kingdom of God. Jesus is telling them that there are “other sheep” which are not of the fold of Israel whom He must bring.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the "WORLD" that He gave is one and only Son that "WHOSOEVER" believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life!"

This salvation and “shared Shepherd” is our connection point (16b)

The salvation provided by our Good Shepherd becomes the primary connection point that brings us together across cultural divides, across racial divides, across economic divides

We are ONE IN CHRIST! We have the same CALLING, we share the same BLESSINGS, we are in the same FLOCK, We have the same SHEPHERD! In Christ the Afrikaans and the English are ONE. In Christ the American and the Zambian are ONE. In Christ the President and the yard boy are ONE.

Gal. 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

So here is the point! The DOOR divides! (10:1-10)

The door has two purposes: It shuts some people out of the fold - “*he has a demon and is mad.*” It shuts others in - “*these are not the words of one who has a demon.*”

The Good Shepherd gives his life for his sheep - He does this because he paid the ultimate price to purchase them with own blood! He laid down His life for His sheep!

So is He YOUR SHEPHERD? Will you receive Him as your Good Shepherd today? There is only one way into the flock - that is through Jesus Christ. Enter through faith in Jesus today and you will be under the loving care of the Good Shepherd.

Here is the pdf download of