

## **Theme: The Lord is My Shepherd. That's Enough.**

### **Text: John 10:1-11**

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 "But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 "And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 "Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. 7 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 "All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear 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 does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. 11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

A certain pastor was calling in his sermon theme for the church notice in the local newspaper. He spoke his theme to the secretary on the other end of the line, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

"Is that all?" the secretary asked.

"That's enough," replied the pastor.

Imagine his surprise when he opened the Saturday newspaper and read his sermon's theme: "The Lord is My Shepherd. That's Enough."

How true! That pastor's "accidental" sermon theme is the theme for our sermon this morning as well. In fact, that's essentially what David was saying when he wrote those familiar words of the first verse of our Old Testament reading, Psalm 23, "**The Lord is My Shepherd. That's Enough.**"

It's true: Jesus our Good Shepherd, is all we'll ever need. He is our maker, our provider, our protector, and our Savior. No one else has, and no one else can do what He did and still does for you and me. Each one of us, by God's grace through the faith He's created in our hearts, can say: For me He laid down His life. For me He took the nails that hung Him on the cross, and paid the price of hell for my sins. For me He died, that I might live. Yet a dead Shepherd isn't much good to the sheep even if He did give up His life to save them from the wolf. And so we are glad and thankful that we can also say: For me He rose to life again to destroy death and assure me of my own victory over death on the Last Day! Later on in this same chapter of John Jesus would predict that this is how His Father's plan for salvation would play out. Jesus said, "**Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father**" (John 10:17-18).

Yes, the title The "Good Shepherd" certainly fits Jesus perfectly! But what are we called in the Bible? Where do we fit in Jesus' illustration? We are His "**sheep.**" This description fits us very well also. But it's not a very flattering illustration! Unfortunately, we are not called sheep in the Scriptures because we are lovable, wooly, and cute! In the Old Testament we have this very accurate description of our nature from the prophet Isaiah, "**All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way**" (Isaiah 53:6a).

We human beings are a lot like “**sheep**.” We tend to have a “mob mentality” and like sheep we simply like to “follow the crowd” without thinking. We are fearful, timid, extremely stubborn, and, yes, often very stupid; especially when you consider that, like sheep, we are some of the only creatures on this earth that are self-destructive by nature and are hopelessly lost and helpless if left to ourselves. Like sheep we human beings are utterly dependant on our “**Shepherd**.” Without Him to guide and protect us we are *lost*.

And yet, despite all these faults and undesirable characteristics we have the comfort and assurance that even though we are “**sheep**” we are His sheep! We can’t have it better than that! By God’s grace each one of us can say that Jesus, The “Good Shepherd,” is my Good Shepherd who guides me and cares deeply for me! Peter, one of Jesus’ “sheep” that had once gone astray, wrote in our New Testament Scripture reading, “**For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls**” (1 Peter 2:25). Our **Good Shepherd** also made the ultimate sacrifice for us. In fact, it is His sacrifice for our sins that Jesus Himself points to as proof in our text that He is the “**Good Shepherd:**” “**I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep**” (v. 11). This saving sacrifice on the cross for our sins is also the basis for the true, “**abundant life**” that we enjoy through our “**Good Shepherd**.”

Many people, even those who confess to be Christians, make the mistake of interpreting this verse to refer *only* to the things of this life: physical and material blessings. While it is true that Jesus does bless us in these areas far beyond what we deserve or need, these blessings are not what truly make our life “**abundant**.”

As our “**Good Shepherd**” He is looking out for and taking care of all our needs and wants—especially of our soul—so that we lack nothing! “**The Lord is My Shepherd. That’s Enough.**” Do you have desires or needs right now in your life? Are you daily facing what seems like an insurmountable task or difficulty? Do you feel lonely and uncared for; lost in the sea of humanity? Jesus knows it! He knows all our needs and cares about helping us through each one of them because He knows each one of us, His sheep, individually and personally by name—better even than we know ourselves! Jesus says in our text, “**the sheep hear his [the shepherd’s] voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out**” (v. 2-3). The voice of our “**Good Shepherd**” is the trustworthy voice of life and truth. His “voice” is the very voice of God Himself, found in the Bible.

That is the voice we want to listen to. Not the voice of imposters or false teachers, like the Pharisees of Jesus’ day, who were, as Jesus puts it, “**thieves and robbers**” (v. 1). They did not enter into God’s flock by way of the “**Door**,” (v. 7) Jesus Christ. They proved that they were only after the sheep for what they could gain for themselves. and were not looking out for the welfare of their souls. Not so with our “**Good Shepherd!**” He did not seek to exploit us or gain anything for Himself, but willingly surrendered everything for us at the cross of Calvary. As Jesus said in the last verse of our text, “**The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep**” (v. 11).

Listen to the voice of our “**Good Shepherd**.” Don’t just listen to the voice of men like me, who are Jesus’ under-shepherds. Listen to the voice of our “**Good Shepherd**” Himself. Get acquainted with what *His* voice sounds like by picking up the Bible for yourself. Listen and learn what He has to say to you about this “**abundant life**” (John 10:10) He has given you. Listen and learn where He wants to lead you: “**in the paths of righteousness, for His name’s sake**” (Psalm 23:3).

You know, for all their faults and undesirable characteristics sheep can be trained remarkably well to listen to the voice of their own shepherd—and *only* their own shepherd. Experiments have been done between shepherds where a neighboring shepherd changed clothes with the one who owned the sheep. The sheep refused to follow the stranger who was in their shepherd’s clothes, but followed the *voice* of their regular shepherd who was in strange clothes! In fact, in most cases if a stranger calls out to the sheep they will look up in alarm, and if he calls again they will “**flee from him**” (v. 5).

As the sheep of Jesus' flock we should exhibit these same characteristics which Jesus mentions in our text, "**And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers**" (v. 4-5).

No matter what our society tries to tell us, no matter what our school or our teachers or professors may try to tell us, no matter what our friends, our parents, family members, or even our pastors tell us—even if our own hearts and minds tell us that it's reasonable, fun, or even good—we should always ask, "What does my Good Shepherd say?" Then look to the Scriptures and listen to His voice! He knows best, and He knows us best! He is the one who has come to give us life—true life, "**abundant life**" (v. 10)!

He came to give us a life that goes beyond this life. Again, many people make the mistake of interpreting Jesus' words here in v. 10 concerning the "**abundant life**" He gives us to be referring only to our lives here on this earth. Could Jesus really give us an "**abundant life**" here on this earth if there were no eternal life in heaven to follow? No! As Paul once wrote, "**If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men**" (1 Corinthians 15:19). Jesus' main purpose in coming to this earth was to save our souls and give us everlasting life in heaven. We can thank God that Jesus also gives us another illustration about Himself in our text, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep**" (v. 7). He is our "**Door**" to eternal life. He says again in v. 9, "**I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.**"

The promise of heaven, of the eternal "**green pastures**" of joyful life in His presence is what gives our lives true purpose and "**abundance!**" It is a life that is focused on and lead by Jesus, our "**Good Shepherd;**" the one who safely leads us to the "**green pastures**" and "**still waters**" of His Word. He is the one who leads us "**in the paths of righteousness**" and comforts us and guides us safely through the "**valley of the shadow of death**" in this life and at life's end. Yes, we even have the peace of Christ, our "**Good Shepherd**" promised to us: "**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life**" (Psalm 23:2-4, 6). But don't forget that David ends this Psalm with a reminder of our greatest blessing: our destination in the "**house of the LORD**" (v. 6)! That is where our "**Good Shepherd**" is leading us! Not just to live a more righteous life, or to experience financial freedom, or healing in our relationships, or just to have a life of purpose, or even just to "live your best life now." No, David ends his Psalm with confident words based on the promise that our crucified, risen, and ascended "**Good Shepherd**" Himself is "**preparing a place for us,**" a "**mansion**" (John 14:2) for us, in heaven: "**And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever**" (Psalm 23:6b). That is true, "**abundant life**"! A life with Jesus, The Good Shepherd. A life given to me by Jesus, my Good Shepherd—your Good Shepherd. What more could you want? What more could I want? "**The Lord is My Shepherd. That's Enough.**" Amen.