

Theme: The Shepherd and the Door

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.



It is one of the most endearing and comforting pictures of Jesus in the Bible: **The Good Shepherd**. Just the thought of Jesus guiding us, providing for us, and protecting us like a loving shepherd fills our hearts with peace. When you look at the picture in the bulletin or on the printed copy of the sermon, or when you hear the words of Psalm 23 read again like we did today and think about the fact that we are one of Jesus' whom He is caring for and calling by name, doesn't it give you a deep sense of comfort and contentment? **"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1 KJV)**, meaning, "I shall not be in want," there's nothing more that we need. Jesus our Good Shepherd, is all we'll ever need. He is our maker, our provider, our protector, our guide, and our Savior. No one else has, and no one else can do what He did and still does for you and me.

Yes, the title **The "Good Shepherd"** certainly fits Jesus perfectly! Unfortunately we also fit the description of **"sheep"** perfectly as well. Yet despite the fact that we are stubborn, helpless, wandering sheep, we are **His** sheep! 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 you are now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" (1 Peter 2:25 EHV)**. 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**! 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.

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).

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 highly educated and intelligent people 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 our hope in Christ applies only to this life, we are the most pitiful people of all.**" (1 Corinthians 15:19 EHV). Jesus' main purpose in coming to this earth was to save our souls and give us everlasting life in heaven.

That's why it's important to remember that in this text where Jesus calls Himself the "**good shepherd**" (v. 11) Jesus also gives us another illustration about Himself. He calls Himself "**the door**" (v. 7, 9). He says in v. 7, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.**" 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.**" He is our "**Door**" to eternal life. 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. We 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 He is "**the Door**" by which we enter: "**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 we want? Amen.