



***The Parable of The Good Shepherd
(John 10:1-18)***

Before we look at this parable, we need to first read it in context. See John 9:40-41 - "Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, "We see." Therefore your sin remains.'"

Jesus was describing a person who is spiritually blind before He went on to speak about the Good Shepherd in chapter 10. "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 but he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out 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."

Later in John 10:9 Jesus identified Himself as the door for the sheepfold. People have to come through Him to become part of God's sheepfold. This simply means that everyone else who preaches another way to God is wrong, for Jesus says: "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture."

Let's now concentrate on verse 3 which says, "to him the doorkeeper opens and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."

Jesus knows all His family by their first name and so He can address you by name at the beginning of a sentence. I don't know whether He does this for the rest of His family, but maybe because I have had demonic voices speak to me in my illness, I often hear in my spirit my name being called. I can be walking down the road and then have a thought, "Matthew, I want you to go down to the shops first before you go to church." and because He said Matthew at the beginning, I know it's not my thought but it's Jesus speaking to me. Essentially, when you [start](#) to practice hearing words of Jesus in an audible sentence in your spirit, you can ask Him to address you by name.

Secondly, we see mentioned here: "My sheep hear my voice and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out." I have spoken to gifted Pastors, Bible teachers, intercessors and many mature Christians who say that they have only heard Jesus speak in an [audible](#) voice (Out loud) on a couple of occasions in all their life. So, I'm not talking about that kind of audible voice here, I'm talking about a still quiet voice that you have to train yourself to even hear. That is how God talks to most people in their spirit. If you are filled with your own agenda all the time, you will miss Him. He also talks by giving us sharp promptings in our spirit to do or say something. I feel very blessed because God does speak to me and I have distinguished His voice from those of the enemy. "Lord Jesus in Your name, I ask that you will start to talk to everyone reading this book [and address](#) them by name, just as You do for me. Amen."

Verse 4 says, "And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." Now, if you are a sheep of Jesus, if you are His true follower, you will obey what He tells you to do. Your life should not be a mish-mash of wrong decisions which are based on your flesh. A true follower of Jesus follows the steps that Jesus gives. Jesus leads your life by showing you the way to do things and what decisions to make according to His perfect will.

This parable has been preached so many times, but very few emphasize the fact that people need to listen to Jesus. Psalm 37:23 says "A righteous man's steps are ordered by the Lord." A believer is already righteous in God's sight: therefore, a Christian's steps are planned and designed by the Lord.

John 10:5 should give us some comfort in these times. "Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

As we become familiar with Scripture and the voice of Jesus, we will then be able to recognize wrong teaching by someone who is misinformed or is led by a wrong spirit. You may hear someone else, or even you may start to speak, and you will be aware that your "spiritual alarm" has started to ring out: take notice, for what you have begun to listen to, is not really God's message to you. So, rest assured that you are protected when you recognize the voice of the Good Shepherd, Jesus. (Every child of God has been given an inner "virus protector" called God's Holy Spirit.)

Verse 7 continues, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep." In other words, there is no other door to Heaven. There is no other way that you can be a follower of Jesus but to follow Jesus Himself. The verse 8 says: "All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them."

Jesus is not talking about the anointed Old Testament prophets here. They were all true spokesmen of God but the people He is referring to here are, the teachers of the Law: the Scribes and the Pharisees who have come before Jesus. He said they were thieves and robbers. They were not preaching the truth of the Word of God. They were teaching in the wrong spirit because they themselves had wrong motives.

"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture" (v. 9). The sheep receive nourishment from the pasture. If you give your life to Jesus Christ, you will be nourished by Him on the things that are good. So if you are not a Christian and you are reading this book, Jesus really is the answer you have been looking for.

It goes on in verse 10, "the thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly."

The Christian life is not a life where one simply exists: it is not only getting by week by week, but having such abundance in your provisions that you can give and freely share with others. In fact, life in Christ should be full of peace, joy, contentment, understanding, personal satisfaction and fulfillment in life. You should not be aimless, wondering what the will of God is, or if you

will ever find peace. The Christian life is an abundance of all good things. I am sure that you have received that message as you have been reading this book.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." (v. 11)

Jesus Christ laid down his life and was willingly crucified to die for our sins. He is our Creator and as such He truly loves every single person: "but a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep and I am known by My own" (vv. 12-14).

The hireling can be likened to a pastor who does not take the time to go out and help a member of his congregation who is in need. In the last ten years, I personally have not found a pastor who has not loved me and has not been there when I needed him. A true pastor is not just a hireling; He is a true servant of God and a good shepherd to his congregation.

Bad shepherds and hirelings do exist. This reminder would not be in the Bible if they did not. If the pastor does not have time or does not really care for your concerns, you need to find a church, small enough where the pastor has a vested interest in your life. Robin, my Pastor (to whom I have dedicated this book), is deeply interested in my life. If I do not connect with her once a week, she would want to know what was wrong. If I missed out visiting our community center for a week or if I was missing for more than a week, she would ring me at home and ask me what was wrong. That is what a true pastor is.

Verse 14 reads, "I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own."

A true Christian knows Jesus personally. He knows Jesus very well. Real Christianity consists of more than intellectual knowledge about Jesus. You should have an experiential knowledge of Him—knowledge based on experience. You should be able to share many stories about Jesus—about what He has done, how He saved you from this, how He showed you that, and how your life would not be the same without Him. You should be able to confess that your life would be totally useless and lost and without meaning if Jesus was not in your life.

Many people profess to know Jesus as their Savior and Lord yet they cannot testify like I do. If you have become a Christian and what I have described does not reflect your inner life, than perhaps you could be in some type of bondage or you are not diligently seeking

God like He wants you to. The Christian life is actually supernatural because we have a supernatural God inside of us forever. I imagine some people reading this book, may envy the life I have with Jesus. The good news: you too can have that life! We need to pray that you can experience that deep relationship with God.

"As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep and other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd." (vv. 15-16)

Jesus was talking to the Jewish people about the Gentiles who will become Christians one day and both the Jewish and the Gentile Christians will be all one flock. At present, there may be a lot of denominations in the world but Jesus is prophesying here that we will all be one flock one day and everyone will be in peace and unity. All over the world, not just in Israel, thousands of practicing Jews have given their life to Jesus. They have recognized Him as being the "Anointed One" of God promised in the Old Testament: their long awaited Messiah!

"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again" (v.17).

Jesus gave his life, was crucified on the cross for our sin and was resurrected. This was witnessed by many people. "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" (v.18).

A good shepherd will put his life on the line against predators of his sheep. Jesus allowed Satan to kill Him in order to rescue us. He is a tremendous shepherd. He can be your Shepherd. Ask Him to be with you and talk to you in a personal way.