

Lessons from the Shepherd

John 10:1-18

9/19/04

Intro

One of the most famous Psalms, and probably the favorite Psalm of all time is Psalm 23. We have taken great comfort in knowing that as the Great Shepherd, He makes us lie down in green pastures, leads us beside still waters, and that He restores our soul.

In John 10, the Lord Jesus Himself tells us that He is the true Shepherd; even the One that anoints our head with oil and who causes our cup to overflow.

Illus – there is a great difference between sheep herders of today and shepherds of Jesus’ day.

In chapter 9, Jesus has healed a man born blind. This created a debate because it was done on the Sabbath. By the end of that chapter, the man who was healed is correcting them because of their blindness.

It is in that context that Jesus teaches about thieves who are false shepherds, and that he is the true Shepherd.

These verses in our study give us lessons from the True Shepherd that should cause us to trust Him even as the sheep will trust their shepherd.

I. He Calls His Own by Name

A. The sheep hear His voice

- Shepherd in that culture would often gather together at watering places. He would call and the sheep would know His voice.

Illus – There was a book I read when I was young about a dog that was part wolf, and the wild in the dog kept calling out to him. But he who is the Lord’s has a call inside of him that is the voice of the Lord.

Psalm 95:6-8, “Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness...”

- The wind and the sea hear His voice.
- Even the dead will hear His voice, and they will live because they heard it.

John 5:25, “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.”

B. He has a personal relationship with each one

- A shepherd in that culture would give a name to each sheep.

Illus – we also give names to our animals that we love (though I once raised a couple steers and had to give them unusual names). We give names to our children that have meaning.

- Notice that, in this gospel, people encounter Jesus on a personal basis.
 - Nicodemus
 - The woman at the well
 - The helpless man by the pool at Bethesda
 - The man born blind

Illus - Notice that when Jesus came into town and Zacchaeus had climbed a tree just to get a look at Him, Jesus called him by name.

Luke 19:2-5, And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich. Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way. When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”

- Jesus does not bring people into the Kingdom of God as a group. Everyone must have their own personal relationship with the Lord.

C. The sheep follow because they know His voice

- In the morning when the shepherd began his day or when they had gathered with many others for drink. He called them and then led them out. They followed because they knew His voice.

Illus – there is an old song we used to sing when I was younger, “The Lord knows the way through the wilderness, all I have to do is follow...”

- Notice also that Jesus leads by example, all we have to do is follow. Follow His grace, His love, forgiveness, patience, and His servants’ heart.

John 13:14-17, “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

II. He Gives Life Abundantly

A. He is the doorway to life

- In that culture if a shepherd was a long way out and needed to stay overnight with the sheep, he would make a corral type structure with shrubs and would himself become the door.
- The thief would come in a different way to kill, steal and destroy.
- This is how we know the lies of the enemy; does this destroy or edify?

Illus – The Pharisees were the thieves and robbers he was referring to, but ultimately we understand that the thief is himself the devil.

Verse 9:30, the healed man would not hear their voice, but gave them a corrective word, “Well, this is an amazing thing...”

- But Jesus came, His purpose, is that we would have life through Him. We must go through that door and that door only.

Luke 19:10, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

1 Timothy 1:15-16, “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.”

B. In Him is the abundant life

- It’s interesting to note Jesus’ words; he came to give us life, yes, **but even more...abundant life.**
- But what is abundant life?
- To be filled up to the full with all the riches of Christ.

Ephesians 4:16-21 He does far more than we can ask or even think...

Illus – a pastor was talking to a man who had recently committed his life to Christ and said, “This means you don’t have to fear death anymore.”

The man responded, “I have not feared death. What I have been afraid of is wasting my life.”

Illus – many people spend their lives making money, trying to get ahead, to become successful.

But what a sad it would be to arrive at where you always wanted to be, only to find that you don’t want anything you have.”

III. How Great is the Shepherd’s Love

A. That He lay down His life

- A true shepherd would lay down his life to protect the sheep.
- This is a demonstration of how much Jesus loves us, when He gave His life for us.

Revelation 1:5, “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,”

Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

- The cross what about how much Jesus loved us...

B. Beware the hireling

- In contrast to the true Shepherd is the hireling. He is the one who is there simply for his own gain; he does not love the sheep and will not risk his life for them when troubles come.

1 Peter 5:2-3, “shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.”

- This has always been God’s heart.

Ezekiel 34:15-16, “I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest,” declares the Lord GOD. “I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick;”

C. One flock with one Shepherd

- Verse 16 is a very important verse because Jesus is referring to you and me!
- We are the sheep of a different fold.

Illus – He takes down the dividing wall, and the two will become one. Israel and the church will be one flock in Jesus the Messiah.

Conclusion

He laid down His life of His own accord because it was the love He has in His own heart that motivated Him to die for us.