

John 10:11 - 42

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~ The Good Shepherd is the mystery we will consider in this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. This is the second allegory the Lord Jesus has given us in the Gospel of John; the first was in chapter seven, when Jesus said He was the Door of the sheep and, by which, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. Well, in this report, Jesus says He is the Good Shepherd. How can He be both at the same time?

In our previous report, we learned that a flock of sheep would be handed over to a porter in Israel by a shepherd in the evening, and the shepherd would then go to an inn to lodge and spend the night and get cleaned up. The porter would sleep right in the doorway of the sheepfold. Jesus is not only our Door to salvation, but He is also the Good Shepherd. Most importantly, Jesus is the One Who protects His Own.

The Lord Jesus also says He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. This has turned into a seriously mixed metaphor now. The Lord Jesus came down to earth and identified Himself with us this way. We are called the sheep, and Christ identifying with us emphasizes His humanity; the aspect of the Good Shepherd emphasizes His deity and, friends – Christ alone is worthy and able to save us to the uttermost. No other human being could have done that for us. It had to be God. Because of that, Christ is EVERYTHING to the genuine Christian.

Alright, the Good Shepherd is also the Great Shepherd in the book of Hebrews. Peter will call Jesus the Chief Shepherd. Psalm twenty-two first reveals the Lord Jesus to us as the Good Shepherd; and here, Jesus is saying the same. In Psalm twenty-three we see Him as the Great Shepherd who is able to keep His own. Then Psalm twenty-four brings Him as the Chief Shepherd and that is a picture of His return to the earth at His second advent; and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a crown of rejoicing. These are some wonderful, beautiful pictures given to us of Jesus in the Word of God....

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11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

~ My friends, this is the epitome of the difference between Christ and any religious figure. Buddha never did anything for his followers. Mohammed does absolutely nothing for Muslims – in fact, these “leaders” of these “great religions” always demand something be done for them; and that includes the cult of Catholicism. The modern religious ruler and cult leader does nothing but get rich while doing nothing for their flock. The follower of the religious cult does not know their hireling. The Lord Jesus knows His sheep and His sheep know Him. There is a wonderful relationship that we can have with Jesus that cannot be had with anyone or anything else. Oh, that we might know Him and the power of His resurrection - and the power of His suffering. To know Christ means to love Christ; and, if you’re His sheep, He knows you. Ezekiel chapter thirty-four verse eleven – check it out....

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, and one shepherd.

~ This is another important piece of information to process properly. The “fold” is the nation Israel. You’ll notice I have changed one word from “fold” to “flock” in verse sixteen, because this gives us the proper

translation. We have many folds but only one flock and, of course, only One Shepherd. Today, God is calling out both Jew and Gentile as a people unto His own; all are called – rich and poor, wise and simple; male and female; black and white. All people from all nations and from many folds are going to be made one flock with One Shepherd! Jesus says this is all in the will of our Heavenly Father....

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again?

18 No man taketh 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 commandment have I received of my Father.

~ See, the Father loves Jesus because Jesus died for us according to the Father's will. So, we ought to also love Christ because He first loved us enough to die for us. You may remember the trial of Jesus in Matthew, where we saw the Lord Jesus was in full control of all that was happening. Jesus set the time of His death on the feast day after the enemy had said the crucifixion would not happen on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people. Well, we know the crucifixion happened on the feast day. If you read the Gospel records accurately, you'll notice Jesus wasn't on trial at all; the Roman government and the nation Israel were on trial – and you and I were on trial – but not Jesus We were condemned to die in Him because He died for the sins of the world. Christ didn't have to do what He did, friends. Christ laid His life down willingly for the joy that was set before Him. No man would have ever touched Him without His consent. Naturally, this all causes division today, too....

19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

~ These people couldn't forget the incident of the eye opening of the man who had been born blind. Some people thought Jesus was the Divine Son of God, but others thought He was Satan – just like today. This division has been around since Biblical times, and the Lord Jesus is still the dividing factor. Jesus said He came to bring the sword of division. Well, the Bible divides with razor sharpness. The Lord Jesus Christ just happens to be the Savior of the world. I find some people believe and some do not believe. Some people reading will hear His voice and believe - and some will not. I don't expect anything otherwise....

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

~ Well, it's cold in the day we're studying and this vivid verse, twenty-two, gives us a picture of Jesus walking around – I wonder if He's still wearing those sandals we always see Him with in the pictures? Do you think anyone gave Him some nice winter boots? Jesus has not yet declared publicly His Messiahship; and the religious rulers weren't about to receive Him as the Christ. Of course, Jesus has made it clear to the apostles who He was. Also, in Samaria He made Himself known to the men that followed the woman at the well, as strange as that was; however, remember, the men of Samaria said they HEARD Him and knew He was the Messiah. So, these people say to Jesus that if He is the Christ they want to know....

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

~ Jesus was born in the line of David, and He was introduced to Israel by John the Baptist. His teaching demonstrated works; and His life and miracles all demonstrated that He was, in fact, the Christ. Everything that ever happened in the life of Jesus proved His works and Who He was. Well, these people believe not because they are not His sheep. We can tell who

His sheep are today because they believe. People demonstrate that they hear His voice when they profess that they believe. Likewise, they demonstrate they are not His when they say they do not believe. It's really as simple as that....

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

~ The only brand on His sheep today reads OBEDIENCE. If you want to know whether a person is saved or not, just determine what his relationship is to the Lord Jesus Christ. You don't have to judge anyone's heart – just his words. Of course, you'll be able to see a man's obedience to God, also – but the words are a definite give-away. What we are talking about is the blood-tipped ear of the priest. We saw that when a priest was dedicated, the blood was placed on the right toe, thumb and ear. That designates this priest as walking for God, working for God and hearing the Lord when He calls. Only the Spirit of God can open the things of Christ spiritually to your understanding. Eye hath not seen nor ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for him that loveth Him. Well, God has revealed all of that today to us by His Holy Spirit through His Word. Only with a blood-tipped ear can you hear the Holy Spirit. Man needs a spiritual hearing aid and that, of course, is None Other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The speaking mouth, hearing ear and the seeing eye, all hath the Lord made.

Friends, it's really not that complicated. If a shepherd called out, and a bunch of sheep followed that shepherd, I would make my reasonable conclusion that those were his sheep. I would conclude that any sheep not following him were not his sheep. I don't see it as complicated at all making the determination who the sheep are in this allegory. So, we're told something here about sheep that is very important to remember....

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

~ "Giving" them eternal life means they don't earn it in any way, shape or form. We don't work for our salvation, friends. Further, if the life God gives is eternal, that means it's forever. Some people mistakenly believe their salvation can be lost tomorrow - but, if that were so, then it wouldn't be eternal – it would be something else. No, friends, when we are saved, Jesus gives us everlasting and eternal life. The Shepherd died and the sheep were scattered, but He gathered them all up again. What I just read is Jesus saying "they will never perish!" Will people backslide? Probably and yes – but – will they perish? – No! A sheep might stray into the pigpen, I understand that, but that sheep isn't going to stay there very long. No one can take you from the hands of the Father. That should be a great comfort to your soul tonight.

In a flock of two thousand sheep, just one sheep that gets a half a mile away is totally lost. Usually, two or more of them wander off together. Well, here comes the wolf and kills the first sheep; so, the second sheep just stands there and says, "bah" until it gets eaten for dessert. Sheep, my friends, are just plain stupid. A sheep has absolutely no defensive mechanisms built in, either; no claws, no fangs; the legs aren't fast enough to run away from danger. If any sheep is ever safe it's because they have a shepherd watching over them to protect them....

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one.

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

~ Jesus claims to be God here, again. The Lord had the evidence and the credentials, but these Jews are just not going to accept what they can see with their own eyes. These people understood that Jesus made Himself to be God – it's only the liberal that comes along today and says Jesus never claimed to be God. I don't see any way to misunderstand Jesus here. Of course, the liberal misunderstands so many, many things....

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there.

~ Jesus claims to be God because He is God – not you – not me. The Lord Jesus Christ is Who He said He is. What think ye of Christ? That is the test of both our state and scheme in our hearts, minds and lives. We cannot be right in our actions unless we think rightly about Christ. Impossible ~

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John 10:11 - 12

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