

JESUS: "I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD"

Jesus' "I AM" (10)

Banská Bystrica, 22nd June 2014

John 10:1-30

John 10:1-30 "I assure you: Anyone who doesn't enter the sheep pen by the door but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. ² **The one who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.** ³ The doorkeeper opens it for him, and the sheep *hear his voice*. **He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out** (ἐξάγει αὐτά). ⁴ When he has brought all his own outside (ἐκβάλλη), **he goes ahead of them.** The sheep *follow him* because **they recognize his voice.** ⁵ They will never follow a stranger; instead they will run away from him, because they don't *recognize the voice* of strangers." ⁶ Jesus gave them this illustration, but they did not understand what He was telling them. / ⁷ So Jesus said again, "I assure you: **I am the door of the sheep.** ⁸ All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but *the sheep didn't listen to them.* ⁹ **I am the door.** If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture (σωθήσεται καὶ εἰσελεύσεται καὶ ἐξελεύσεται καὶ νομὴν εὐρήσει). ¹⁰ A thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they *may have life and have it in abundance.* ¹¹ **"I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd *lays down his (1) life* for the sheep (τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν). ¹² The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and doesn't own the sheep, leaves them and runs away when he sees *a wolf coming.* The wolf then snatches and scatters them. ¹³ *This happens* because he is a hired man and doesn't care about the sheep. ¹⁴ **"I am the good shepherd. I know My own sheep, and they know Me,** ¹⁵ as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father. **I lay down My (2) life for the sheep** (τὴν ψυχὴν μου τίθημι ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων). ¹⁶ But I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and *they will listen to My voice.* Then there will be **one flock, one shepherd.** ¹⁷ This is why the Father loves Me, because **I am laying down My (3) life so I may take it up again** (ἐγὼ τίθημι τὴν ψυχὴν μου). ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but **I lay it down on My own.** I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again. I have received this command from My Father." ¹⁹ There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?" ²¹ Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?" ²² At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but *you do not believe because you are not part of my flock.* ²⁷ **My sheep hear my voice,** and I know them, and *they follow me.* ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and **they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.** ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.** ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

OUTLINE

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 - 0.2. YES
- 1. JESUS: LAYS HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP**
 - 1.1. THE BASIS OF RELATIONSHIP
 - 1.2. PROTECTION, SAFETY
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4. CONCLUSIONS

0. INTRO: HUMANS AS SHEEP?

- sheep: (1) good character – as against a wolf or goat, [**Mt 7:15** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.] (2) straying sheep – in need of a shepherd [Lk 25 – the parable of the lost sheep] → Phillip Keller: *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, (1973), go easily astray (Isa 53:6, Luke 15:1-7), vulnerable, in need of protection
- **A useful metaphor?**

0.1. NO

- (1) Man in the Bible: the image of God; **Psalm 8:4-5** ...what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? ⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings¹ and crowned him with glory and honor., **Heb 2:7-8** You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor,¹ ⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet."
- (2) Urbanization; European shepherding → unfamiliar metaphor
- (3) "Pastoral" = "idyllic" → reality: fight for life
- (4) Enlightenment → *Sapere aude!* (KANT); Liberalism vs. Perfectionism (paternalism;) = "I know what I want, why would anyone tell me what to do?"

0.2. YES

- **Isa 53:6** All we **like sheep** have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way...
- **Mk 6:34** ...he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.
- **Jer 50:6** My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray,
- **Mt 25:33** And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.
- **Mt 10:16** I am sending you out as **sheep** in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.
- "I belong to Him simply because He deliberately chose to create me as the object of His own affection." (Ph. Keller)
= I need to admit that I need to be led, taken care of, that I don't understand everything

CONTEXT: **Ezekiel 34** --- John 10 = Jesus is THE good shepherd

We are all the wounded sheep and Jesus wants to heal us. He makes us lay down in green pastures. Am I willing to be a sheep? Jesus shepherds the sheep, not the wolves, the lions etc. Am I willing to substitute my desires for His?

1. JESUS: LAYS HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP

- 3x repeated (vv. 11, 15, 17)
- the good shepherd → caring; protecting; understanding the sheep better than do sheep understand themselves

1.1. THE BASIS OF RELATIONSHIP

- depth – sacrificial, unlimited (hirelings)
- purpose – giving, not getting (Jeremiah; Ezekiel)
 - **Jer 10:21** For the **shepherds** are stupid and do not inquire of the LORD;
 - **Jer 12:10-11** Many **shepherds** have destroyed my vineyard; they have trampled down my portion; they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. ¹¹ They have made it a desolation; desolate, it mourns to me. The whole land is made desolate, but no man lays it to heart.
 - **Jer 23:2** ...concerning the **shepherds** who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them.

- **Eze 34:2-6** "Son of man, prophesy against the **shepherds** of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the **shepherds**, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, **shepherds** of Israel who have been **feeding yourselves!** Should not **shepherds** feed the sheep? ³ You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but **you do not feed the sheep.** ⁴ The weak you have not **strengthened**, the sick you have not **healed**, the injured you have not **bound up**, the strayed you have not **brought back**, the lost you have **not sought**, and with **force and harshness you have ruled them.** ⁵ So they were **scattered**, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. ⁶ My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

The basis of my relationship with Jesus is that He's bought me, He's thinking of me, He cares for me in the most important areas of my life. This can't be measured by physical/material blessings. He's giving me the most important and beautiful thing: abundant life

1.2. PROTECTION, SAFETY

- David: **1 Sa 17:34-36** But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there **came a lion, or a bear**, and took a lamb from the flock, ³⁵ I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. ³⁶ Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God."
- perseverance: ²⁸ **they will never perish ... no one will snatch them out of my hand;**

2. JESUS: GIVES HIS SHEEP ABUNDANT LIFE

- **Rom 14:17** or the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of (1) righteousness and (2) peace and (3) joy in the Holy Spirit.

2.1. LIFE IN GOD

- ^{10:29} My Father...has given them to me
- Ps 16:11 You make known to me the path of life; in **your presence** there is **fullness of joy** (שְׂבַע שְׂמֵחָהוֹת); at your right hand are pleasures forevermore (נְעִמּוֹת בְּיַמִּינְךָ).
- spiritual life (1Cor 2)

2.2. ETERNAL LIFE

- ^{10:28} **I give them eternal life**
- quality – eternal life = to **know** God (**John 17:3** ...this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.)

2.3. LIFE OF LOVE

- **Jn 15:13 Greater love** has no one than this, that someone **lays down his life** for his friends.
- intimate knowledge: ¹⁴ **I know My own sheep, and they know Me** – ³ ...He calls his own sheep **by name** → knows thoroughly well WHO you are and WHAT you need...
- meaning and significance – I may not fully understand God's plans with me or this world, but I know that He knows

3. JESUS: GUIDES HIS SHEEP BY HIS VOICE

- not just *theology*; *life-circumstances*; ...
- Jesus walks *before* the sheep
= I'm able to say: "This word/sermon/message... was about me." = I know I've heard God's voice

3.1. NO VIOLENCE IN SEPARATION

The Eastern sheepfold is a mere enclosure surrounded by a palisade. The sheep are brought into it in the evening, several flocks being committed to the care of the common keeper or porter for the night. In the morning the shepherds return and knock at the closely barred door of the enclosure, which the porter opens from within. Each separates his own sheep by calling to them ; and the sheep respond, disentangling themselves from the rest, and when thus collected they follow their own shepherd, wherever he may lead.¹

- (1) my sheep (regeneration) – the Cross → calls by name
- (2) know/recognize my voice (listening) – sweet voice, longing, concentration, switching off other voices (FBMeyer: “The desire to hear and follow Jesus proves that you are his sheep (4, 8, 27)”)
- (3) goes ahead of them → they follow me (obedience) – communion in closeness

Wherever He’s leading me He’s already been there.

He’s leading me personally, specifically, not just a part of a herd.

Ask Him, when in doubt: “Is this your voice I’m hearing?” and be patient, wait for His reply.

Jesus says His sheep know His voice = a picture from the past when the sheep from different flocks used to be put together in one barn for the night. In the morning the shepherds would come and call their own sheep to come out and the sheep would recognize the voice of their shepherd.

3.2. “PUTTING FORTH” – THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **John 10:3** φωνεῖ κατ’ ὄνομα καὶ ἐξάγει αὐτὰ **John 10:4** ὅταν τὰ ἴδια πάντα ἐκβάλῃ
- ⁴ When he has brought all his own outside (ἐκβάλῃ), **he goes ahead of them.**
- out of the sheepfold (F.B.Meyer: (1) providences, (2) constraints of the Spirit, (3) direct call)

4. CONCLUSIONS

- The Good Shepherd lays his life for you – to get your trust and love.
- The Good Shepherd gives you the joy of God’s presence – to make your life full.
- The Good Shepherd guides you according to your circumstances – to train you for eternity.

¹ MEYER, F. B. *The Life and Light of Men*, p. 192.