

## JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:1-21  
Key Verse: 10:11

Lesson #27

Jesus is the good shepherd. In verses 1-6 Jesus teaches the Pharisees, his disciples and the man born blind that he is the true shepherd. What are the marks of the true shepherd? Look at verses 1 and 2. The true shepherd enters by the gate. One who does not enter by the gate, but climbs in another way is a thief. The robber does not care about the sheep. He is only thinking about himself. The Pharisees show that they are false shepherds by their attitude and actions toward the sheep—the blind man. The Pharisees were false shepherds. Ezekiel 34:1-4 describes the false shepherds who only take care of themselves. They do not take care of the flock. [“The word of the Lord came to me: ‘Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.’”] The Pharisees saw the man born blind as a man born in sin and they offered him no hope. They did not rejoice when he was healed. When he did not cooperate with them and deny Jesus’ grace, they cast him out of the synagogue.

Jesus the true shepherd came in by the gate. His coming was prophesied. He is the shepherd whom God had promised to send in Ezekiel 34:15,23 [“I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays...”. “I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the Lord have spoken.”] Jesus, the true descendant of David, Jesus the Son of God is the true shepherd. The true shepherd comes in to care for the sheep. He came as God’s promised Messiah and true Shepherd. He comes through the gate because he has the key. The gatekeeper knows him. He came to care for the sheep. He cared for the man born blind. First, he planted hope in his heart. Then he healed his blind eyes. Later, when he was cast out for speaking the truth, Jesus came to him and opened his spiritual eyes.

Jesus the true shepherd knows his sheep by name. The sheep recognize his voice. They listen and follow. Our shepherd Jesus knows us by name. He knows all about us because he loves us. We also know him. We recognize his voice. We have a love relationship with him. He calls us out and goes on ahead of us. We know his voice, so we follow him. He does not push from behind or drive us with a whip. He leads. He sets the example. He once said, “If anyone would come after me he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.” We are listening to our shepherd’s voice when we study the Bible and seek to obey it. We follow him because we trust him.

Jesus is the gate. The Pharisees and disciples did not understand the metaphor of the shepherd and sheep. So Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. Only Jesus is the gate. He is the way to God. He is the way to heaven. He is the way to abundant life. There is no other gate. Those who pretend to be gates are all liars. They are thieves and robbers. Jesus said, "Whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture." Jesus our shepherd—the gate—leads us into green pastures and beside still waters. He leads us to an abundant life. We must enter by him. When we accept his grace of forgiveness and claim his shed blood which covers our sins, we are entering through the gate, Jesus.

Again, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd." What is the ultimate sign of the shepherd? The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is different from the shepherd. He abandons the sheep when he sees the wolf coming. He is also self-seeking. He saves himself, and does not really care about the sheep. Jesus died for my sins. When I accept his death for my sins and the forgiveness he purchased for me, he becomes my shepherd. If I refuse the gift of forgiveness through his blood, he is not my shepherd. Jesus is my shepherd.

Jesus has other sheep. Jesus says again, "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me. ...I lay down my life for the sheep. "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen." Jesus' "other sheep" also hear his voice and follow him. So there is one flock and one shepherd. His other sheep are from every tongue and tribe, every race and people. Every follower of Jesus who listens to the word of God and seeks to live by it is my brother and sister. We belong to the same shepherd. We are one flock with one shepherd.

Jesus laid down his life only to take it up again. He died on the cross at the hands of sinful men. He could have called a legion of angels to save him, but he didn't. He died for me. The Father loves Jesus because he laid down his life for the sinful people of the world. God raised him from the dead. In Jesus is life. His life is the light of men. His life is abundant life. It is life indeed. He gave new life to the man born blind. He offered new life to the Pharisees. He gives new life to his disciples—including me. Praise Jesus the Good Shepherd.