

## “I AM” – Jesus (week 4) “I Am the Good Shepherd”

July 30, 2023

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### A Two Question Quick Poll

**Question 1:** How many of you think our world is full of unhappy and dissatisfied people?

**Question 2 (Multiple choice):** Why are there so many unhappy people?

1. They're not looking for “The Good Life”?
2. They are looking for “The Good Life” in all the wrong places?
3. There is no such thing as “The Good Life”?

Our focus today is:

If you want “The Good Life” follow the Good Shepherd.

There's just one problem. We have to trust HIS guidance more than the way we guide ourselves.

- But why? Here's one example (video):

Haven't you ever jumped into the same ditch after God pulled you out?!

- There is no need to be offended by the Bible's frequent comparison of people to sheep.
  - **Here's a sheep [stuffed animal].** Here's Me.

- The intelligence difference between sheep and me.... is miniscule ... (and this one's stuffed!!)...

- **Another comparison: Here's Me.... Here's God.**

- The intelligence difference between me and God!!?? Are you kidding me? ■ Hello! That's like comparing a birthday candle to the SUN!!!

**The truth is we are a lot like sheep:** We wander and lose sight of our Shepherd. We choose momentary pleasures at the expense of our future well being. We frequently forget an eternal perspective. We frequently forget the predators we can't see, and our enemy's schemes against us.

Here is the KEY passage for today!

*John 10:10–11 (NIV) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. <sup>11</sup> “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

Clearly we need the Good Shepherd!!

**The context in which Jesus says this is VERY INTERESTING.** It’s all about what happened after he claimed to be the Light of the World in chapter 8. In chapter nine he substantiated that

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claim by healing a blind man. All the guy knew his whole life was darkness until he met the light of the world.

**Do you know how the Pharisees responded?**

They kicked the healed guy out of the synagogue!! For what!? For trusting the guy who miraculously healed him.

**Do you know how Jesus responded to the Pharisees for that?**

*John 9:39–10:2 (NIV) Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” <sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” <sup>41</sup> Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains. **John 10:1** “Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.*

**Jesus then described a community sheep pen** where multiple flocks were being watched by a gatekeeper. He allows the legitimate shepherd to come through the gate to call out his sheep by name to go out together to green pastures.

Jesus explained who the sheep will follow and who they won’t. . **The sheep won't follow a stranger, whether a thief or a hireling. They follow who they trust**

**The Pharisees didn’t get it,** but the people who are beginning to trust Jesus more than the Pharisees did not miss the point!!!

**I. His Sheep TRUST and FOLLOW Him**

*John 10:3 (NIV) ...the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*

But Jesus isn't done. He has more points to make. At verse 7, the scene changes...from one kind of pen to another.

*John 10:7-10 (NIV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

It was quite common for shepherds out in the field to create a holding pen with a half wall, with stones or brush, with thorn brushes placed on top of the half wall. In this circular pen, sometimes built against a cliff wall, or a cave, the shepherd would leave an opening just wide

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enough for him to sit or sleep in the opening. And so, the shepherd himself served as the gate to the pen.

The good shepherd protects sheep from the predators of the night, even the religious ones.

Jesus challenges all true Israelites to come out of **the pen of the Pharisees' closed religion** of their own making and follow the good shepherd they have been waiting for.

*Ezekiel 34:23 (NIV) I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd.*

This prophecy came long after King David died. It was about the coming Messiah, the son of David.

## **II. He is the GATE**

*John 10:9 (NIV) I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved...*

Now let's focus on the word "WHOEVER." *whoever enters through me will be saved...*

Jesus was very INCLUSIVE in his effort to gather his own FLOCK.

Just a few sentences later he said,

**John 10:16 (NIV)** *I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.*

The “other sheep” was in a different “pen”. Jesus was referring to Gentiles (a term for all non Jews), who would be invited to be part of his one flock! How many of us here are glad he included Gentiles?!!

Jesus calls YOU, “**whoever** you are, from **wherever** you are...to where God wants you to be...” if you will **trust** and **follow** him. Have you been listening to this message, **TAG YOU'RE IT!** He just called you.

Are you interested enough to begin to see if you can trust Jesus the Good shepherd? He's inviting you into a relationship of trusting him. He will show you how good he is.

### **III. He gives LIFE to the FULL**

**John 10:10 (NIV)** *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

Jesus' fulfillment of the Old Covenant hopes are different than the Pharisees and crowds of Jews expected.

**IV. How?** [does he give this life to the full, and eternal destination?] **He LAYS DOWN his LIFE** for you!

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**John 10:11 (NIV)** *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep ...*

By his death he takes away our sins. Jesus knew what he came to do. He knew in what manner he would die for his sheep. Death by crucifixion.

**Isaiah 53:5–6 (NIV)** *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

**John 10:14–15 (NIV)** *“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—<sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

**John 10:18 (NIV)** *No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father*

Jesus also says later in this chapter...

**John 10:30 (NIV)** *I and the Father are one.”*

- • Jesus is one and the same as the “LORD” and “Shepherd” in **Psalm 23**, when we say, “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.” Everything that is true in Psalm 23 is about Jesus.
- • Jesus is one and the same as the “LORD” and “Shepherd” of **Isaiah 40**:
- • **Isaiah 40 (NIV)** *Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, ... her sin has been paid for, ... <sup>3</sup> A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; ... <sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. ... <sup>9</sup> You who bring good news to Zion, ... lift up your voice with a shout, ... say to the towns of Judah, “**Here is your God!**” <sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, .... <sup>11</sup> He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.*

Jesus predicted his victorious crucifixion and resurrection! He knew what that would accomplish. By his life, death, and resurrection, he would redeem his lost sheep, cleansing us from our sin, and then he would pour his resurrection power into us, through his Holy Spirit filling us. The result was that with the Spirit’s help, his sheep could hear his voice, trust him, and follow his lead!

If you want “The Good Life” follow the Good Shepherd.

He came to guard and guide us HOME.

## Talk It Over

### **“I AM” -Jesus** (Week 4) “I Am the Good Shepherd”

#### **SMALL TALK**

1. Have you ever had an experience where someone's guidance or leadership played a crucial role in your life? How did that impact you?

#### **VIEWPOINT**

2. **READ John 10:1-21.** What is the context of this teaching? What happened in John 9 that leads to this teaching?
3. What are the key claims and truths taught in this section?
4. What is controversial about his statements? What is beneficial about his statements?

#### **GETTING PERSONAL**

5. Reflect on your own life and spiritual journey. How does the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd give you comfort and assurance in times of uncertainty or difficulty?
6. Jesus' willingness to lay down His life for the sheep demonstrates the depth of His love for us. How can this sacrificial love inspire you to sacrificially love and serve others in your community and beyond?

#### **MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)**

1. Do you have the sense that you are experiencing “life to the full” as Jesus described in John 10:10? If so, in what way? If not, can you think of what steps you might need to take to experience more of what Jesus came to give you?