

¹ “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. ⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ¹² But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³ The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. ¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, even so I know 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 will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

Text: John 10:1-16 A 4/19/26 Jeremiah 23:1-6 Ephesians 2:11-22 Psalm 100 Resp. Ps.: 23
Hymns: 192 (1-4), 192 (5-8), 201, 187

OUR GOOD SHEPHERD

Dear fellow believers in Jesus, our Good Shepherd,

In our text Jesus calls us “*sheep*.” Sheep are helpless without their shepherd, and inclined to stray from him. By calling us “*sheep*” Jesus is telling you and me something about how we are by nature. Jesus calls Himself, “*the Good Shepherd*,” telling us about Himself – who He is, how He feels about us, and what He has done for us. Today, Jesus reminds us that He is **OUR GOOD SHEPHERD**.

Just before our text Jesus had been talking to the Pharisees, religious leaders of the Jewish people. Jesus tells them, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*” A little later Jesus explains that He is “*the door*” of the “*sheepfold*.” Jesus is saying that the only way to be a saved child of God is through faith in Him. Jesus is saying that any religious leader who doesn’t teach salvation by faith in Him alone is a false teacher. Jesus calls a false teacher “*a thief and a robber.*” ... “*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.*” A false teacher who leads his followers away from Jesus robs them of eternal salvation and destroys them eternally in hell.

We’re told that the Pharisees “*did not understand the things which [Jesus] spoke to them.*” The Pharisees didn’t believe in Jesus as the promised Savior, so they couldn’t understand what He said. How could the Pharisees, who didn’t believe in Jesus, possibly be good religious leaders?

Jesus said about the Pharisees, *“They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch”* (Mt. 15:14). People who don’t believe in Jesus can’t understand the Bible. How terrible when such people put themselves forward as teachers of religion!

Jesus says, *“A hireling, he who is not the shepherd ... sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.”* A false teacher doesn’t care about the people who follow him. He’s not there when his followers need help against Satan’s attacks. A minister who wants popularity and lots of people following him and lots of money cannot and will not be a good shepherd to people and their spiritual needs.

How can we keep from being led astray by a false teacher? Jesus says, *“All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.” “They will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”* Jesus’ words are very emphatic in the original: *“They will never follow a stranger.”* Jesus says we’ll recognize and turn away from a false teacher. Jesus assures us, *“If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth”* (Jn. 8:31-32). Jesus assures us that if we keep hearing and studying His Word, we’ll know when a minister is speaking the truth and when he is not. Through His Word Jesus protects us from false teachers who lead us away from Him. May we be like the Christians at Berea. When the Apostle Paul preached to them, *“They received the Word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”* (Acts 17:11)

Jesus says, *“The sheep follow him,”* (from the original: *“keep on following him”*) *“for they know his voice.”* We recognize the truth from God’s Word. As we keep hearing God’s Word, He keeps leading us and we keep following Him.

Jesus says, *“I am the door,”* from the original: *“I Myself am the door.”* A doorway is an entryway. Jesus is the only way to heaven. There is no other way. The only way to be one of God’s people and have eternal life is by faith in Jesus. Acts 4:12 says about Jesus, *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”*

In contrast to a false teacher Jesus says, *“He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens.”* A true, faithful teacher from God believes in Jesus as his Savior from sin and teaches salvation by faith in Jesus alone. Jesus calls a faithful minister a *“shepherd of the sheep.”* The root meaning of *“shepherd”* in the original is “to protect.” A faithful minister cares about those entrusted to his spiritual care. If even one of Jesus’ sheep strays, a faithful minister lovingly seeks through encouragement and warning from God’s Word to lead that sheep back to the Good Shepherd.

Jesus says of a faithful minister, *“The sheep hear”* (from the original: *“pay attention to, consider, understand”*) *“his voice; and he calls his ... sheep by name and leads them out.”* A faithful minister leads people to God in Christ. A faithful minister teaches what the Bible says.

In this way God's people listen to – pay attention to, consider, understand – what God says in His Word.

“The sheep hear” (from the original: *“keep on hearing”*) *“his voice and he calls his ... sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his ... sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him,”* (from the original: *“keep on following him”*) *“for they know his voice.”* Jesus' faithful ministers lead His people with His Word. Jesus' faithful people are faithful to His Word. They keep on following a minister who faithfully teaches God's Word.

Jesus says, *“As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father.”* Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. The only way to know the true, living God is by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus says, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* (Jn. 14:6)

Jesus says, *“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”* Scripture says, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved”* (Ac. 16:31). Being fed by God's Word, we can go about our lives in the secure knowledge of our salvation in Jesus.

Jesus says, *“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* A false teacher leads his followers to eternal death in hell. In sharp contrast, Jesus richly and freely gives eternal life to all who believe in Him. Jesus says, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”* (Jn. 6:47)

Jesus says, *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”* Jesus loves us so much that He sacrificed His life on the cross to save us from sin, from death, from the devil, and from hell.

Jesus says, *“Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”* Everyone who believes in Jesus is a saved child of God! *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* (Jn. 3:16)

Jesus calls you and me His *“sheep.”* We are completely helpless to save ourselves, and inclined to stray from God. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, loves us and gave His life on the cross to save us. Through His Word Jesus led us to believe in Him. Through His Word Jesus protects us from Satan, and from false teachers. Keep hearing and paying attention to and believing God's Word, and so staying close to Jesus. Jesus keeps us as His own, beloved sheep, and one day will take us to heaven. Thanks be to God that Jesus is **OUR GOOD SHEPHERD**. Amen.