

We The Church, Part 1

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Date: 09 February 2020

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[0 : 00] Okay, we're going to start in a somewhat unusual way. Would you open up your Bibles to Ezekiel chapter 34? Now, here's how to find it. Just open your Bible to the middle.

You're probably in a psalm, and then just start going right. And you'll see, like, Isaiah, and then you'll bump into Jeremiah, and then you may see lamentations fly by real fast, and then there is the prophecy of Ezekiel.

Now, we're going to end up spending most of our time this morning in John chapter 10, looking at the Good Shepherd. But in order to understand what's going on here, I want to read you sections of Ezekiel 34.

This was written 600 plus years before Jesus spoke these words in John 10. Ezekiel 34.

The word of the Lord came to me. 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.

[1 : 13] Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat. You clothe yourselves with the wool. You slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. 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. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd. And they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered. They wandered all over the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over the face of the earth with none to search for or seek for them. Verse 11. For thus says the Lord God, Behold, I, I myself, will search for my sheep and will seek them out as a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered. So will I seek out my sheep. And I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and will bring them into their own land.

[2 : 26] And I will feed them. 14. I will feed them with good pasture. They will, shall lie down in good grazing land and on rich pasture. They shall feed on the mountains of Israel.

Verse 15. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep. And I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. I will seek the lost. And I will bring back the strayed.

And I will bind up the injured. And I will strengthen the weak and fat. And the fat and strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice. Verse 23. And I will set up over them one shepherd.

My servant David. And he shall feed them. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God. And my servant David shall be prince among them.

I am the Lord. I have spoken. Verse 30. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God with them. And that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Lord God.

[3 : 27] Verse 31. And you are my sheep. Human sheep of my pasture. And I am your God, declares the Lord God. In John 10.

Jesus declares himself to be that shepherd. Gathering himself a flock of human sheep.

This morning, we're getting back into our series on the church. And in verse, chapter 10 of John, verse 16, you could sum up this two-part series, this Sunday and next series, by saying, One flock, one shepherd.

The one flock of God has one shepherd who is God. So, last week, we started a study of the church.

And I'm not sure if you remembered this, but here's how I define the church. The church is the blood-bought people of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, on mission for Christ.

[4 : 31] And our desire, over the next two months, is to think about the church the way that God thinks about the church. To feel about the church the way that Jesus feels about his church. To prioritize the church the way the Holy Spirit prioritizes his church.

And so, generally speaking, the New Testament offers a variety of different images of the blood-bought people of God. And we're going to hit a bunch of them. The Bible talks about the church as a body.

It talks about the church as a bride, a holy temple, a royal priesthood, a family, a city set on a hill. In fact, one scholar, he has identified at least 100 distinct and different images of the church in the New Testament.

And many of those images get pulled in together. Each image has its own unique contribution to our understanding of the blood-bought people of God.

And this morning, we're going to look at one particular image, the flock of God. The blood-bought people of God. But, we're going to do it in two parts.

[5 : 44] We're going to look at, this morning, the shepherd of the flock. And then, next Sunday, we're going to emphasize the flock itself. Now, it's going to be overlap because this image, they're both together in John chapter 10.

And you'll see how this shakes out. But when it comes to the flock, the New Testament has a lot to say about it. Acts 20, 28, Paul gathers the elders of the Ephesian church.

And he tells them, pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock who Jesus bought with his blood. 1 Peter 5, shepherd the flock that is among you.

Hebrews 13, 20 and 21, Brian Winnington is going to close our service with a benediction that talks about the chief shepherd, Jesus. Matthew 26, 31 through 40, Jesus teaches on the final judgment. And he likens it to a shepherd who separates his sheep from the goats. John chapter 21, Jesus is reinstating Peter.

[6 : 54] Do you remember this? Do you love me? Yes, I love you. Feed my lambs. Do you love me? Yes, I love you. Feed my sheep. Do you love me? You know I do.

Feed my sheep. This morning, we're going to look at John chapter 10, where we will see Jesus describing himself as the good shepherd.

And he's going to talk about the people he laid his life down for, his sheep. He's talking about the church. So the point of this passage is to show a particular relationship between Jesus and his church.

The shepherd and his flock. So in chapter 10, verse 16, we read, so there will be one flock, one shepherd.

And so we can summarize this all by saying one flock, one shepherd. That's what John 10 is about. But if you want to get into a little more, we're saying this. We are one flock following our one shepherd.

[7 : 59] And if you want to press it a little bit more, we are one united flock following our one exclusive shepherd.

There is none like him. And to that end this morning, I want to look at six truths about Jesus, the good shepherd, that makes him one of a kind.

And we can't help as we look at the good shepherd, learn some things about us, his flock as well.

The first truth about Jesus, the good shepherd, is his authority.

Lou didn't read this this morning, but I want to bring it to your attention. Chapter 10, verses 1 through 5, Jesus says, Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber, but he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. But when he has brought out all of his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

[9 : 10] A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. What is this all about? Well, first thing you need to know is the you in verse 1.

Truly, truly, I say to you, it has to do with what happened in chapter 9. Jesus is talking to a crowd of Jews, specifically to Pharisees.

And these Pharisees were claiming to see Jesus for who he was, but in fact, they were blind to who Jesus really was. And what 1 through 5 of chapter 10 is, is about Jesus' legitimate authority and

access to the sheep.

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold. Now, when you hear the word sheepfold, I don't know what's going through your mind. So let's just help paint a picture of what a sheepfold in the first century, ancient Near East, typically look like.

Well, it is this protected pen, oftentimes in a courtyard, in a village. And oftentimes it's using the wall of a house, kind of, or just kind of an exterior wall of a village.

[10:17] And from that, there's this thatchwork of sticks that were built together and woven together in order to form a sheep pen, a sheepfold.

And what that was for, was for shepherds, remember this is an agrarian economy back in the day, there were sheep herders. And they would put their sheep in the sheep pen by night in order to protect them and keep them.

Now, that sheep pen typically had an entryway. Sometimes it had a door, sometimes it didn't. So it wasn't unusual for shepherds to hire a gatekeeper by night to make sure no ill will was done to the sheep.

One of the things about John chapter 10 is that there is this, Jesus weaves a contrast through this section. And it has to do with who he's speaking to.

He's speaking to the false shepherds of Israel, the Pharisees. And so there's this contrast that he starts building in verse 1.

[11:26] I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in another way, that man is a thief and robber. And otherwise, another way of saying, hey, if you see somebody climbing into a sheepfold, not through the entryway but going over the side, they're not legit.

They don't have any business dealing with the sheep. And then in verse 2, he says, but the one who enters by the gate, he's the true shepherd of the sheep.

He's legit. He's drawing a contrast to the people he's talking to. And then in verse 3, we see the kind of validation of it.

Verse 3, the first beginning up to him, the gatekeeper opens. The gatekeeper recognizes that this shepherd is the legit shepherd. He lets him have access and authority to the sheep.

And then the kind of piece de la resistance, the thing that validates that this is the shepherd of the sheep above all.

[12:33] The sheep. The sheep. The sheep hear his voice. So imagine a shepherd walking up to a sheep pen, greeted by the gatekeeper.

As soon as those sheep in the pen hear his voice, they're turning heads. Their ears are kind of moving towards the shepherd because they recognize his voice.

The sheep hear his voice. They turn to him. He calls his own sheep by name. Did you catch that? His own sheep by name.

The likely picture is of a shepherd calling his own sheep by name from a sheepfold that has other sheep in it. He's calling select sheep out.

The one that belongs to him. The ones that he calls out by name. Mike, come to me. And he leads them out.

[13:35] And when he brought them all out of his own out, he goes before them. And the sheep follow him for they know his voice. Now if you're familiar with western sheep herding practices, maybe you watch the movie Pig.

Maybe you like Australian sheep dogs. And so you watch YouTube videos of Australian sheep herders herding their sheep. They, western sheep herders, they herd from behind.

They drive their sheep. But in the ancient Near East and in the Middle East today, shepherds herd their sheep by going out in front of them.

Because they recognize the shepherd's voice. And so the picture here is of a shepherd leading his sheep.

Notice in verse 5, they don't follow a stranger because that stranger is not legit. So he is too illegitimate. So they quit him.

[14:38] Too illegit and they quit. Got it. But when it comes to the shepherd, the good shepherd, his sheep recognize his voice.

Now this raises a little bit of a theological piece in the Gospel of John. Jesus is talking about these sheep as being his own.

And he calls them out by name. If you flip in the Gospel of John back to chapter 6, verse 37 through 40.

Finally, Jesus says some very interesting things about the people that God the Father has entrusted to him. Jesus says, all the Father gives me, speaking of people, will come to me.

And whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. God has given Jesus a people. And they're going to come to him. And he will never cast them out. They'll never perish. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me, the Father.

[15 : 44] And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing, none of all that he has given me. He's talking about people. But raise it up on the last day.

God the Father has given God the Son a people that God the Son is going to lay his life down for, call out, and he's going to shepherd them all the way to the end. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life.

And I will raise him up on the last day. Those who belong to Jesus believe in Jesus. So the sheep who hear his voice are the very human sheep the Father has given the shepherd's son, of whom he will lose none.

Gather all to himself. Here's the point of what we're seeing. This is the point Jesus is making. He's talking to these Jews who don't like him. And he's saying, whether you recognize me or not, as the Christ, it's besides the point.

Because the people who need to understand and hear me are my sheep. And they will hear my voice and respond to my call.

[16 : 58] Well, I'm the legitimate shepherd of Ezekiel 34. Move over. So there's a people, God the Father has given God the Son, whom Jesus will call out from the world to follow him.

And I'm going to unpack that next week a little bit more. But what you need to see here is what Jesus is developing in John 10 is a very interesting way to talk about the relationship between the master and his disciples.

The shepherd-sheep relationship is a very helpful way to illustrate the authoritative and affectionate relationship between master and disciple.

Jesus and all of the blood-bought. So what we see here is that Jesus is the legitimate shepherd. He has authority over his flock. One flock, one shepherd obeying the voice of their one exclusive shepherd, Jesus.

[18 : 06] Now, I'm going to put in a little fast forward. We're going to start moving a little faster. The second truth that I want you to see that makes Jesus one of a kind is his personal knowledge of his flock.

We see that in verse 3. He says, To him the gatekeeper opens, the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

God the Father has given God the Son of people, right? Now, the mistake we can make is thinking that God has just given this mob of people with kind of blurry faces, and God's kind of like, Well, I got this mob of people that nobody really knows.

In Revelation chapter 7, this mob of people who Jesus laid his life down for is a multitude without number from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

But here Jesus is saying, They're not blurry faces to me. I know them each by name.

[19 : 13] Which means he knows you by name. If you are a follower of Jesus, if you've been called out, if you know him as your good shepherd, he knows you by name.

He knows everything about you. Have you ever experienced someone, you meet someone for the first time, you say your name once, and then that person, the next time you see him or her, they got your name.

They know you. It's so dignifying. It's so welcoming. It has this sense of that person took the time to really concentrate on learning my name, and that person wants to know me.

That name, Jesus knowing your name, means he knows you through and through. If you look down to verses 14 and 15, we read this.

I'm the good shepherd, Jesus says. I know my own, and my own know me. We'll come back to that my own know me next week. I know my own. So is Jesus here just kind of saying, I know the facts about you.

[20 : 23] I know their name, their height, weight, IQ. I know their income. Blah-ba-dee, blah-ba-dee, blah-ba-dee. He knows that. Is that, is that all?

Look at verse 15, because in verse 15, Jesus tells us the kind of knowing with which he knows us. In verse 15 he says, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father.

I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. He's comparing his knowledge of us with his knowledge in relationship to the Father, and the Father's relationship to him.

A relationship between God the Father, and God the Son, that's marked by a loving relationship of mutuality. They belong to each other.

There's clear distinctions in their personhood, clear distinctions in authority. We have the Father and the Son, but there is a fullness of affection. A loving relationship.

[21 : 35] His knowing us is him loving us. Loving all that we are. He knows us personally. So much though, not only knows us each by name, he loves us each thoroughly.

If you look down to verse 27 of chapter 10, Jesus says, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. Jesus isn't describing a strictly professional relationship between shepherd and sheep.

Jesus is describing a personal, intimate, loving affection between master and disciple. Here's what this means.

He knows you. He knows exactly where you're at. And he loves you where you are. He loves you. And not just does he love you, he loves us as a church.

The good shepherd loves us, his people. And not just this local church, the universal church, all of his flock, he loves his people. So when we are kind of getting on the outset of a search for a worship leader, we have confidence that our good shepherd loves us, and he knows what we need.

[22 : 58] He goes before us. He personally knows each and every one of his own blood-bought sheep by name, including you.

One flock, one shepherd. We are one united flock following our one exclusive shepherd who lovingly knows us each by name. The third truth is that flows out of what we just read about Jesus, his loving knowledge of us.

He cares for his flock. We see this in verses seven through ten. And I think that this is going to minister to some of you in the room.

Verses one through five, he's talking about his legitimate authority and access through the gate to the sheep. And in verses seven through ten, he switches it up a little bit.

Now he's talking about himself as the gate, as the door to the sheepfold. So Jesus said to them, again, the Jews, particularly Pharisees, truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

[24 : 09] I mean, what's he doing here? This seems weird. He was just talking about a shepherd, now he's talking about a door, and he comes back to shepherd talk in verse 11 and 14. So, is he shifting this up?

Let me assure you, Jesus isn't kind of putting the whole shepherd talk on hold. Let me explain.

Don't imagine in your minds when Jesus says, I am the door of the sheepfold, don't imagine the sheepfold with a wood door and the name Jesus burned into the door.

Don't think that. Here's what you need to think. Jesus is talking about a role of the shepherd. Not all sheepfolds in the first century had doors.

And so, if a sheepfold didn't have a door, a shepherd would either employ a hired hand to stand guard, or the shepherd himself would lie down in the entryway of a shepherd, of a sheepfold, as the shepherd door.

And that performed two functions. We see one in verse 8. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

[25 : 28] The shepherd in the door keeps out the bad guys, thieves and robbers. Do you know who Jesus is talking about there? He's talking about the religious leaders of that day that he's speaking to.

And in the first part of verse 10, Jesus helps us understand the intent of these thieves and robbers. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. Jesus, the shepherd door, protects his human flock from the bad guys with bad intent, so he protects his flock by keeping out death and destruction.

Get it? But in verse 9, it's the other side of that. He is the entryway to life.

Jesus says in verse 9, I am the door if anyone, if any human, if any sheep, if anyone enters through me, by me, he will be saved in all of that, what that means and go in and out and find pasture.

[26 : 43] I'm going to provide you life, good pasture. Now, there should be a couple things popping in your head right now. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul, Psalm 23. Remember when we were reading through Ezekiel 34 how God himself will feed his sheep on the highlands of Israel, just the choice food?

It's a picture of life. And that's why in John 10, 10, the second half, Jesus talks about I came that they might have life and have it abundantly.

I came to provide abundant life pasture to all of my sheep. The bad guys come to steal, kill, and destroy.

But the good shepherd came and he is the door to his legitimate sheep that they may have life and have it to the full. If you look down at 10, 28, he says, I give them eternal life and they will never perish.

[27 : 56] Later on in John 17, Jesus says, and this is eternal life, that you know God and me, the Son. Eternal life is defined by Jesus in terms of being in right relationship to him.

So if you know God through Christ, you will never perish. You have abundant life starting now. The good shepherd wants to give you good pasture.

In 738, Jesus talks about it this way, about giving a heart from which flows rivers of living water. It's a reference to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in us perpetually, non-stop, giving us life that quenches our deepest soul thirst.

the good shepherd gives abundant life to his sheep. He protects and he provides.

Now, I just need to make one qualification here because you're like, man, my life doesn't look like that. The situation that sparked all this good shepherd talk was the healing of a blind man in chapter 9.

[29 : 18] And that blind man, Jesus, came up to spit into some mud, put it onto his eyes and tell, go wash that off in the pool of Siloam. The blind man never saw Jesus.

He just heard his voice. And then after he's healed, there's this big hubbub.

And he begins to identify himself, the former blind man, he begins to identify himself as one of Jesus' disciples. Even though he's never seen Jesus, he's just heard about Jesus.

His parents kind of ostracize him and then this climax is in this man born blind but now given sight by Jesus whom he just heard in obedience.

The Pharisees kick him out of the synagogue which is basically being kicked out of a church. The men who could see Jesus but were blind to who he really was kicked the blind man who didn't see Jesus but believed in him when was given sight out.

[30 : 31] You see it? So why am I telling you all this stuff? Well when this man born blind healed by Jesus finally meets up with Jesus again and sees him for the first time one would think that this blind man now who can see would be like oh man this stinks parents have kind of virtually disowned me I got kicked out of the synagogue bug bummer one would think that that kind of alienating would crush one but do you know what this blind man who can now see do you know what he does when Jesus says hey you're looking at the guy that healed you do you know what he does 938 he says Lord I believe and he worshipped Jesus that's what abundant life looks like it is thriving joyful living for

Jesus despite your circumstances being in right relationship to God through Jesus does that he cared for that blind man now who is given sight and Jesus the good shepherd cares for you to protect and to provide the fourth truth his sacrificial good on behalf of his flock this is verses 11 18 and this is where the thickness of the passage shows up in these verses Jesus refers to himself as the good shepherd he does that three times twice in verse 11 you can see it I am the good shepherd the and once in verse 14 I am the good shepherd so the question becomes what does he mean by good well in classic Jesus style he starts off with a picture of bad shepherding in verses 12 and 13 he says hey we've all seen the hired man before he who is a hired man hand and not a shepherd look at who does not own the sheep the sheep do not belong like that who does not own the sheep they don't belong to him when he sees a wolf coming he turns tail to save his own life and when he does that the sheep are snatched by the wolf and scattered he's again giving a dig against the

Pharisees verse 13 he says a hired man because the sheep don't belong to him he doesn't care for their safety when a beast point not the good shepherd the good of the good shepherd is what he

will do for his sheep in danger and this good is the same good that makes good Friday good each time Jesus brings up that he is the good shepherd there is this explicit link to him laying down his life look at verse 11 I'm the good shepherd the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep 14 I'm the good shepherd I know my own my own know me just as the father knows me and I know the father and I lay down my life for the sheep and then in verses 17 and 18 three more times he talks about laying down his life for the sheep and twice he talks about taking it up again his resurrection the greatest danger facing his sheep was his sheep's sinfulness and remember verse 14 I know my own I know my own and so the good shepherd on good Friday gave his own life to cover over to atone for the sin of his own sheep so that they can come into a relationship with him and become part of his flock the greatest good the defining good was Jesus giving his life for his own and taking it up again it's absolutely vital to making us his own his sacrificial good of laying down his life makes us his own his death is what makes us the blood bought people of God he perished so that we would not perish we are one united flock following our one exclusive shepherd who laid down his life willingly of his own accord with his authority under the charge of his father for the glory of the father's name five the fifth truth he's gathering all of his flock

I'm going to develop this more next week let me just touch on it now in verse three we get a hint of something to him the gatekeeper opens the sheep hear his voice and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out he calls out his sheep from the other sheep in the sheep fold he says come come to me come out of them come to me and become part of my flock Jesus in John 10 is addressing Jews so he's saying in verse three I am calling by name human sheep from the Jewish sheep fold now if you look down at verses 15 and 16 remember in 14 says I am the good shepherd I know my own and my own know me just as the father knows me and I know the father and I lay down my life for the sheep and he says in verse 16 and I have other sheep that are not of this fold [37 : 01] I must I must I must bring them also and they will listen to my voice so there will be one flock one shepherd Jesus is calling a worldwide flock unto himself not only from the Jewish sheep fold but sheep outside of that sheep fold for the Jewish mind there was two groups of people in the world Jews and non Jews also known as Gentiles and so when Jesus says I've got sheep none of this fold he's saying I've got sheep that I laid my life down for who I know and will know me and they are from the Gentile sheep fold and I'm going to gather them from the Jews I'm going to gather them from the Gentiles and I'm going to make one whole new blood bought flock my church and that word must carries the sense of urgency it carries the sense of verse 18 discharge

Jesus says I have received from my father I will do this he's talking about the global church all the blood bought people of God from multiple sheep folds indwelt by the Holy Spirit on mission for the good shepherd and I want to press on you today that this must is still in effect the good shepherd is still gathering himself sheep from multiple sheep folds from white sheep folds from black sheep folds from Jewish and Gentile from Republican and Democrat he's calling them all unto himself they hear his name he's laid his life down they come after him they must come after him they can't resist his call because they were given to him by the father I'm going to develop this a little bit more next week but when we talk about being one united flock following one exclusive shepherd being one flock turns out to be harder than it sounds the fifth truth is he's gathering a flock now there's no one like him and the sixth truth is a promise he makes to his flock that's in verses 28 and 30 it sets him apart only he can make this promise he makes this promise to those who he's called by name those whom he knows those who heard his voice and follow him to those whom he has laid his life for to those whom he has gathered into one flock with one shepherd to them and to them alone he makes a stunning promise in verses 28 through 30 look at verse 28 he says

I give them eternal life and they will never perish promise and no one will snatch them out of my hand the last time we encountered the word snatch was in verse 12 when the hired hand bolts and the wolf comes and snatch the sheep not so with Jesus you can't snatch one of Jesus feet sheep out of his hands because they belong to Jesus no one no thing will snatch any of Jesus sheep from his hand because that hand is a pierced hand a hand that was buried a hand that was raised that hand is the hand of the risen shepherd Christ no one will snatch any of

Jesus own from his hand because they belong to him by virtue of his death and his resurrection they are his you can't you can't pull them away from him they're his you're his no one can snatch you out of his hand they will not perish because he has perished for his own but it gets better verse 29 my father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand do you notice Jesus said about his father he's greater than all there's no greater

authority no greater power which means this no one can snatch them out of the father's hand no one is able no one has the power no one can press so hard for so long that they can remove them from the father's hand christian if you belong to the good shepherd if he's called you and you believed him you are in the eternal double grip of the son and the father it's a picture of not only protection but preservation until that last day john six your assurance of being part of jesus flock is securely grounded in this god the father set his love on you and called you to be his own from eternity past and god the son laid his life down for you and was raised and made you his own for all eternity future so that what this means is both the father and the son are united in purpose and in essence to make you and keep you as their own the triune

God claims you as his own and no one can take you out of his grasp how about that for a promise one flock one shepherd we are one one united flock following one exclusive shepherd who's promised to never let us out of his grip that should give you a sigh of relief it's based on Christ's finished work so he alone is our one exclusive shepherd and I hope you're hearing that as good news okay let me just hit four quick things how this particular image of the church shepherd and flock uniquely contributes to our understanding of the church it portrays the master discipleship relationship in pastoral terms shepherd and sheep it's clear line of authority Jesus is the leader we are his followers second it depicts a necessary dependence between the sheep and the good shepherd we need him he doesn't need us but he's committed to us out of his love for us he's going to provide and protect us we need him we're dependent on him third we follow him in a community a community of sheep following a shepherd is a flock a community of

[45 : 19] Christians following after Jesus is a church we follow Jesus together more next week but let me just say this there is no such thing as a flock of one sheep and there's no such thing as a church of one Christian four there's no one like a good shepherd if there's one thing you're pulling out of John 10 it's this there's no one like him there's no one like him who lays down his life for the sheep he is the focal point of the church he is the one we follow together it's all about Jesus of what he's done for us of what he's doing for us of what he will do for us he's one of a kind in authority over his flock knowledge of his flock care for his flock the sacrificial good on behalf of his flock his gathering of his flock his promise to his flock he alone is our one exclusive shepherd and can I have an amen that's good news that's good news we the church are the blood bought people of God indwelt by the spirit on mission for Christ and if you are wondering if Jesus is calling you to follow him you'll know it because he's calling you to follow him come after me let's pray

God in heaven we thank you so much for John 10 we feel the limits of time so we're grateful for next week God would you instruct us would you help us to think your thoughts about your church father Jesus would you help us to feel your feelings for your people who you shed your blood for in spirit of the living God would you help us to prioritize rightly the church as you do in Jesus name we pray amen