

The Good Shepherd And His Sheep pt2

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[0:00] Right? Draw me nearer. But what does that look like? What does it look like when he's drawing us nearer?! What takes shape in your life? What shows up as evidence that you're nearer than you were the day before?

That you're nearer than you were the year before. What evidence do you have? Are you nearer today to your shepherd, to your savior than you were when you were saved?

How do you know? How does it take shape? What does that look like? How does it evidence itself in your life that you are nearer today than you were before?

And is that really the objective? It is the objective, isn't it? To be drawn nearer to him. And this morning what I'd like to present to you is in drawing near to him, you look more like him.

The sheep begins to take on the resemblance of the shepherd. The sheep begins to have the same qualities, the same character as the shepherd.

[1:21] So that you see the flock and you know, oh, those are the shepherd's sheep. They belong to the good shepherd. And I would hope that as there is a resemblance of the good shepherd in you, that there is an attractiveness that would say from the world to you, take me to your leader.

Take me to the good shepherd. And as we begin to resemble the things that we talked about a couple of weeks ago, the things that are beautiful and marvelous and wonderful about your good shepherd, as those things begin to take shape in you, the world will say, I want to know more about your good shepherd.

Take me to your leader. Take me to your leader. Now, remember back to when you were young. Younger. This is a game that I always loved to play.

Simon Says. You like to play Simon Says? I love that game. Or follow the leader. And what was the telltale sign of the individual who was effective or the winner of the game?

Well, they listened carefully to the instructions of Simon, whoever that Simon was. Or they emulated the pattern that they saw in that leader as they're following the leader, as they're emulating his activities, as they're walking in the way they walk, and they're speaking the things they say, and they're moving in the way that the leader moves.

[2:59] Or they're following the instructions of the leader. That was a fun game. But do you realize that that is not just a game for that day? It's the game.

Or I might say it should shape your life. The life of following your leader. And you have a good leader.

You have the best leader. Now, unlike that game Simon Says, And unlike the game follow the leader, where the person who followed instructions best was the winner.

The focus and attention was directed to that individual. Good job. You can now be the leader. Way to go. Perfect for you. So, the way that we emulate our leader, in contrast to that, doesn't draw attention to us, but draws attention to him.

That's when you know you are following your leader the best. When attention and focus and glory and praise goes to him, and not to you.

[4:11] Are you following your leader today? Well, a couple of weeks ago, we were looking at John chapter 10, verses 1 to 18. This morning, I'd like to look at John chapter 10, verses 1 to 18.

A few weeks ago, we were focusing and directing our attention to the Good Shepherd. We were looking at the qualities that made him good. But this morning, what I'd like to do, is I'd like to draw attention, not to the Good Shepherd, but I'd like to think about and talk about his sheep.

What is true about the shepherd's sheep. So, if you're there in John chapter 10, let me just read the first few verses, and we'll make our way through this passage together.

John chapter 10, verses 1 to 18. If you're visiting with us this morning, there's a Bible in front of you, there in the pew. We're on page 896.

Let me read the first few verses here. Here's what it 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.

[5:24] 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 sheep by name and leads them out.

When he has brought them out, all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

Do we have slides this morning, Joey? Okay, I just want to make sure that we're tracking together. Okay, good. I think, if I remember correctly, there are four qualities in our passage this morning that direct our attention to the shepherd.

Things that will be true of you as a sheep, if you are a true sheep, part of the flock, that help to point to the wonder and the goodness of your good shepherd.

And here in the first couple of verses, we see that the first quality is they listen to their shepherd.

They listen to their shepherd. Now, the number of passages that are up there are to try to walk you through.

[6:30] You don't have to worry about writing them down. They're there just for your own benefit. Of course, if you want to put them down, you're welcome to. But just to try to chart our progress through this book, Jesus was not a wimp when he came to helping the scribes and the Pharisees and the religious leaders to know, I'm the guy.

I'm the Messiah. I'm the man. Follow me. Time after time after time, Jesus clearly and boldly and definitively said, I am he.

I'm the Messiah. Let there be no question. It's me. And here we have some examples going all the way back to the first chapter where John the Baptist says of him, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And Jesus, walking onto the scene, accepts the title, accepts the praise of John and gets baptized in the presence of everyone. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

In John chapter 2, the account that we find in the Gospel of John and we don't find anywhere else, Jesus goes into the temple and Jesus is cleansing the temple of the money changers, overturning these tables.

[7:48] And he says definitively in John chapter 2, 16, Do not make my father's house a house of trade. Here will you worship in the temple. This is my father's house.

True identity was being defined, declared in the presence of all who heard. To the woman at the well in John chapter 4, verse 26, and some of these will be up there, others will not, so don't be confused or alarmed.

The woman is asking Jesus the question. He says, We know the Messiah is coming. And Jesus says, I who speak to you am he. I'm the one. I'm the Messiah.

In John chapter 5, verse 17, Jesus states, My father is working until now and I am working. And with that, the crowd decided that they were going to pick up stones and kill him because he was even calling God his own father.

They got it. They understood what that statement meant. In John 6, 35, Jesus says, I am the bread of life. And later on in the passage, he says, I came down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

[9:00] I am from above. I am from heaven. The father resides there. He sent me down to do his work. In John chapter 7, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

I am the one. I am the well that has been promised in the Old Testament. Drink of me. In John 8, 12, I am the light of the world. In John 8, 58, Before Abraham was, I am.

John 9, 5, I am the light of the world. And then four times in the passage, this passage in John chapter 10, Jesus says, Twice, I am the door.

And twice, I am the shepherd. Now by this point, the religious leaders should have gotten it. Jesus is the man. And they should have listened to his voice.

Should have recognized the works and the truth and the statements that were so clear and definitive. And they should have bowed before him and listened to his instruction.

[10:03] They had the opportunity to do that. And yet they turned on Jesus and decided not to listen. Jesus is one worth listening to.

He is the good shepherd worth listening to. We find an interesting reason to listen to him. We find it here in verses 3 and 4. It says, To him the gatekeeper opens, the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name.

Now that's an interesting detail that John brings out. He calls his sheep by name. What is the significance of calling his sheep by name? And not the converse.

Not the sheep calling the shepherd by name. Interestingly, throughout the Old Testament and even in the New Testament, there was significance in naming. We find in the very first chapters of Genesis, Adam named the animals.

We find throughout the Old Testament, God renames Abram to Abraham. He renames Sarai to Sarah. He renames Jacob to Israel.

[11:17] Of course, the angel shows up and says, His name shall be Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. An angel shows up and says, Call him John. Speaking of John the Baptist, Jesus to Simon says, You're no longer going to be called Simon, you're going to be called Peter.

There is significance in name. The connotation of this is a connotation of ownership and authority, of really the birthing process of legacy, of identity and procession proceeding from the individual who has been named.

We do this in our own day in some sense where moms and dads who have born children, they call their children by name.

Now, sometimes they run through the whole list before they actually get to the right one, but they call their kids by name and their kids do not say, Hey, Andrew! Or, Hey, Sarah!

They don't call parents by name, they call them by their title mom or dad. It's an issue of authority, it's an issue of procession, it's an issue of submission to the one who is naming and calling and the natural outworking of that is they are called by name and they listen and follow the voice of the one who has called them.

[12:48] This morning, are you listening to the voice of your good shepherd? Is it the resounding voice in your ear? Is it the instructive and wise voice that you hear?

When making decisions or seeking to raise families, is it the voice that directs your path? You will be defined, you will be identified by the one to whom you listen.

Are you listening to your Savior this morning? And when you listen to your Savior, there will be an attractiveness about your life because there will be a contrasting effect of your life.

You will stand out and the world will wonder why you're not caught up in the flow. And they may ask you because of listening to the settling voice of your Savior.

It may cause them or bring them to the point of saying, there's an attractiveness about you. There's a wisdom in the instruction that you are getting. There's a discernment about you.

[13:54] You are listening to a voice of reason. Take me to your leader. Take me to your good shepherd. And then the effect of the sheep in emulating and responding to the voice of their shepherd is accomplishing his purpose in pointing and directing the attention of individuals of this world to their good shepherd.

But there must be more than just listening to the voice of the shepherd. It needs to be a voice that is singular. A voice that is central. A voice that is supreme and ultimate.

That leads us to this next point. Not only are they listening to their shepherd, they are loyal to their shepherd. We find that here in verses 5 to 8. Let me read these verses for us.

It says, A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So Jesus again said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

[15:09] Are you loyal to the voice of your shepherd? Now, there are a lot of voices out there competing for your attention. There are a lot of voices out there who are vying for your loyalty.

But we are called to be loyal to the voice of our shepherd and his voice alone. Those voices in the world, they are seeking to set the priorities for your life.

They are trying to tell you the best way to help raise your children. What the expectations are for you in family. what it means to be the right kind of parent or the right kind of husband or the right kind of wife.

What are those role distinctions all about anyway in this world? They tell you that expressing your independence is ultimate, not submission to the authority whether it be in the workplace or whether it be in the world in terms of the government.

The submission? What are you talking about? We're supposed to be independent. independent. That's what this country was founded on after all. They want to set the standards of work and success and parenting and activities that are ultimate for you.

[16 : 28] Set standards for your home and for education and for marriage and all those voices in this world are competing for your attention. Will you listen to those voices? Do you find yourself being governed by those voices, making decisions based upon those voices instead of hearing the clear, clarion call of your shepherd seeking to give you direction for life?

Some of those voices are easy to recognize but others are not because they actually come from within the church. There are voices in the church competing for your attention as well. They would say, lay claim on your blessing.

They would say, you can have your best life today. They would say, God has given you a dream. Find that dream and work it through. They would downplay the reliability of the scripture.

They would tell you that doctrine and theology, that's for the elite, that's for the scholastic, but doctrine divides. Let's not do with doctrine. Let's be people of love.

They would tell you to exalt their own prophetic word. They would tell you that all you need to have is enough faith and you'll never be sick again.

[17 : 45] Or they move in the opposite extreme and they stress the separation that we have with the world to unhealthy levels. They would tell you to be people who are focused on holiness and not mingled with this world.

Don't be polluted by this world in any way. They might convince you to practice those Old Testament dietary laws. They might overemphasize certain styles of music.

They may seek to spiritualize their own convictions and judge those who do not follow what they found to be so true in the scripture. And certainly there are some convictions that God has laid on our life and we need to know what those are and follow those.

But understand there's also liberty. There's also the opportunity for us to follow the voice of the Lord for us in the convictions that He lays on our own hearts.

But loyalty to the shepherd is imperative. Notice the dangers here for not being loyal to the shepherd. We find that here in verse 8.

[18 : 51] All who came before me are thieves and robbers but the sheep did not listen to them. Sheep don't listen to the thieves and to the robbers.

They understand the dangers the implicit dangers that are there. These are those who would seek to destroy, who would seek to kill, who would seek to maim the flock.

Your shepherd is the only one who cares about what is best for you. Understand that He is a good shepherd that seeks to bless and protect and to guard and the things that He puts on your life as seeming restrictions are meant to help protect you from the consequences of sin in your life.

And although these things may seem counter-cultural, although they may seem out of the mainstream or archaic or ancient, obtuse, perhaps sexist or prejudice, not up with the 21st century, they are in fact timeless.

They are in fact best because they came from the One who created you. They come from the One who loves you most, who loves you best, who gave His life so that you could receive life.

[20 : 11] So when culture turns up its nose at purity before marriage, at roles of husbands and wives and the dynamic there, at submission to authority or hard work and integrity and business or unwavering conviction and an unwillingness to compromise like Daniel or appropriate discipline within your home or prioritizing worship and being part of the body of Christ and worshiping Christ on a regular basis, setting that at the forefront of your family, they would like to say that those who practice such standards are old-fashioned, out of date, out of touch with the 21st century.

Just this week, and I want to approach this example with some fear and trepidation. Okay? I want you to understand that there is in my own heart a grieving over sin.

And just this past week, some long-time friends of ours decided after 22 years of marriage that they were going to call it quits. Two people that I would say and they would say love the Lord.

And yet, an unwillingness to resolve conflict, an unwillingness to humble themselves and to make it work. And too often, too often, the church looks just like the world.

Now, I can say this because I don't know your relationships, I don't know your history, I don't know the issues in your life, so I'm speaking ignorantly, so please hear me out, but too often, the sheep look just like the world.

[22 : 17] There is nothing attractive about our lives, there is nothing compelling that points to Christ, there is nothing that says, oh, how much they look like Jesus because they look just like the world.

As it relates to things like living together before marriage, marriage, one article says this, as a modern dating expert who empowers women to take control of their lives, I think it's time we stop clinging to the old ideal that you must wait until you're married to move in together.

The reality is that two-thirds of married couples live together before tying the knot, so the question that now needs to be answered is not if you should move in together, but rather when and how. Now, that's mainstream, but that is not what our good shepherd would say. How about sex before marriage? You would think that that would be something that would set us apart, that would be contrastive.

In a study of 38,000 Americans, 95% said that they were not celibate before marriage. Now, that's just the world, right?

[23 : 33] Of those who were interviewed, 80% of those were also professing evangelicals. Too often, those who are called to be sheep and emulate their Savior, loyal to their shepherd, there is nothing distinctive, there is nothing compelling about their life that says, oh, I want to be like the shepherd.

Now, there is grace. grace. When we blow it and mess up and sin, there is grace for you and there is grace for me.

Praise the Lord. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from even those things. He can redeem the brokenness of our life.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. But, oh, may that not be said of us, a willingness to compromise, a willingness for us to say, oh, the world looks a certain way, it's accepted in the mainstream, it's okay for me.

May we listen to the voice of our shepherd and may we be loyal to His voice because it will be, especially in these days, it will be distinctive. It will stand apart.

[24 : 55] And when we do, there will be an attractiveness about your life. There will be the distinctiveness and the settledness and the blessing that comes for those who follow after God, who are not broken, who are not tripping up and falling into all the wreckage and disrepair of this world.

They're not experiencing the kickback of all of those things that they have done in this life to sin and to disregard the standards of God. There will be a measure of health and there will be a measure of wellness about their life and blessing and peace and not the brokenness and hurt and the baggage that comes along with sin.

And that will be distinctive and that will be attractive so that this world might say, hey, take me to your leader.

I want to know the good shepherd. Is there an attractiveness in your life? The kind of loyalty that would lead you to be single-minded in devotion to him so that as the world looks at your life they say, I want to know your Savior.

Take me to your leader. We find later on in this passage, and I'm going to read from verses 9 to verse 15, and we'll pick up our next component here, our next mark of the sheep.

[26 : 25] It says in verse 9, I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and he will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill.

I lost my place. And destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees.

And the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is the hired hand, and he cares nothing for the sheep. 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.

love. I know my own, and my own know me.

[27 : 35] Now what I want you to see and pick up through our times together is that these words are used interchangeably throughout the scripture. The words knowing and loving can be used

interchangeably.

They're synonymous terms. Because the more we know him, the more we love him. And the more we love him, the more we do the things that please him. John, in his letter to the Ephesians, says this in 1 John chapter 2, verses 3 to 5.

He says, Now by this we know that we know him. Knowing is primary for John. How do you know you're part of the flock? How do you know that you know the shepherd?

Well, here's the answer. If we keep his commandments. But, whoever keeps his word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.

By this we know that we are in him. These words used interchangeably in this passage, those two verses, help us to see that knowing him and loving him are interchangeable.

[28:43] There's two words that Jesus emphasizes significantly through John chapter 13, 14, 15, and 16. We'll get there maybe next year or two. I'll tell you what, I just want to let you know how wonderful it is to be in a church that treasures the word of God and is willing to take it slow, is willing to be patient in the process, willing to dig in.

That is a beautiful, that's a beautiful thing. It's a great quality of a church that loves God too. They love his word, they want to know him, and not just a superficial way, they want to know and dig in to their savior.

And so, if we don't get there for a couple years, that's great for me. But John cares deeply about knowing and loving the savior.

In our study together, John chapter 20, 34, and 35, he stresses the purpose for the book, right?

He says, let me read that for you, I had it memorized and then now it's gone. These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

[30:01] Believing and knowing go together too, do they not? And it should not be any surprise that John places a heavy emphasis on knowing. In Matthew, the word knowing is used 35 times.

In Mark, 26 times. In Luke, 36 times. In John, how many? A hundred and eight times the word knowing.

You think John cares about this believing and introducing you to the savior so that you can know him and love him? You better believe it. He cares greatly about that. And a couple of weeks ago, we've been kind of going through this reading of John together and I hope that you did that and I had a couple of folks come up to me.

One person came up to me and says, 98. 98. Okay, give me some context here. He says, 98 believings throughout the book of John.

And he was right. If you read the ESV, there's about 101 if you read the New King James and there's 96 if you read the NIV. And I don't know what the discrepancies are, but there's a lot of times where it talks about believing.

[31:12] John cared about believing and he cares about knowing. And Jesus cares about you knowing him. Do you know the savior?

Because if you know him, you will love him. There's no wonder why the apostle Paul in virtually all of his prayers, the emphasis of his prayers was not what you would think.

Not necessarily on holiness, not necessarily on loving God, but it was on knowing, this component of knowing. For himself, he prays, and we saw this several weeks ago in Philippians chapter 3.

The highest thing that I could do, the greatest purpose of my life is knowing him. And these are some of those passages that talk about this deep desire for the apostle Paul, for the churches to know Christ.

For the church of Philippi, for the church of Ephesus, for the church of Colossae. And in Peter, he prays this same thing in 2 Peter chapter 1 verses 3 and 8.

[32:19] That his divine power that is granted to us all things pertains to life and godliness through the knowledge of him. Interestingly, power comes through the knowledge of Christ.

He talks about all these qualities that continue to grow through the Christian life. They add to one another. And the end result is if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they will keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of him.

Isn't that interesting? How crucial. How essential knowledge of God is for the Christian life. Do you know your Savior?

And do you love your shepherd? The ultimate example of that knowledge is given for us right here by Jesus Christ. What does that knowledge look like?

Well, we find it here in verse 15. Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. that is the epitome of knowledge. That's the epitome of love.

[33 : 29] That's the epitome of oneness. It's the knowledge that the Father and the Son have for one another. We'll take a deeper look at this next week and the week following.

It comes front and center to us as we look at the relationship between the Godhead and how that plays out. But we know that knowing the shepherd means emulating the shepherd.

Any of you who are interested in sports, you look at certain sports figures. You look at how they do their golf swing or how they stand at the plate or how they catch a ball.

You care about the shoes they wear if you're a runner. You care about their lifting regiment. You care about their diet. You want to emulate their success and so you look to the facts so that you can know them and you can emulate their life.

Knowing Christ, knowing the good shepherd will lead to you emulating his life. So, all you have to do is ask yourself the question, do I look like Jesus more today than I did when I first came to know him?

[34 : 45] And if that is true of you, then you're growing in this process of knowing him and loving him and showing him to the world. And when we show Christ through our love, there is an attractiveness that shows up.

There is this compelling aspect of that beauty of Christ coming through our life. love, that love, that greatest love, the ultimate love for the highest joy of him becomes attractive to this world so that they will say, hey, take me to your leader.

Introduce me to your good shepherd. I want to know him too. Will you help me understand what it means to know and love your shepherd? You see, it's not about coming to church and they realize that.

It's not just about the routine. It's not just about the externals in life. There's something inside that is helping you to be more than you would be on your own.

It's Christ. It's a love for Christ and knowledge of Christ that moves you to greater things, greater purposes. But perhaps the telltale sign of that love is this final component we find here in verse 16.

[36 : 14] It says, and I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also and they will listen to my voice so there will be one flock and one shepherd.

This final aspect is that they live as one with the shepherd and his sheep. It's one thing to say, I love the shepherd.

But the telltale sign of that love for your shepherd is how you love your other sheep in your fold. Is there a oneness?

Is there a love and a compassion and a heart and caring for them? Is there this weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who rejoice?

Carrying burdens for them and being compelled into pursuing peace when there is conflict.

Submitting yourself to them, forgiving their trespasses against you and asking for them to forgive your sins against them.

[37 : 24] Paul talks about this as a mark of the spirit in your life. In Ephesians chapter 4, 1 to 3, he says, walk worthy of the calling with which you were called. With all loneliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

This is a spirit work. And those who have the spirit will pursue oneness with the shepherd and oneness with sheep.

Now I have in my notes a walk again through the gospel of John that we don't have time for. But what I find very interesting is the reason why we are to love the sheep.

And it's not what you would think. It's not just because we're all in the same group. It's not just because we love the shepherd. What he points to here, Jesus says in speaking about the Gentiles being brought into the fold, he says here, verse 16, I have other sheep that are not of this fold.

Who is taking the initiative? I must bring them in. And I'd love to take you through the gospel of John and emphasize the fact that this is a work of God for us.

[38 : 50] He's the one choosing the team. And if it's his team, we have no business messing it up. We have no business saying, I don't like the players on the team.

Because it's not your team. It's his team. And if you love your Savior, you're going to love his team. You're going to love his sheep.

And you will do whatever it takes to emulate his love for the sheep in laying down preferences, in laying down life, in laying down your possessions, in laying down whatever it is, in emulating to the full extent that the shepherd did in laying down his life for the sheep, you will do the same because it's his team.

It's his flock. So, do you love your shepherd? Do you love your shepherd by loving his sheep? Sheep are distinctive. They have a unity that stands out. They have a love for one another that stands out. They have a loyalty to their shepherd that is contrastive and sets itself apart from the world.

[40:11] They are those who listen to the voice of their shepherd. We've heard it said that the goal of preaching is to bring the audience to a point of saying yes or no to Christ, right?

Do you realize that your life is a sermon? Your life, every day, wherever you are, has a message. Is that message of your life helping people say yes or no to God?

Is that message of your life drawing the focus to the beautiful and glorious and marvelous shepherd that you have, the good shepherd above all other shepherds?

So they might say, take me to your leader. Introduce me to that great shepherd. shepherd. Let's pray. Oh Lord, that is our prayer this morning.

It is that our life would be so distinctive that it would emulate and mimic the life of our good shepherd in such a way that people around us, the world around us, would say, oh, introduce me to your good shepherd.

[41:26] I want to know him more. may that be true of us, Lord. We know we need your help. It is a spirit work that has to happen for us, not something that we can do on our own.

So do that work for us, Lord, and help us to care for the things that you care for. Help us to love this world as you love the world. Help us to love one another as you have loved your sheep.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.