

Why Do You Listen to Him?

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[0 : 00] I'm going to read for us John chapter 10. The sermon text really begins at verse 14, but I think we need to read everything leading up to that because our Lord Jesus gives this this word picture.

And now he continues to explain the meaning of it all the way up through verse 21 for today. And as you hear me read this and you read for yourself, remember, this is God's own word.

It's his inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear and sufficient word for you. John chapter 10 verses 1 through 21. 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.

When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them and the sheep follow him for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him for they do not know the voice of strangers.

[1 : 16] This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. Verse 7. So Jesus again said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

All who come, all who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

The thief comes only to steal and kill 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 wolves coming and leaves the sheep and flees. And the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

He flees because he is a hired hand and 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.

[2 : 23] And I know the father and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must also bring them and they will listen to my voice.

So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason, the father loves me because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.

I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my father. There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.

Many of them said, he has a demon and he is insane. Why listen to him? Others said, these are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon.

Can a demon open the eyes of the blind? This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Will you pray with me?

[3 : 40] Oh Lord, your heart beats.

You are alive. You cry out in a loud voice. And you do this through earthen vessels through your church.

Please speak once again today for the glory of your name we ask. Amen. Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The question we need to consider to this is the question that the opponents of Jesus ask at the very end of this passage we read. Look at verse 20. Why do you listen to him?

Why do you listen to him? On a different occasion I shared with you about a tribe in the Amazon. Missionaries brought them the gospel but a church never took root.

[4 : 59] Years passed. A new team of missionaries arrived and as they started sharing the gospel the people of this tribe told them we have a word for that. And the word they use is that word when you're on a trail going back to your village after hunting.

You give out a call and everyone who hears that jumps on the trail and goes back home. This is the picture. Why do you listen to Christ?

Why do you listen to the gospel? Well for the tribe, the hunters, to not listen means that you're choosing to remain lost.

You're going to be hungry. You will perish. But you do listen because you don't want to be left out in the jungle all alone to be devoured by wild animals.

If you listen or don't listen, it's a matter of life and death. Why do you listen to him? Jesus says, I call all who belong to me, to the way, to the life.

[6 : 10] And my own will listen. They will follow me. We saw last week how this word picture was very familiar. A fold is a wall in the shape of a circle about waist high with one opening.

That's the door. A lot of times different flocks will be brought in. So you'd have maybe three or four different shepherds sharing one fold. They bring them in at night to protect them from predators. They take them out in the day to enjoy the pastures.

And the shepherd himself would sit at the door. He is the door. No one comes in to devour his sheep unless going through him. And when it's time the next day to go out, he calls his own by name.

Every single sheep he knows by name. He calls them. They follow his voice. The goats, the other shepherd sheep, they don't follow that shepherd. They stay right where they are.

They follow those shepherds. Why do you listen to him? If you trust Jesus as your good shepherd, that means you trust that he is who he says he is.

[7 : 19] And he says he is God. He says, I am the good shepherd. I laid down my life for you. I know my own.

My own know me. If you know me, you will follow my voice. Now look at verse 19. We read in light of this glorious teaching that there was again a division among the Jews.

He says, I have other sheep that are not of this fold. Well, this fold represents the nation of Israel. So among the nation of Israel, those hearing the gospel, hearing this good news of who Jesus is, even among those within this fold of Israel, there's a division.

Because of these words. Why do you listen to him? In verse 20, they attack both his person, both his divinity and his humanity.

They say, why he has a demon spiritually. This is not something you want to hear spiritually. You cannot trust him. They're throwing doubt on his goodness and his divinity.

- [8 : 28] This man can't be from God. He has to be from God's enemy. Why listen to him? The other phrase is that he is insane. That's an attack on his humanity.
- His mind doesn't work right. The words he's saying do not make sense. See how the entire person of Jesus comes under attack. Why do you listen to him? That's the same doubt that the serpent cast against God to Adam and Eve, wasn't it?
- Why do you listen to him? I believe the doctrine and focus, the reason why we listen to our Lord, is sovereign grace.
- Why do we listen to him? It's because of his sovereign grace. That's what he's going to open up in today's verses. What is sovereign grace? I want to give a simple little definition.
- Then I want to read a quote describing. Because I think it's something that's almost better described than defined. Sovereign. Sovereign means a king's decree. So picture an empire.
- [9 : 35] The king, the sovereign, sits on the throne. He's surveying the enemies where they're invading. They got the map laid out on the table. And he says, we need to raise up our army. I need every man 13 and older to call, report to duty.
- And I'm going to send out my battalions where I need them. He's the king. He sovereignly will protect his entire empire, his entire nation. Because he's the sovereign king. In the Bible, we see of God's sovereign grace.
- The father has the full view. The son is the champion. He's the captain of our salvation. He is boots on the ground, raising up the army and leading them.
- And it's his Holy Spirit that energizes, that applies the plan of God. He does it by grace. Because soldiers, just like sheep, they don't deserve to be in his army.
- We all failed. We failed basic training. But he raises us up. He energizes us. And he sends us out. Here's how a pastor in the 1800s in Scotland described the sovereign grace of God.
- [10 : 41] His name is Horatius Bonar. He said, grace bursts forth spontaneously from the bosom of eternal love. Father, Son, and Spirit, eternal love.
- And rested not until it had removed every impediment and found its way to the sinner's side, swelling around him in full flow.
- Grace does away with the distance between the sinner and God, which sin had created. Grace meets the sinner on the spot where he stands.
- Grace approaches him just as he is. Grace does not wait till there is something to attract it, nor till a good reason is found in the sinner for its flowing to him.
- Why do the sheep listen to him? Because of his sovereign grace. Why do you listen to the Lord? Why do you crack open your Bible?
- [11 : 45] Why do you sit and pray? And ask God, we're just saying it. Speak, O Lord. Why do you listen to him? I think we see in this text several reasons.
- Number one, you listen to him. Because without the good shepherd, you and I are dead. Let's do a brief recap. This is why we had to read the whole chapter again.
- We read in verse one that your soul will be stolen away by thieves. We read in verse five that all will feel like strangers to you from whom you must flee.
- In verse nine, you won't be safe at night without your good shepherd there nearby. Verse 10, you won't enjoy abundant life on green pastures if you ignore the voice of the shepherd who calls you out into them.
- In verse 12, without your good shepherd, you are scattered and you were devoured by ravenous wolves. And in verse 13, no one will care for you or watch over you.

[12 : 56] You will be an orphan without the good shepherd calling you by name. That brings us up to verse 14 for today. Why do you listen to him?

You and I, we need a good shepherd. We need God himself to be our shepherd. We need to know that we belong to his flock. We need to know that he laid down his life to save you and me.

So when people mock you or ask you this question, why do you believe that stuff? Why do you believe him or why do you listen to him? You can do like they did here in verse 21.

Look at what they say. Others, in response to Jesus being called a demon, possessed or insane. Look at verse 21. They say these are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon.

See the words of the Lord. They are words of life. Can you say that? Is the gospel the word of life for you? It's your shepherd's good word.

[14 : 01] And then they say, can a demon open the eyes of the blind? They're still referring back to this great sign where a man born blind was physically healed.

And our Lord used that to teach that it's not just about physical healing. His sovereign grace opens the eyes spiritually of all those of us, all of us after Adam born in darkness.

And that's the work of the Holy Spirit to open your eyes. And if that's your testimony, that's the best answer you can give. Why do you listen to him? Why do you believe this stuff? His words are life.

He opened my eyes. That's why we listen to him. Without the good shepherd, we are dead. In 1820, there was a baby girl who was born, either born blind or within six weeks became blind.

Her name was Fanny Crosby. We just sang one of her songs. She wrote over 4,000 songs and hymns in her life. You know, when you're blind, physically blind, all your other senses get heightened.

[15 : 05] And so her ear was masterful. She could hear melodies and she could just hear rhymes. She was also able, if someone was reading the word to her, the word of God, the Holy Spirit helped her.

And she just retained it. Super strong auditory learner. And think about from the perspective of someone who's physically blind, like Fanny Crosby. Her whole life, she has needed someone to hold her hand and guide her around.

Just to survive. Just to do basic life functions. All the way, my Savior leads me. Who have I to ask beside?

How could I doubt his tender mercy, who through life has been my guide? Fanny Crosby knew why she listened to him.

As her good shepherd. And if you trust Jesus as your good shepherd, you believe he is who he says he is. You will listen to him.

[16 : 07] Number two, why do you listen to him? This is something I really enjoyed learning here. When you hear Jesus say, I am the good shepherd.

What he's saying is, I am God. That's what he's saying. Look at verse 14. I am the good shepherd. Now, this word translated good, it means I am the ideal, the intrinsically lovely, the perfect shepherd.

Remember in Mark 10, when the young ruler came up to Jesus and he said, good teacher. And Jesus just stopped him in his tracks and said, hold on. You're calling me good teacher.

You know, only God is good. Why do you call me that? He's testing him. Are you saying I'm God? He's putting him to the test right away. Do you believe I am he?

When Jesus says, I am the good shepherd, he's saying I am the only good shepherd. I am the shepherd that you would dream of having.

- [17 : 07] The shepherd that all other shepherds should strive to emulate intrinsically. There is no flaw in me and my goodness as your shepherd. Now, if you knew your Old Testament, Ezekiel 34, we read a lot of that last week.

Listen to what verse 15 has promised all along. God said, I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God.

So when Jesus says, I am the good shepherd, he is saying I am the Lord God.

We listen to Jesus because he is God. He is the word of God taken on the flesh. We listen to Jesus because God speaks through Jesus.

This gets put to the test for us as well. When we're going through one of those extremely hard seasons of life and it feels like this world is not my home.

- [18 : 20] I do not belong here. You feel like a sojourner, a pilgrim, someone with with no true home on this earth. But you remember.

Jesus Christ came to this very earth. He took on flesh to be my good shepherd and his Holy Spirit speaks and calls me and his word is a lamp to my feet.

He will show me how I need to walk even through this hard path. When there's that fun thing that your whole family, your kids want to do. Or when you're not sure if that check you put in the mail is going to bounce.

You remember. It's God himself. Your good shepherd. Who makes the lilies of the field beautiful in their simplicity. It's your good shepherd who makes the joyful sparrows sing and have something to eat every day.

And he promises you in 2 Peter 1:3 that from his loving, loving hand as your good shepherd, he will give you all you need for life and godliness. And that's all you need.

- [19 : 28] He will provide for his sheep. You listen to your good shepherd because he is your God. And if you trust that Jesus is your good shepherd, believing he is God, you will listen to him.

Number three, why do you listen to him? Because all whom he knows from every nation will hear his voice. Look at verse 16.

Jesus says, I have other sheep that are not of this fold. So the fold he's telling the Jews about is Israel. Now picture yourself in the Middle East, which looks a lot like Colorado.

You get out of the city and you see these open fields. And there are places where you can't grow crops. There's not enough water. So you just have some cattle, skinny sheep and cattle and goats. And there's this fold over here and this fold on the top of that hill.

And all the shepherds just scatter around because they got to find enough grass to eat. Jesus says, I see Israel. I'm calling my sheep out of Israel. There are other folds.

- [20 : 35] There are other nations. And I have my sheep in those nations as well. When they hear my voice, they will follow me in the same way. And I must bring them out.

Notice how he says in verse 16. He doesn't say there will be one. What does he say? Look at verse 16. He doesn't say there will be one fold. He's not going to bring believers out of every other nation into Israel.

He says there will be one flock. What defines this flock? It's that they have one shepherd. And wherever the shepherd goes, they follow. They follow his voice.

So you see, belonging to the flock of Christ is not about your ethnic line or your bloodline. It's not about nationality. It's about do you hear the voice of the good shepherd?

And do you follow him? If you do, then you belong to his flock. In Zechariah chapter 8, we read this. Thus says the Lord of hosts, peoples shall come yet.

[21 : 37] Even the inhabitants of many cities saying, let us go at once to seek the favor of the Lord of hosts. Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts.

In those days, ten men from the nations of every tongue shall say, let us go with you. For we have heard that God is with you.

What a glorious promise. Christ shows up and he says, I am the good shepherd. Out of many nations, they will follow me. I am the one they will trust. God is with me and I am with you.

And through me, God is with you. So this is our confidence. This is our confidence for evangelism, for gospel missions, isn't it? Jesus says, I have other sheep in verse 16.

He doesn't say, I will have other sheep from other nations. Look at verse 16. He says, I have them. They're already mine. They are in Indonesia.

[22 : 38] They are in Algeria. They are in Aurora. They're in Parker. I have them. They're mine. And when they hear my voice, they will follow me.

That's where we get our confidence to pray and to trust God and to proclaim him. Look at the way he describes it. He says, there will be one flock. Do you listen to him?

Do you believe this? He will have one flock. I will be the one shepherd. And in what way does the shepherd know all of his sheep?

He says in verse 14, I know my own and my own know me. Now look at verse 15. I know them in this way. Look at 15. Just as the father knows me and I know the father.

In the Bible we read of God, the father, God, the son, God, the Holy Spirit. One God, three persons.

[23 : 38] The one God, the triune God in three persons exists in eternity past, before time and space were even created. So how does the father know the son?

Eternally. Relationally. This word knew to know in the biblical sense is the same way that Adam knew Eve. It's an intimate bond.

An unbreakable covenant bond. And Jesus says in verse 15, I know my sheep in that same way. I know them eternally.

Relationally. They are mine. I have those sheep already. There will be one flock. So our prayer is that his sheep will hear his voice.

Romans 10. How can they hear unless someone preaches to them? How will the Lord call them? He does it through earthen vessels. He does it through his people, through his church.

[24 : 40] The gospel goes forth. And those that belong to Christ, that know him, believe. They will believe. They must. Because Jesus says, I must lead them out. They will follow me.

Blaise Pascal, one of the greatest scientific minds of history. I believe he was a true sheep who knew sovereign grace.

Listen to how Blaise Pascal, again, describes what he experienced. Just like the blind mate, he opened my eyes. Here's Blaise Pascal's words. The gospel to me is simply irresistible.

No man ever believes with a true and saving faith unless God inclines his heart. And no man, when God does incline his heart, can refrain from believing.

That's the end of Pascal's quote. And so, what we read in Ephesians 4 is fulfilled. There is not one body, one flock. Because there is one spirit.

[25 : 48] All who were called to one hope that belongs to your call. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. Because if you trust Jesus as your good shepherd, and if you believe that he is God, you will follow him.

Well, this gets tough now. This is where we want to say, that sounds insane. In my mind, I can come up with a hundred objections to this and problems. Why do you listen to this?

We listen to this because if you hear the good news, the voice of the shepherd, Jesus says, I must bring you into my flock.

Now, you're going to want to put your finger on the verses as I point out some key words here. Look at verse 16. I have other sheep that I, what's the next word? I must also bring out.

And they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. Okay, well then let me ask you this question. Did God the Father ordain his son to death on the cross without having a definite certain people in mind?

[27 : 09] According to Jesus, you have to say no. He said he does have those he has known. He does have those he will bring out. So when our Lord Jesus lays down his life for his sheep, he does it for those he will save.

Isaiah 53 10 says it was the will of the Lord to crush him. It was the sovereign decree of God to send his son to pay the price for sin.

And here's the promise attached to it, that when he does that, when he makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring. The lamb will receive the reward for his suffering.

I hope this just sounds to you as truth. Like, Jason, why are you getting so worked up about what's just truth? I hope that's how it sounds. But you also need to be warned.

Some will say wrongly this, that Christ had died to make salvation only hypothetically possible for whoever would choose him. What that's saying is this.

[28 : 17] Hypothetically, then, it's possible that none would choose him. Those are the only two options. Either Christ died to save his own, or you're saying ultimately no one would choose him necessarily unless they wanted to.

In that case, he would die in vain. Those are the only two options. And in the words of our Lord Jesus, he says, I have other sheep. I know them as the Father knows me.

I must bring them out. The shepherd calls the sheep by name. The sheep follow his voice. I lay down my life, not for the goats, not for someone else's, some other shepherd's fold.

I lay down my life for the sheep. I know them. They know me. I will call them out. They will follow me. Do you see that? Here's why this is so important.

In John 15, 16, Jesus says, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. In 1 John 4, 10, we read, Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son, who gave his life for us, for his bride.

[29 : 37] We read in Acts how this actually happened. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Acts 13, 48.

If the Lord brings someone to believe, it's because God has ordained them unto life. They knew the voice of the shepherd when they heard the gospel. How could they not? It became irresistible to them.

Isn't this a glorious truth? It's so comforting. Again, because if it's all up to you and up to me choosing God, it becomes of works. This is what Paul preaches in Romans 11.

If we listen and obey the voice of God by our own works, Paul says, Then our following Christ is no more of grace. In the same way that you choose him, you want to un-choose him.

Did you hear the shepherd's voice or did you never hear his voice? Because if you hear his voice, you will follow your shepherd. I want to read you another testimony.

[30 : 38] This is from Augustine of Hippo. This is something really cool. He most likely lived in the northern part of Algeria, across the Mediterranean Sea from Europe. And it's possible that he is from the people group called the Che, who speak the Berber language.

St. Augustine, as he's called, he described his experience of hearing the shepherd's voice this way. You called. You cried. You shattered my deafness.

You sparkled. You blazed. You drove away my blindness. You shed your fragrance. I drew in my breath.

And I pant for you. That's a testimony of a sheep who has heard the shepherd's voice. That's the testimony of a simple soldier who has been summoned by sovereign grace.

Jesus says to you as well, if you have an ear to hear his voice, I am the good shepherd. I laid down my life for you.

[31 : 55] If you hear my voice, you will follow me. Into life abundant. Why do you listen to him?

Because he laid down his life for his sheep so that he would take it up again. In verse 11, verse 14, and verse 15, he says this same message.

This is his refrain. I lay down my life for my sheep. Now, this is confusing. When his hearers heard him say this, they thought maybe he was talking about committing suicide.

I laid down my life. This man's insane. Remember in John chapter 9, when he said, where I'm going, you cannot follow me. That's probably what they thought then too. Well, we can't follow you if you're committing suicide.

And they think he's insane. Now he says, I'm going to lay down my life. And he's saying this over and over and over. So now he clarifies this hard teaching. Look at verse 17.

[32 : 58] For this reason, the father loves me because I laid down my life. But listen, he says, I do that, that I may take it up again. Jesus is, is making it very clear.

The purpose of laying down his life, the purpose of his death, it's a sacrifice for salvation. He will become a substitutionary atonement.

He will pay the price that sin deserves. And this is the charge his father has given him. This is what we testify from Romans eight. Christ Jesus is the one who died, but more than that, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who is indeed interceding for us.

And because he not only laid down his life with the authority, obeying the charges father gave him, but he also has authority to take up his own life. That's why Paul can ride and we can believe.

Who then shall separate us from the love of God? In Christ Jesus, our Lord. He laid down his life for his sheep, that you will forever belong to him.

[34 : 06] You are his. He has ransomed you. You see how there's a perfect harmony between the will of the father and the will of the son.

In John three 16, we read how in love, the father sent his son. To pay the price for sin. Here we read, Jesus says, no one takes my life.

I lay it down. The father sent me to lay down my life. That's my charge. I willingly, by all the authority my father has given me, I willingly obey.

I lay my life down. And by that same authority, I take it up. The father raises his son fully satisfied by the price he paid and the perfect life he lived.

We read that it was, it was the spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. And Jesus says, I myself take up my life. Father, son, and spirit, perfect harmony, the sovereign will of God, the decree of God carried out in human history so that nothing can separate you from the love of God.

- [35 : 20] The pastor, the young pastor, Robert Murray machine. He describes this experience as well. He was a man whose life he, he, he traveled to Israel, but his life got cut very short with sickness.

He died an early death. And he described, as you come to the Lord's supper now, the Lord Jesus, it's the flaming eyes of the King on all those who approach his banquet feast because he lives.

McShane said, when the voice of Christ speaks through his word, you will rise. You will leave all and you will follow him. Fanny Crosby again, all the way.

My savior leads me. Oh, the fullness of his love. Oh, the sureness of his promise in the triumph of his blood. Fanny Crosby loved the word of the Lord.

She heard his truth and it resonated and it fed her soul. And it was the life, the life abundant that she could enjoy. Fanny Crosby memorized five chapters of the Bible each week.

- [36 : 44] I'm struggling with five verses in about a month, five chapters of the Bible each week. She started that when she was only 10 years old. And with the encouragement of her grandmother, because her dad died when she was six months old.

So mother and grandmother raising this little blind girl. By the time she was 15 years old, she had memorized all four gospels, the entire Pentateuch, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, the book of Proverbs, the song of Solomon, and many of the Psalms.

She knew the voice of her shepherd. He is her life. His word was the delight of her soul. We don't know how many more years the Lord gives to each one of his sheep on this earth, but you know what the purpose of our life is?

It's training us to hear the voice that will speak life to us for all eternity. It's training your soul to trust God and to love him more and more and more.

And everything that you have to go through in the body, it's preparing our souls for heaven. Everything is to prepare your soul for eternity with your good shepherd.

- [37 : 59] That same pastor, Horatius Benar, the Scotsman, he's put it this way. He said, it was free, sovereign grace when God awakened you as a sinner.

It was free grace when it found and laid hold of you. And it's God's free, sovereign grace that will hand you up in glory one day.

Do we think about that day? It could be very soon for any one of us. We just sang these words from Fannie Crosby.

The last thing I'll read from her. Here's that day. Here's what it'll be like. When my spirit clothed immortal, wings its flight to realms of day.

This my song through endless ages, Jesus led me all the way. If you know Jesus, if you hear his voice, you will follow him.

- [39 : 04] Why do you listen to him? Why would you not listen to him? How can you not want to follow Jesus Christ, the good shepherd?

If you love your life, if you understand the reality that your soul exists in, the reality of heaven, if God is in his providence, brought you to hear the gospel, you will hear his voice and you will follow him.

Listen to your good shepherd. Let's pray. Lord, you speak.

You lead us all the way. You lead us in the path of righteousness for your name's sake. You teach us to walk in your love. We read in 2 John 1 6 that this is love, that we walk according to your commandments.

And this is the commandment that just as we have heard from the beginning, so we should walk in your truth. Help us to walk in the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, to obey his commandments for his name's sake.

[40 : 36] Lead us, Lord. You speak. We will listen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.