

Light Has Come to the Wandering Sheep

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Preacher: Rev. Aaron Roberts

[0 : 0 0] a fantastic passage there's so much to talk about here whenever jesus says truly truly he's usually making a commentary on something that's just happened so in many ways this chapter here chapter 10 jesus is talking about something had happened in chapter 9 which is helpfully what jordan preached on last week we have this blind man who was healed by jesus and uh what was the upshot of all this i mean great for this guy great result for him the upshot is the pharisees you know heard about this and hauled this guy before him and and interrogated him and didn't like his answers so kicked him out of the church so awful now there's a ton of say this there's so much to say about that which we won't one thing i want do want to do is zoom in on this one particular line though and talk about what that means it's that line in verse 10 i've come that that may have life and have it to the full because jesus is contrasting what the pharisees did to uh this blind guy right whose crime was being healed by god and being honest about it and christ says i'm not i'm not gonna i'm not gonna kick you out of the church i'm not gonna lay heavy stuff and you want to free you and so there's this iconic line i've come that you may have life and have it to the full and you can see it there in verse 10 now some people might hear that line and and uh who who are not christians and might go well that's just i mean that's a ludicrous statement i know many people believe the opposite of this jesus giving life no religion faith that's that will that won't give you life that will cripple your life because christians are against against things which are you know fun and fattening and i don't know good times and yet here we have it jesus saying this astounding thing i have come to give you life a full life so what does that mean well let's have a look there is if you asked your average punter like okay what's a full life what would that look like what what would you have to do to gain that i think there would be uh there'd be a number of strategies um three off the top maybe four the pursuit of power the pursuit of uh things the pursuit of pleasure the pursuit of legacy with various various kind of nuanced positions in between and these aren't necessarily bad things well the power ones are a bit dodged but these other ones aren't necessarily bad things i mean you know it's not terrible i mean it's not this when i and i'm not trying to i'm not saying these things pursuit of things pursuit of pleasure pursuit of legacy i'm not setting up a straw man i'm not saying things you know that's the devil's objects or whatever i don't know you know like uh pleasure is stop being naughty or i don't know like these aren't necessarily bad things or selfish things i like things i like pleasure i want to have a positive impact on the world but in the in the passage jesus develops this intricate lovely picture of a shepherd and a sheep and their life together and he and and under all of these other things which may be good things may be very harmful things in your life he slides these ideas under them and says you know what there is a full life you can live outside of these things here let me tell you about it and it's very different to these things so firstly the full life from the passage the full life that jesus talks about

is a life in relationship with god and that's that's everywhere throughout this passage so back in the days people uh like today flocks of sheep in new zealand australia places like that i mean hundreds thousands right of sheep back in the days they'd be like 20 or 30 sheep would be a really good sized sort of flock and the sheep were kept for wool and more like sort of pets uh at night they would um put them in these communal sort of pens so to speak and and and they're guarded by gatekeeper you see that in verse one or two it talks about that and so the question is this so in the morning sheep would go sleep somewhere so the sheep are safe right so in the morning the shepherd would get a sheep out in the morning and all the herds were all sort of mixed in together in this thing and uh to get them out he would call them so there'd be the shepherds would you know i guess sort of stand around and the other guy is going whatever whatever they are those are i'm not an expert in this but i i'd say that's very close to some of the calls from my research which is vast so the sheep would come out and they would go to the person that's calling them they'd know

the shepherd because they know the shepherd's voice oh that's you know i'm with the la la guy right he's he's the guy that looks after me i mean that's the base that's the gist of verses one to six jesus is the shepherd the sheep know his voice voice three he calls his sheep by name it says they're not going to follow strangers they run away from strangers no but they know the shepherd he's great he's the shepherd they know his voice they know his voice really well compared to all the other voices around them i have two little kids and as a parent now i often hang out with other people with kids because your schedules you have these tiny windows of opportunity to socialize right and um you could be like at a there's a cafe on the drive called the nest little nest the nest i think or the little nest and it's a very kid-friendly one there's a little playground there the kids can play and then you can you know it's can pretend to have you know like a like a conversation and stuff and and it's mayhem in this place absolute mayhem and all of a sudden there'll be like there'll be like you know 10 kids playing you hear a cry you know and for like half a second you'll see every parent will look up and then one of them will stand up and go oh yeah that's my kid right because they know they know that voice and if just the if you weren't if you don't have any of these kids it would just sound like bedlam but you can pick out your kid's voice and all of us you know their voice because your heart that voice your heart is bent towards it and it's the same with god right we know his voice our hearts are bent towards him so this is the image of a shepherd calling out his sheep in this passage and so just this wonderful wonderful picture of the kind of intimacy we should have with god and i do love this uh he calls them by name so he's not just you know he's got names for them flopsie and mopsie and cottontail or whatever they're called you know and and uh and this is just this god knows your name i don't know how else to say this god knows your name the billions of people in the world he knows your name he says aaron follow me you know susie follow me matt follow me jordan follow me i think that's just incredible we did a series on the church last year if you weren't here we made a very big deal about the idea that god is about gathering a people and but i don't want that to obscure the idea that god isn't intensely personal and that's what really jumps out here so i'll ask you a question can you describe your relationship with god like that when you meet god will he say it's good to see you

because if he if it's the opposite you know i don't do i know you and that's terrible so folks a life lived to the fullest the life that jesus is talking about in this passage this full life it's a life shared with god a life of friendship and intimacy with our heavenly father but it's not just that two we also see from the passage that it's a life of following god so it's not god as my friend but i'm essentially a free agent no there is no mistaking the image jesus uses here the there is a person in charge and that's the shepherd and this is a good thing because the shepherd leads them not to death but to the safety of a pen to pastures that's what it says there if you're here and you're not a christian i will say this as plainly as i can there is a god you you are not you are not god and following god does mean relinquishing your role as your own moral authority but i hope you see the sense in that because who who knows better than god to direct you to guide you he's not guiding you to trouble he's guiding you to pastures that's a wonderful guidance you know using the imagery here of the passage it says he leads the sheep right which means that unlike uh sheep like farmers you know in the old country it's it's um driving the sheep with dogs no it's the shepherd out the front walking guiding you that's the kind of leadership god wants to have in your life that's the kind of leadership god will give you if you'd allow that and this is a good thing it makes perfect sense because sheep are stupid animals and so i don't want the slight insult in this imagery to be lost on you either you know there aren't any wild sheep around there you realize that right because they just walk off cliffs and drown themselves the shepherds they are everything to this sheep they are essential to life folks we all need a shepherd now can you admit that that's a big thing to admit that you need a shepherd so two points out of the passage so far under the umbrella statement that Jesus wants to give you life and a full life that full life is a life shared with god friendship with god two a full life means not just a friend but lord a lord who guides a lord who leads lastly to know the full life Jesus offers is to know forgiveness five times in the passage you would have heard jordan say i lay down my life for the sheep it's there it's repeated a lot when scripture repeats itself it's kind of going look at that that's important i lay down my life for the sheep i mean this is what makes him the good shepherd right this is why jesus is the good shepherd not the lame shepherd right and why he's different from the hired hand in verse 12 like it particularly puts that and i think that's interesting the hired hand is not like a bad guy i don't think i think he's just he he takes off when the wolf comes you can understand that you can't blame him he's just he's just a hired hand he's on you know he's on minimum wage he's just but the shepherd the sheep are his he owns these sheep he'll do

anything to protect the sheep even put his body on the line that's partly probably what this door thing is about when there's kind of a bit of a mixed metaphor in there where Jesus says on the door the shepherds would lay in front of the door would sleep in the doorway of these pens literally they were the barrier to the outside world to to animals that wanted to kill and eat the sheep folks you are you belong to God and and he'll do anything to bring you to himself let me let me explain that let me explain that further because there's a word in here which you can actually translate slightly differently but it gives you a lot of insight here the word for f-o-r for that word there as in lay down my life for the sheep that word there that in the broader sense actually means instead of instead of so Jesus is saying here the shepherd lays down his life right instead of the sheep having to die I mean Christ is pointing to the cross for the sin of the world all the pain that has been caused in the world people deserve to be punished because God is just but Jesus took that punishment for us so he died instead of us that's what this for the sheep business is about he takes our place on the cross and he does that so we can know forgiveness this is really really important because we all have dark places in our heart we have places of vanity and fantasy and selfishness etc we all have skeletons in our closet things that no one knows about not even our spouses if we have one but the problem with these skeletons is they don't stay there do they they kind of jump out and they kind of like half a step in front of you tripping you out so how do we deal with these skeletons how do we how do we move from feeling guilty or angsty or dirty or two-faced or weak and shamed and move to a place where we can feel clean hopeful satisfied full of life we can make that jump we can make that move certainly not by just letting time take its course time tends to make things worse I think as that guilt bites in we can make that move by knowing the abundant overflowing grace of God the forgiveness that Jesus brought on the cross for us and that's just about the best thing I can tell anyone I think and it's a wonderful thing it's wonderful news because it deals with a great fear that we might have as we think about God perhaps we're not Christians and we're kind of thinking about this whole thing and whether it's for us I mean if you're not a Christian you might be thinking well I'm a spiritual person I really like Jesus the idea of Jesus and I want to follow him but if I come to God with all my skeletons will he want anything to do with me well the answer is yes the biggest yes I can give and that's a yes not because you've lived a really amazing life but because of what Jesus has done because of the life he lived and the death he suffered it's a great result it's great news isn't it so let me finish up here this has been a short sermon

[15:27] I know Jesus has said that he's come to give us life that's his big statement in this passage and a full life not just a life like a full life an abundant life a life as God meant it to be do you want that life what do we need for that life what does that life look like well it's a life and a relationship with him that's one two it's a right relationship with God which means we view him not as a dialogue partner a moral dialogue partner or the spiritual part of our life because it's good to be spiritual but no we view him as our creator our heavenly shepherd our father who sits on the throne of the universe in the throne of our hearts that's two three the full life comes from the life that knows the wonderful forgiveness of God and as I say that I know things pop into your mind and you go can God possibly forgive me well yes he can that's the life in abundance that Jesus is talking about at the start of the sermon

I said the common strategies for a full life are the pursuit of things the pursuit of pleasure the pursuit of a legacy now here's the great thing about the Jesus strategy the Jesus full life when you have that you can pursue nice things but not be owned by them because you belong to God not these things you can enjoy pleasure but not be driven by it you can do that denying sometimes things that are pleasurable in your life because you trust in the shepherd to lead you to pastures sufficient to sustain you you can seek out a lasting legacy but not be defined by it because more than others knowing and respecting you you realize it's far more important that God knows your name folks do you know this abundant life you could be here you could be a Christian you could be not a Christian do you know this abundant life the life of knowing and following God can you describe your relationship in God using that intimate picture that Jesus described do you know the life of forgiveness if not it's on offer

Christ presents it to you in this picture know forgiveness know God know your heavenly shepherd hand over the reins to him if you don't quite know what that would look like or how to do that if you are in a bible study or something like that why don't you talk to the person that runs that bible study and say can you help me think this through would you pray for me if you are here and you're not a Christian or you are not in a bible study really connected to the community here come and chat I'd

love to chat to you come and chat to Jordan Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen
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