

Good Shepherd

Portraits of Jesus - John 10

March 7, 2021

DAY 1: "I AM the gate."

1. Jesus uses a sheepfold and shepherd to illustrate the nature of His relationship with His people. In that day a sheep pen was made out of rocks, tall enough to keep sheep in and predators out. Sometimes separate flocks would share a pen. In the morning when it was time to head to pasture, the sheep would recognize their own shepherd's voice and follow him.

2. As you read through these verses:

a. Circle the word "gate" every time it appears.

b. Underline the verses that describe the nature of the relationship Jesus has with His sheep (people).

John 10:1 "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.

² The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. ³ The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.

⁸ All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

3. How many times did Jesus use the word "gate"?

4. What was He wanting us to understand about His role as the "gate" of the sheep pen?

5. What did you learn about the nature of the relationship Jesus wants to have with His people?

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Thieves and robbers, strangers, and the thief.

1. Today, we'll look at the same passage we studied yesterday.
2. This time underline the concepts that illustrate the nature of the "thieves and robbers", a "stranger", and the thief (Satan), those who would lead the sheep astray.

*John 10:1 "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is **a thief and a robber**.*

² The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. ³ The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

*⁵ But they will never follow a **stranger**; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."*

⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.

*⁸ All who ever came before me were **thieves and robbers**, but the sheep did not listen to them.*

⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

3. What are these false shepherds trying to do? What strikes you about their methods?

4. False shepherds are any leaders who try to lead a believer astray. A false shepherd can be a religious leader or a secular leader.

5. What drives the false shepherd is self-interest. He or she will use the sheep for their own self-interest, which can be financial, personal, the quest for status, glory, control, or a sense of superiority.

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

6. The singular "thief" in this verse can be thought of as Satan. What are his intentions with you?

7. In contrast, Jesus comes, not to destroy you but to give you real life, life to the full.

8. Whoever you listen to, and align your life with makes a huge difference in outcome!

The Good Shepherd is willing to sacrifice Himself for you.
The false shepherd is willing to sacrifice you for himself.

9. What strikes you from today's study?

DAY 3: The Good Shepherd

1. Jesus calls Himself “the good shepherd.” There are two Greek words for “good”. One word translated “good” means beneficial. The second word for “good” means “intrinsically good, beautiful, fair.” It describes the ideal, the model that others may safely imitate. It is this Greek word Jesus uses to describe the kind of shepherd He is. His goodness was inherent in His nature.

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me--

¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father--and I lay down my life for the sheep.

¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

¹⁹ At these words the Jews were again divided. ²⁰ Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?" ²¹ But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

2. There are four things striking in yesterday’s and today’s verses about Jesus.

a. Jesus dies for the sheep (vv. 11-13)

b. Jesus knows His sheep (vv. 14-15)

c. Jesus knows our natures and our names.

He does not just know “sheep” in general, as in “if you know one sheep you know them all.” He knows each one by name.

d. Jesus knows our needs.

3. Compare how Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd with Psalm 23.

Psalms 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. ² He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³ he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ⁶ Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

4. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 4: Eternal life

John 10:22 Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade.

²⁴ The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

1. If you've been reading along in previous chapters of John, this question will sound eerily familiar. It's not that the Jewish leaders haven't asked Jesus about His identity before. They have, repeatedly.
2. As we've seen over and over again, the issue is not a matter of knowledge or explanation. It is a matter of the will. Is there a willingness to genuinely listen and ponder the answer, to grapple with it and consider it? No. There is a narrative that the Jewish leaders stubbornly adhere to. If they hear something that goes against their narrative their ears and minds close down tight.

John 10:25 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me,

3. The Jewish leaders may have disagreed with the theology of Jesus, but the number and different kinds of miracles should have been the "DNA" evidence of His divinity. Think of the denial and mental shenanigans one has to do to deny the following:

- a. Approximately 15,000 were fed from five loaves of bread and two fish—with leftovers!
 - b. A man born blind can now see.
 - c. A man who was a paralytic for thirty-eight years is healed, and can now walk.
 - d. At a wedding feast, about one hundred and eighty gallons of wine is made, instantly.
- ...and yet...

John 10:26 ...but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

³⁰ I and the Father are one."

4. What do we learn about eternal life in these verses?
5. What does He mean by "snatching a believer out of His hands"? Do we have eternal security?
6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: The divinity of Christ

1. John 10 ends with this discussion.

John 10:31 Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, ³² but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

³³ "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

2. The miracles Jesus reminds them of as evidence to consider is cavalierly and rebelliously cast aside as meaningless.

3. Likewise, American secular culture refuses to acknowledge the divinity of Christ.

4. Jesus tried to persuade them using the scriptures.

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'?"

³⁵ If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came--and the Scripture cannot be broken--

³⁶ what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?"

5. The word for “God” in Hebrew is “elohim.” Depending on the context of the passage, Elohim can be used as God’s name or it can be used to describe judges in ancient Israel.

6. He then reminds them to “connect the dots.” Connect the dots of these miracles, the goodness of what Jesus is doing and the truth of His teaching.

John 10:37 Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. ³⁸ But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."

7. Sadly, and predictably, the leaders responded like they always did. They reacted before considering all the evidence.

John 10:39 Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

John 10:40 Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed ⁴¹ and many people came to him. They said, "Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true."

⁴² And in that place many believed in Jesus.

8. This would be the last time Jesus was in Jerusalem until “Palm Sunday.”

9. What strikes you from today’s devotional?