5 – 3 – 2020 The Good Shepherd

John 10: 1 - 18

Father God, Lord Jesus, as we prepare to hear your word, may our hearts be open to receive the blessing that comes to us from your word.

Your word is powerful, your word brings healing. May you accomplish all that you intend for each of us. In Jesus name. Amen.

How many of you know a shepherd? Do you have first-hand knowledge of what a shepherd does?

Sheep were often gathered into a sheepfold to protect them from thieves, weather, or wild animals. The sheepfolds were caves, sheds, or open areas surrounded by walls made of stones or branches.

The shepherd often slept across the doorway of the fold to protect the sheep. Just as a shepherd cares for his sheep, Jesus, "The" Good Shepherd, cares for His flock, those who follow him.

Please open your Bibles to the book of John chapter 10, we will be looking at Jesus, "The" Good Shepherd and we will look at the sheep that follow Him.

John 10:1-6

We see the red-letter words we know as the words of Jesus. He continues to direct His words to the Pharisees who were taking one of the many rebukes that Jesus had with them about their teachings.

The Pharisees supported their actions against Jesus because they said they were the pastors, the shepherds of the church, they feared losing their power over the people if they believed Jesus.

In the minds of the Pharisees, Jesus was the intruder the imposter, and the people’s duty was to stick with them and oppose all that Jesus said and did.

In opposition to the Pharisees, Jesus Himself describes the false shepherds, and the ones that are interfering with the plan, purpose, and mission of God.

Jesus shares illustration of a thief or a robber coming to do damage to the flock, the children of God. Coming in by way of deception, not coming in by the gate as designed but coming in by a breach in the wall, an open window, a loose or broken board, over the wall, or under something.

The thief or robber has no reason to enter he is not invited. His plan is unlawful and only desires to harm the flock or steal from the owner.

He is not coming in by way of an entrance as designed by a gate with a shepherd to guard the gate.

The Pharisees did not get it they did not understand His parable and Jesus has to get a little more forceful.

Read John 10: 7 – 18

There are two paths of life, One leads to life, that is in Christ Jesus. The other leads to death and destruction life without Jesus.

You are given a choice which path you will take.

There are two kingdoms, One of light and one of darkness. Every human being has a choice which road they will travel and who they will follow.

Jesus says in John 14: 6 “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father but by Him.”

In John 10: 10 Jesus says Satan and deceivers are “The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy.”

Jesus continues “My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."

Clearly, there is a choice. Will you accept the truth of God found in salvation through Christ Jesus?

Will you choose to be deceived into believing it is all about you and allow the enemy of your soul to steal what God is offering you?

Jesus says; I have come to give you life, full life, abundant life. Life worth living! Which road will you decide to travel and who will you follow?

The Bible talks a lot about doors. Some doors are to be opened, some are closed and need to remain closed. Doors paint a spiritual picture of what and how we are to approach them.

In Revelation 3: 20 Jesus is standing at a door and knocking and wanting to come into our hearts and lives. It is an invitation where you must open the door.

He does not pound on the door like a bill collector or demand to come in and takeover.

The door of your hearts is controlled by us when He knocks will you let Him in?

The gate from our text is a form of door in which Jesus "The" Good Shepherd says that He stands by for us to enter.

Continuing in John 10: 7 - 9 7 so he explained it to them: “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. 9 Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved".

In this passage, Jesus as "The" Good Shepherd makes us some pretty radical promises

Jesus promises to protect His sheep "sacrifices His life for His sheep." In other words, you did not earn this priceless gift. Eternal life is freely given by the shepherd and freely received by his sheep, simply because He is the shepherd and we are the sheep.

The life Jesus gives is *eternal*. Eternal life, by definition, is a life that never ends, and if you have this life, it is yours forever!

Whoever enters through me, the narrow gate will be saved.

“I will never leave you nor forsake you” "The" Good Shepherd is not like the hired hand that abandons his sheep at the sign of danger.

The hired hand has no real investment in the flock. He shepherds the flock because he is paid to do so. The hired hand has to calculate whether it is worth the effort, the sacrifice, the risk of doing this job for what he gets paid.

“I know my sheep.” I am the good shepherd that will leave the 99 and go after the one in danger.

Jesus "The" Good Shepherd promises to meet the needs of the weak. As in Ezekiel 34 The Good Shepherd desires His followers to protect the weak from those that desire to eat them, harm them or lead them astray.

This should be a humbling verse to anyone that desires to do kingdom work for the Lord. It should demand each one to do an evaluation of where they are with what the Lord has asked us to do.

"The" Good Shepherd takes His job seriously and He demands that His followers, that would be us, have the same mindset.

We see the picture of "The" Good Shepherd as protector and provider for His sheep. One that will go after those who go astray. He will be the one to carry those who have been injured by carrying them on His shoulder.

Jesus says follow me. He leads by example, His promises are true, and you can bet your life on them to be fulfilled.

He raised the standard for what a shepherd looks like and what promises a shepherd must keep.

The Pharisees and many Jews were ignorant to what Jesus was telling them.

I went to Bible School Jesus! –

I have a degree in Religion Jesus!

I not only know the rules, but I set the rules!

Jesus do not tell me what I need to do!

Those who were wise and elegant were unaware of what He meant by thieves and robbers. They did not understand why going through the right gate was important to their salvation.

John 14: 6 “Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. And John 10: 7 so He explained it to them: “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep."

Do we live in that day and mindset today? The things of God are not important enough to let the Lord change your life.

The things that God wants to do are only hindered by those that will not let Him do it in their lives. It is a great danger that the word of God is preached all over the world and many have turned a deaf ear to Him.

The Pharisees had great intelligence and they were too proud to have their intelligence challenged.

What are you talking about Jesus!

I am a good person

I do not hurt anyone

I am not as bad as that person!

1 Corinthians 1:18 “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

For those of us who know Christ as savior, we must respond quickly to the things of God and the leading of God’s Word for our lives.

For those that know Christ, We must be aware of the enemy seeking to deceive us, to destroy us, and cause us to live far below the standard that the Lord desires for our life.

For those that do not know Christ we need to be praying for them because until their eyes are opened, they cannot grasp the Word of God for their lives.

They have blinders on, and the Lord will use us to remove the blinders. Jesus says, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”

Christ came to vindicate divine truth, heal the sick, raise the dead, bind up that which was broken.

Christ specializes in broken things.

He can raise a person to a higher level. He can raise a church to a higher level in the community He has called them to be.

Christ Jesus calls us to be;

Justified just as if I did not sin

Sanctified, empowered to live life the way life was intended to be lived by a child of God.

Glorified, spending eternity with your savior.

That they may have life to the full

Someone ought to be praising the Lord right now!

Full abundant life is eternal life. Life without the fear of death.

Are we good sheep? Those under the care of Christ Jesus who know who Jesus is! Those that are under the care of "The" Good Shepherd know their shepherd.

They do not follow just anyone! They do not go to strangers the many voices of the world do not distract.

They respond to their shepherd. The one willing to lay down His life for them.

The one who has proven Himself in the past.

Do we listen? Do we go after the word of God with a hunger to hear what God has to say to us?

Do we do the things we know to do and wait for God to give answers for the things we do not know?

Today technology is everywhere. There are so many distractions that can keep us from hearing the Lord's voice for our lives.

People sitting around a table manhandling their phones, many people but no one is talking or listening they are just existing. We need to be listening to "The" Good Shepherd.

Do you enter by the right gate? The Good Shepherd's sheep enter through the narrow gate. (His way)

God gives us direction on how to follow and how to enter into a right relationship with the Lord.

Are we good Sheep?

Are we doing things that please the Lord?

Are we doing what He has called us to do?

Do we need to be reminded how good God is to us, how in love He is with us?

You are led back to the shepherd by the gentle hand of God wanting to embrace and love you.

We also have to be reminded to be good sheep

Not stray away, to be seeking, paying attention, listening, for His voice to speak to us individually and as a church.

He desires to be your shepherd He wants to be your Lord and your Savior. The wolf/lion out there is not meant to just scare us it should draw us closer to "The" Good Shepherd. Amen?

Some testify to past experiences of God working in their life. The Lord was my shepherd! (Past tense)

Some plan to get close to the Lord! The Lord will be my Shepherd! (One day)

Testify today, take Him as your shepherd, thanking Him for what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do in your life and the life of the church.

Please join me as we close with a scripture, I am sure we all know!

1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Amen!