

The Gospel of John Part 26: The Work of Our Good Shepherd (Part 1)

John 6:1-15



John 6:1-15 After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). 2 Now a large crowd was following Him, because

they were seeing the signs which He was doing on those who were sick. 3 Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He was sitting down with His disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. 5 Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where should we buy bread, so that these people may eat?" 6 And this He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was going to do. 7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little." 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed them to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftover pieces so that nothing will be lost." 13 So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had done, they were saying, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 So Jesus, knowing that they were going to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

1) The Good Shepherd Heals the Diseased Sheep. Jesus heals the sick and causes a large crowd to follow Him. Jesus's work as the Good Shepherd extends well beyond that of physical healing, rather, He specializes in spiritual healing. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who can and will heal His sheep from the disease of sin, but we have to draw near to Him and ask to be treated, to be cleansed, and made pure, so that we can remain a vibrant and healthy member of the flock, and not become easy prey for wolves that roam about in the world.

2) The Good Shepherd Strengthens the Weak Sheep. Jesus uses a crisis from the crowd as an opportunity to strengthen His disciples. As a sheep of Christ we never outgrow our need to be shepherded by Him. Jesus uses trials to test His own so that they may be strengthened in faith. The follower of Christ is going to encounter various trials, even crisis in their life and these things are a test from our Good Shepherd, not to trip us up, but to build us up in the faith.

3) The Good Shepherd Feeds the Hungry Sheep. Jesus feeds the five thousand as a sign that they might believe in Him. The feeding of the five thousand demonstrates the trustworthiness of God to bring forth our daily provision in life. The Good Shepherd feeds the hungry sheep, not just once, but pours out His provision in our life day by day, and this provision is one that overflows and always satisfies. There is no detail overlooked in our life that our Good Shepherd does not tend to for us.

4) The Good Shepherd Guides the Stray Sheep. Jesus withdraws from the crowd because their intentions were misguided. The crowd rightly understood by what Jesus did that He was both the Prophet and King who is to come. However, Jesus did not come into the world to be crowned King by sinful people, rather, He came to be crucified for sinful people. It is the Father who will rightly crown Jesus king and will do so at His time and by His methods. The guiding work of our Good Shepherd is what binds everything together. Because, the closer we walk with Christ, the less we are inflicted by sin, the more we are strengthened, and the nearer we stand to our provision in life.