

I Know My Own  
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John 10:7-14, 25-30

Most of us haven't spent much time around sheep but we've heard about them. Matthew wrote, *"When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."*

**Matthew 9:36 (ESV)**

Why do sheep require a shepherd? What happens to sheep with no shepherd?

The point: Sheep without a shepherd will be dead sheep in no time. A diligent shepherd will protect the sheep from harming themselves or being killed by thieves or wolves. A "good" shepherd will even risk his life for the sheep. THE Good Shepherd GAVE His life so sheep like us can have abundant life forever.

- A little context before the text: Jesus healed a man born blind.
- When the man recognized Jesus as a prophet, the Pharisees threw him out of the synagogue.
- Jesus found the man and brought him into "the fold" of salvation.
- In this chapter, Jesus described Himself as a shepherd.
- The crowd understood shepherds and sheep but didn't get Jesus' point.
- This chapter contains two more of Jesus' I AM statements.

**John 10:7–14 (ESV) — 7** So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. **8** All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

- We've established that sheep are basically helpless.
  - They wander off and get lost with no "homing instinct."
  - They will follow the lead sheep off a cliff.
  - They are susceptible to injuries and helpless against predators.
- We are told, *"If a wolf enters the pen, they won't defend themselves. They won't try to run away or spread out. Instead they huddle together and are easily slaughtered."* That's why there were sheepfolds [pens] for safety.
- In the ancient east there were two kinds of sheepfolds, in a town they had "community sheepfolds" for multiple flocks. In the country a sheepfold was stacked stone walls with no door. At night the shepherd would lie in the opening to act as the door and protector from thieves and wolves.
- Jesus is the only door to eternal safety for helpless sheep like us.
- "I am the door" reminds us of Jesus words in **John 14:6 (ESV)** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- There is only one door to eternal safety and Jesus is that door.

- Stupid sheep do have one good quality. They recognize the voice of their shepherd and only come when he calls.
- [Illustration: Community sheepfolds, multiple shepherds, and dog parks].
- The thieves and robbers represented false messiahs. They came to steal the sheep, fleece the flock, and ultimately kill them for prophet.
- A sheep that knows their real shepherd won't come when thieves call.
- How can sheep like us only hear Jesus voice and not false messiahs?

**9** I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. **10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

- Jesus promises the “abundant” life. More on that in a bit.
- When we hear Jesus talk about the “thief” we think of Satan.
- Ultimately it does refer to Satan but in this context Jesus was condemning “false shepherds” who were doing the work of Satan deceiving the sheep.
- Going “in and out” means to and from pasture not in and out of the flock.
- If the sheepfold is a safe place, why not keep the flock there fulltime?
- When someone trusts Jesus as Savior why not just live at church?
- When Jesus saves us He doesn't take us immediately to Heaven. The abundant life doesn't start when we die; it starts right now.
- Sheep have to graze and we have to live in a threatening world.

**Psalm 23:4 (ESV)** 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.

- When the sheep leave the sheepfold they need a shepherd to stay alive.

**11** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

- That doesn't require extensive explanation: **Romans 5:8 (ESV)** *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**12** He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. **13** He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. **14** I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,

- R.C. Sproul said, *“I tell my congregation that they are God's sheep. I don't own them. They don't belong to me; Christ is their shepherd. The best they can hope from me is that I'll be a good hireling, but that is all I can ever be - a hireling. Therefore I tell them that they should not look to me but to Christ, who is their Good Shepherd, the One who will never desert them.”*<sup>11</sup>

- Thank God for pastors who are diligent “under shepherds” just remember they are “hired hands” not the Good Shepherd. A good baby sitter (a pastor) is a wonderful thing but it can’t replace a loving parent (Christ.)
- The religious leaders still didn’t get Jesus meaning but His sheep do.

**John 10:25–30 (ESV) — 25** Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, **26** but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. **27** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. **28** I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. **29** My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. **30** I and the Father are one.” [Proclaiming Himself God]

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Sheep without a shepherd will soon be a dead sheep.
- Sheep need protection and provision that can only be provided by a diligent shepherd. Every human soul is just like a helpless sheep.
- The Prophet Isaiah wrote: *“We’re all like sheep who’ve wandered off and gotten lost. We’ve all done our own thing, gone our own way. And God has piled all our sins, everything we’ve done wrong, on him, on him.”* - **Isaiah 53:6 (The Message)**
- Jesus is the Door to eternal safety. He is also the Good Shepherd that gives His sheep the abundant life if we will trust Him as Savior and Lord.
- What did He mean by the abundant life? We could spend a week on that!
- First, let’s look at the word Jesus used.
- That word means: “*superabundant* (in quantity) or *superior* (in quality); ...exceeding abundantly above...beyond measure.”<sup>iii</sup>
- Jesus us gives us MORE than we can measure, but MORE of what?
- Though there are many passages of scripture to cite, I thought of two.
- First, the abundant life isn’t about money and stuff; it’s spiritual.
- We can be as “poor as Job’s turkey” yet rich in the fruit of His Spirit.
- You know Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.<sup>iv</sup>
- [Illustration: Tyson asking for “*more, more.*” “*Okay, here you go.*”]
- Since Jesus said He is the Good Shepherd, let’s consider Psalm 23:
  - He meets my physical needs (I shall not want.)
  - He calms me down and makes me rest (makes me lie down.)
  - He clothes me with His righteousness (paths of righteousness.)
  - He protects me from danger (in the valley of death – no fear!)
  - He heals me (anoints my head with oil) physically and spiritually.
  - He changes me and forgives my sin (goodness and mercy.)
  - He gives me eternal life with Him (dwell in His house forever.)
  - Even on my worst, darkest day “my cup runs over” with His blessings and presence. That’s the abundant life!
- This week let’s read His word so we know His voice.

- Let's bask in His presence and protection.
- Let's ask our Shepherd for "more" starting with more of Him.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/I-am-the-door.html>

<sup>ii</sup> R. C. Sproul. John (St. Andrew's Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 2544-2546). Kindle Edition.

<sup>iii</sup> Strong, J. (2009). *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible* (Vol. 1, p. 57). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>iv</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Ga 5:22–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.