

Jesus the Good Shepherd
By Trey Sullins

King David wrote one of the most beautiful Psalms in Psalm 23: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Throughout the Psalm David shows how God was the perfect shepherd for His care, love, and guidance over David. In the same manner we find this powerful illustration being used again by Jesus in John 10. Jesus explains His great love for His creation as well. We need to understand our good Shepherd so that we might know His true love for us.

John 10:11 says, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” A shepherd is one who tends, guards, and guides a flock of sheep. In John 10 the followers of Christ are the sheep. This means that those who follow Him are tended to, guarded, and guided by the Son of God, the good Shepherd. In 1 Peter 5:4 He is also called the “Chief Shepherd.” Jesus tends to us by providing us with the necessary information that we need to make it to heaven. He is the word (John 1:1) and He brought us the revelation of God’s will. He guards us by providing us with a defense against the “roaring lion,” Satan (1 Peter 5:8). He guides us by showing us “the way, the truth, and the life” that leads to life everlasting in heaven (John 14:6). Our good shepherd offers us the chance to be saved and we must be obedient and praise God for that opportunity (John 10:9).

Jesus is the perfect shepherd as well. One big reason is He was willing to die for His sheep. John 10:11 says, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” Romans 5:6-9 gives us further insight into this by showing that Christ demonstrated His great love by dying for the ungodly so that all might be justified. Another reason for His perfection as Shepherd is He opens the door for His sheep. In John 10:2-3 Jesus mentions how the doorkeeper opens for the proper sheep to come into the fold; in verse nine Jesus says that He is the door, and as the door, He allows the proper sheep to enter in through Him. Normally human rulers and people in authority seek their own gain or glory, but with Christ He seeks to save and help those who want to be righteous.

Jesus offers a great reward to those who enter through Him. “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish” (John 10:28). The eternal life which Jesus is talking about there is an eternal life with Him and the Father in heaven (Romans 6:23). Not only does He offer us eternal life, but because God has given the sheep, the righteous, to Him we can never be taken away from Him. “neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand” (John 10:28-29). No matter what happens in this life, we are the only ones who can remove ourselves from the fold of the Good Shepherd. By the choices we make in life, we either remain with Him or reject and leave Him.

The Good Shepherd is our head and as such we have to live accordingly (Ephesians 5:23). He offered His life for us, provides us with our needs, protects us from evil, and guides us to heaven with Him. What we must do is choose to be His sheep! As verse twenty-seven says, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” His voice has been delivered to the world through the gospel and His coming. We have to hear that voice and follow Him into the fold. Once we do this, a glorious eternity in heaven awaits those who remain with Him. What a great blessing we have to be called His sheep!