

Why Jesus Came (Part 1)

John 10:1-30

24 December 2023

10:30 Halifax

Introduction

At this time of year, people think about the coming of Jesus.

- But why did He come?
- Even people who go to church and make much about Christmas are often unclear about why He came—increasingly so in our part of the world.

You need to know why He came—in fact, everyone needs to know.

- For this reason, I am going to take up this subject today—that you might know, that you might know more fully, and that you might be able to tell others.

Jesus often spoke about why He came.

- He explained it from a lot of different angles.
 - Joel Beeke has a little book that gives 31 reasons why He came.
 - But I want to focus on what Jesus said in John 10.

I will read this chapter in God's holy word.

- Because this is God's word, we can be sure that it tells us rightly about Jesus' coming.
- Give attention to the reading of God's word from John 10:1-30.

John 10:1-30: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. ⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who *ever* came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 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 does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it*

more abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ¹² But a hireling, *he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³ The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; and I know My *sheep*, and am known by My own. ¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd. ¹⁷ Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”*

¹⁹ Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. ²⁰

And many of them said, “He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?”²¹ Others said, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

²² Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. ²³ And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon’s porch. ²⁴ Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, “How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you

do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone 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 My Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one.”

Thanks be to God for His holy word.

So why did Jesus come?

- I will get straight to the point.

I. Jesus came to give us life.

- He tells us that in verse 10.

- Look at the second half of verse 10.

- Jesus says: “**I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**”

A. What is Jesus talking about?

1. He is talking about spiritual life.

- That is, life in association with God.

- We are, apart from Jesus, dead toward God.

2. You see this all the time.

- We have a glorious Creator, but we don’t regard Him—we don’t even know Him.

- Unless Jesus saves us, we are spiritually dead.

- We walk around without reference to God, completely oblivious to the most essential part of reality.

B. Paul describes this spiritual death and spiritual life in Ephesians 2.

1. In verses 1-3, he explains that the way we were dead was in that we were cut off from God. I will read it to you with a few comments:

- **Eph 2:1-3: And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world [this is the way everybody is since the fall], according to the prince of the power of the air [the prince of the power of the air is Satan—he won our allegiance by leading us into rebellion against God soon after we were created], the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience [Satan manipulates and controls us because we are the sons of disobedience—cut off from God by our rebellion],³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind [this means that we follow our own way rather than God’s way. We do things that are not pleasing to God], and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others [we were all by nature the children of wrath—meaning people who made God angry by ignoring Him and living in defiance and disregard of Him].”**

2. In Ephesians 2:4-10, Paul explains the life that God gave us through Jesus, His Son:

- I will also read this with a few comments.
- **Eph 2:4-10: But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**
 - We were all spiritually dead—all of us except Christ—but God made us alive with Him—by grace—which means it was not by anything that we did to merit it, but something He did—as it says, being rich in mercy.
 - The fact that He does not save everyone proves that He has no obligation to save anyone. As scripture says, *He has mercy on whom He has mercy.*
- The passage continues in verse 6: **and raised us up together** [with Christ that is], **and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus** [Christ has been accepted by God into heaven and we are accepted because of Him), ⁷ **that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus** [God does all of this to display His grace—to display His character]. ⁸ **For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God** [again, it was through no merit on our part—we were dead in our sins. Verse 9 goes on the drive the point more firmly:), ⁹ **not of works, lest anyone should boast.** [Verse 10 shows that having been made alive, we now live in ways that please God.] ¹⁰ **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**
 - Since we now have spiritual life, we live in ways that please God.
 - We were created anew to live—created in Christ Jesus for good works.

C. Now we can understand what Jesus was taking about in John 10:10 when He told us why He came: **“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.”**

1. In the analogy, God has sheep (people) that He has chosen to be His sheep.
 - What does a person own sheep for? Why does he purchase land and build a sheep pen and hire shepherds and get border collies?
 - To produce fruit for him!
 - What is the fruit of sheep? It is wool.
 - What does God the Father own sheep for? Why did He send Jesus to be our shepherd? Why does He have a sheep pen (the church) and pastures (ordinances to water and feed His sheep)?
 - To produce fruit.
 - What is the fruit that God wants?
 - It is life!
2. The life that Jesus gives us is life in communion with the living God.
 - When we are brought to life, our life that was not for Him is now for Him.
 - Our life-force is now directed and given over to God and His glory.
 - We worship Him as God and we serve Him as God because He is God.
3. It is very pleasant.

- As we grow into the riches of this new life, we are empowered more and more to serve Him and to please Him.
 - And not only that, but we are enabled more and more to see His glory and His perfections, His beauty, His goodness, His kindness, His grace, His holiness, His justice, His wisdom, His power, His wrath and judgment upon His enemies.
 - It is a most delectable thing to know Him, to be able more and more to please Him in the way we love and live.
4. We who were dead in our sins are now able to live, and to live more abundantly!
- We are able to do this because Jesus gives us life.
 - As our shepherd, He is the one who brings forth abundant fruit in us—much life, full life with God!

II. How does Jesus bring forth life in those who are His sheep?

- We will look at four things He does.
- A. First, as our Shepherd, He calls us into life in His sheepfold of life.
1. His sheepfold is His church.
 - It is the household of faith.
 - It is the kingdom of righteousness that He established where God is served—that is, where people live for God.
 2. A faithful shepherd gathers the sheep and keeps them in the sheepfold for the owner.
 - Jesus does that with the sheep that belong to His Father by calling us into the fold—we pass from death to life when we come into His fold.
 - He calls us with a powerful call that we respond to—a call that we cannot resist.
 3. Let me show you about this call in John 10:
 - a. In verse 3, speaking of His own voice as the Shepherd who calls us, He says: **the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.**
 - b. In verse 4 & 5, He adds: **“And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”**
 - c. Jesus had taken in many sheep already from Israel, but in verse 16, He speaks of the gathering in of people from other nations when He says:
 - **“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.”**
 - d. And then, some three months later at the feast of dedication, Jesus picks up on this theme again when they ask Him to tell them plainly who He is.
 - Look at what He says in verse 25-28: **Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life...”**

4. Have you been called with this powerful call? You can't resist it. It is compelling.
 - a. His divine voice exposes your sin—not in a merely superficial way, but so that you see that you are odious in God's holy eyes—that you are in fact dead in your trespasses and sins.
 - That you are guilty and condemned and unable to make up for it.
 - That you, in fact, deserve to go to hell and that unless you are delivered, you are unfit to go anywhere else.
 - His divine voice exposes you.
 - b. His divine voice also convinces you that He is the only one who can save you.
 - You see that your pardon and deliverance requires divine work.
 - It requires no other sacrifice than the sacrifice of the Son of God Himself to atone for your sin.
 - And it requires the powerful working of His Holy Spirit in you to transform you so that you might live—as we saw before, life for God, in allegiance to Him, in ways that are pleasing to Him, that you might see His glory and delight in Him.
 - c. His divine voice powerfully calls you so that you come into the fold.
 - That is, you come into His church, and you come in through the door that God has provided, not by some other way with some false minister but through Jesus who is the door in.
 - In verse 9, He says, **“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”**
 - Yes, when you hear His voice, you come through Him as the only door.
 - The false teachers climb in by other ways—by works, by ceremonies, by excuse making, by suggesting that you are a poor abused victim that God receives because you are a victim...
 - denying that you are a sinner who must come through the door of Jesus crucified, not just for sin of people that abused you, but for your sin!
 - Or not just for those bad people, but for you!
 - d. This is how He gathers the sheep that belong to the Father into the fold.
 - He calls you to come through Him as the door.
 - You come to be the Father's sheep who produce wool for Him...
 - The wool, I remind you, is life—abundant life for God, in devotion to Him and in delight of Him—a life conformed to Him by grace.
 - e. Have you heard His voice?
 - Sometimes there are folks who have been in the church for a long time before they hear His voice.
 - I was, for twenty years, with false teachers who came in by their own way.
 - I heard their false way.
 - But I also heard the truth—I heard the scriptures read, I went to a Bible study where I heard the gospel, I heard in different ways, but I did not hear the voice of Christ until I heard so that I was brought into the fold.

- It changes you—you who did not think you were much of a sinner see that you are; you who did not think you really needed Jesus or really needed to change very much so that He is the only way and that you definitely need to change.
- Your outlook changes and you come to Him, never to look back.

TRANS> The first thing Jesus does is to call us into the sheepfold through Himself as the door that we might be the Father's sheep.

- What does He do after that?

B. After we have come into the fold, He shepherds us so that we will bring forth fruit for the Father.

- Don't forget what the fruit is. People always forget: it is life, spiritual life in abundance; life lived for God as it is meant to be lived, in obedience and service, a life lived for His glory, a life of worship and praise and thanksgiving to Him.
- 1. As a good shepherd, He leads us to green pastures and fresh waters so that we can be nourished and fruitful for the Father.
 - Verse 4 says: **“And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him...”**
 - In verse 9 & 10, He says: **“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture [the place of nourishment and watering].¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.”**
- 2. We can only grow if we are nourished.
 - For the kind of fruit the Father wants for His sheep, we must be nourished by God's word and watered by God's Spirit.
 - That is what is in the pastures into which Jesus leads us as our Shepherd.
 - When we are His sheep, He nourishes us with His Word—the scriptures.
 - He leads us into the truth so that our devotion to God and our love to God and our appreciation and our knowledge of God's will is increased.
 - In the word preached and read, we behold the glory of God and we grow in the fear of God.
 - We are nourished up into new life.
 - We begin to take dominion—husbands bear responsibility for their families and lead them as Christ leads them...
 - Wives submit to the husbands and unite with them as one...
 - And children honour and obey their father and mother.
 - When we are His sheep, He waters us with His Spirit.
 - He leads us to places where the Spirit of God is a work—to faithful churches and to faithful Christian friends...
 - He sends His Spirit to us when we read and pray and live our lives.
 - Spiritual life flourishes in us.
 - We bring forth much fruit to the delight of God the Father and Jesus, His Son, our Shepherd.

TRANS> So the first thing Jesus does to bring forth life in us is to call us into the fold, then the second thing is that He nourishes us.

- The third thing is what He did in order that He might rescue us from death.

C. He gave His life for His sheep! He gave His life for you if you are His sheep.

1. See how Jesus sets forth this glorious truth.

a. In verse 11, He says: **“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”**

- The situation was such that either the shepherd or the sheep must die.
- A shepherd is expected to risk his life for the sheep, but no shepherd would be expected to feed himself to the enemy so the sheep might be spared.
- Yet that is what Jesus did.

b. The “enemy” in this case was not exactly an enemy.

- The enemy that took (and would take) our life was a different kind of enemy.
 - It was God’s sentence of death for sin.
 - The guilt of our sin brought the sentence of condemnation upon us which was a death sentence. The wages of sin is death.
 - That is why, when Jesus calls us, we are found dead in our trespasses and sins—cut off from God, which is cut off from true life.
- It is not just that we feel guilty, but that we are eternally unfit for God.
 - Our wool (our life in sin) stinks and is obnoxious to God.
 - We were fit only to be cast out into the place of darkness—the garbage bin—the pit of destruction—there with the devil whom we followed.
 - We are justly sentenced to spiritual death and eternal death in the pit because of our sin. It is where we belong.

c. Jesus tells us that the Father commanded Him to lay down His life for us—to die in our place—and He did it. He took our penalty!

- In verse 15, He says: **“As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”**

- And in verse 17 & 18, He says: **“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”**

2. Most of you know what this is talking about.

- It is talking about Jesus giving Himself to be a sacrifice for His people’s sins.
 - It is about Him taking responsibility for our sins as the one who came to save us.
 - It is about the cross where He who knew no sin became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.
 - It is about the just dying for the unjust that He might bring us to God—bring us to live for God.
- It is offensive to all people, but it is not offensive to God and it is not offensive to His sheep.

- It sets Jesus apart as God's true shepherd.
 - As you would expect, when the hireling sees danger, he runs away, but Jesus sees death for His people because of their guilt and He says, "Let it all fall on me."
 - Again, verse 11: **"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ¹² But a hireling, *he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³ The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep."***
3. What a remarkable shepherd we have!
- I told three men in a Bible study last week that as men we are to take such responsibility for our families that our wives will say, "I am glad that you are doing this instead of me."
 - That is what we say when we understand what Jesus did—
 - Do any of you want to trade places with Him?
 - Do you want to be the one who is in charge and so must die for the guilt of the church, or are you glad that He is the Lord?
 - He did this so that His sheep might be able to have life and to have it more abundantly.
 - His coming into the world to give life, even abundant life, to His sheep was no small or easy task.

TRANS> And now we come to the fourth thing that our shepherd does that we might have life with God...

- D. As our shepherd, He protects us so that the life He has begun in us may continue and increase.
1. The reality is that we have many enemies.
 - Jesus refers to them right from the start of His discourse in John 10 as *thieves and robbers* who do not come into the fold in God's appointed way.
 - Instead of coming through the door of the gospel, they preach a false gospel to entice us to follow them.
 - Jesus is the true shepherd who comes to do the Father's will and they are the false shepherds.
 - Jesus comes to give life to the sheep and life more abundantly as we have seen.
 - But what would happen if we were to be led away by a false shepherd?
 - We would be ruined, just as Adam and Eve were in the garden.
 2. Jesus will not let that happen to any of God's sheep who have come to Him for life. He will see to it that they never perish.
 - He promises this in verse 27-30: **"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone 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 My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."**
 - If you have come to Jesus for life, He will give you eternal life—and that life is *eternal*.

- You will never perish, and it means that nobody can take you away from God.
- You are kept by divine power.
- Jesus points to the Father as “greater than I,” since Jesus appeared in weakness and was crucified...
 - But He qualifies this by adding, “I and My Father are one.”
 - “One” is neuter showing that He means “one in essence or one nature.”
 - If it was masculine, it would be one person, but that is not true—the Father is father to the son and the Son is begotten of the Father.
 - Jesus became flesh and is our mediator. The Father sent Him, but the Father did not become human flesh.
- Jesus assures us then, that we are kept by divine power so that we will never perish.
 - Once you have come to Him—once you have heard His voice and obeyed His call to come to Him that you might have life—you are secure forever.
 - Jesus will continue to nourish you as a shepherd, using His Spirit and Word, and He will preserve you forever so that you will never perish.

Conclusion:

So why did Jesus come?

- He came that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly.

Do you have this life?

- Have you heard and obeyed His call?