

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 2-19-12 AM NOTES  
"THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP" (PART 2)  
JOHN 10:11-29  
#39 in Series, "Verse-by-Verse Through John"

**Isaiah 53:6a (NKJV)** "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way..."

*O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.*

—Robert Robinson (1758)

I. The Shepherd

A. The Person of the Shepherd (vv. 11, 19-26)

**Hebrews 13:20 (NKJV)** "...that **great** Shepherd..."

**1 Peter 5:4 (NKJV)** "...the **Chief** Shepherd..."

**John 10:11 (NKJV)** "...the **good** shepherd..."

**Mark 10:18b (NKJV)** "No one is good but One, *that is*, God."

B. The Provision of the Shepherd (vv. 11b-13, 15-18, 28a)

1. He Lays Down His Life for the Sheep (vv. 11b-13, 15, 17-18)

**John 18:4-6 (NKJV)** "4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, 'Whom are you seeking?' 5 They answered Him, 'Jesus of Nazareth.' Jesus said to them, 'I am *He*.' And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. 6 Now when He said to them, 'I am *He*,' they drew back and fell to the ground."

**Acts 2:23 (NKJV)** "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death."

**John 19:30 (NKJV)** "So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit."

2. He Unites the Sheep (v. 16)

**Revelation 5:9 (NKJV)** "And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.'"

**Acts 18:9-10 (NKJV)** "9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.'"

3. He Gives the Sheep Eternal Life (v. 28a)

**1 John 5:20 (NKJV)** “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son **Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.**”

**Colossians 3:4 (NKJV)** “When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

C. The Protection of the Shepherd (vv. 28b-29)

*No guilt in life, no fear in death—  
This is the power of Christ in me;  
From life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny.  
No power of hell, no scheme of man,  
Can ever pluck me from His hand;  
Till He returns or calls me home—  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.*

—Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend

“They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.”

—Westminster Confession XVII.1

“I believe in the eternal security of the believer and the eternal insecurity of the make-believer”. —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

II. The Sheep

A. The Sheep Know the Shepherd (v. 14)

**Amos 3:2a (NKJV)** “You only have I known of all the families of the earth...”

**Matthew 7:23 (NKJV)** “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

**Philippians 3:10a (NKJV)** “that I may know Him...”

B. The Sheep Hear the Shepherd (v. 27a)

“There is a mystery here that we cannot fathom or explain, but we can accept it and rejoice (Romans 11:33-36). God has His sheep and He knows who they are. They will hear His voice and respond. The lost sinner who hears God’s Word knows nothing about divine election. He hears only that Christ died for the sins of the world, and that he might receive the gift of eternal life by trusting the Savior. When he trusts the Savior, he becomes a member of God’s family and a sheep in the flock. He then learns that he was ‘chosen...in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world’ (Ephesians 1:4). He also learns that each saved sinner is the Father’s ‘love gift’ to His Son (see John 10:29; 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24). In the Bible, divine election and human responsibility are perfectly balanced; and what God has joined together, we must not put asunder”

—Warren Weirsbe

C. The Sheep Follow the Shepherd (v. 27b)

**Romans 8:14 (NKJV)** “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

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Throughout the Old and New Testament, God's people are compared to sheep. It is not exactly a compliment to be compared to sheep. Sheep are the most helpless, defenseless, and straying of all the animals God created. One college professor said that the existence of sheep is the primary evidence against the theory of evolution. If it was the survival of the fittest, there would be no sheep. Think about it; a sheep (the kind Jesus was referring to) has no means of defense. They cannot run fast at all. They have little spindly legs and they are extremely top heavy. One of the reasons that sheep need a shepherd is that they can't always even stand on all fours. A sheep is so top heavy that they get off balance, fall over and end up on their back with all four legs sticking up in the air and like a turtle turned on its back, they cannot get up. This condition is called a "cast sheep". In a relatively short period of time gasses gather in the sheep's stomach and the sheep dies unless the shepherd gets it back on its feet. Sheep have no discernment about what they eat. Sheep will eat a poisonous plant without discerning the danger in it. The shepherds had to go to the places where the sheep would be grazing and pull up the poisonous plants. Perhaps the most dangerous thing about sheep is their proneness to wander or stray. **Isaiah 53:6a (NKJV)** "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way..." In 1758 Robert Robinson wrote these words that we often sing in the hymn, "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing":

*O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy grace Lord like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.*

In the passage we are looking at today, Jesus is contrasting Himself with the Jewish religious leaders. Jesus is the good shepherd and the religious leaders in last week's text were called "thieves" and "robbers" (John 10:1) and in today's text they are called "hirelings". These Jewish leaders weren't real happy with what Jesus compared them to.

## I. The Shepherd

### A. The Person of the Shepherd (V11, 19-26)

There are three adjectives used in the New Testament to describe Jesus as the shepherd. In Hebrews 13:20, He is called **the great shepherd**. In 1 Peter 5:4, He is called **the chief Shepherd**, and in our text, He is called **the good shepherd**. In the Greek, the word order is like this, "I am the shepherd, the good". The emphasis is on the word **good**. There are two Greek words translated "good" in the English. This word means worthy, in a class by Himself, beautiful, preeminent, and that which is the ideal or the model. The word used here for "good" also can mean good in the sense of true as opposed to false. When Jesus called Himself good, He was claiming to be God. **Mark 10:18b (NKJV)** "No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God." He was also claiming to be God because the Jews called the LORD (Jehovah) who is our shepherd in Psalm 23, "the good shepherd". Jesus is saying that He is the good shepherd of Psalm 23 in a body. We will see in next week's text in John 10:30 that Jesus makes another claim to be God and the religious leaders' response to Him shows that they understood exactly what He was claiming when He said that He is "the good shepherd". These claims of Deity divided people even as it does today. Most everybody is willing to accept Jesus as a good man, a great teacher, and an example of love, but to say that He is God in human flesh causes many of His so called "admirers" to drop away. That was the response in John 10. We read in verses 19-21 that His claims caused a division among those listening to

Him. Some said that He had a demon. This was the fourth time they accused Him of this. Others said that He was “mad”. That word is translated “crazy” or “lost His mind” in some other translations. Still others pointed to His miracles and His message and “That doesn’t sound like a demon possessed crazy man”.

There is a gap of about 2 ½ months between verse 21 and 22, but the crowd and the subject seems to be the same. John has arranged the material by subject. The “Feast of Dedication” is called Hanukkah today. The Jewish leaders were trying once again to trap Him and to get Him to say something that they could get hold of to turn the people against Him. They ask Him if He is the Christ or Messiah to say it plainly. Jesus’ answer leaves no doubt as to whom He was claiming to be. He says in verse 25, “I’ve already told you. Your problem is not a hearing problem; it is a belief problem!” Not only has He told them, His works meet the criteria of works that the Messiah, the promised deliver would do. In verse 26, Jesus gives the primary reason that they have not believed Him. These religious leaders have rejected the true Messiah and thus have given evidence that they are not His sheep.

#### B. The Provision of the Shepherd (V11b-13, 15, 17-18, 28a)

Jesus, the good shepherd provides three things for the sheep.

##### 1. He Lays down His Life for the Sheep (V11b-13, 15, 17-18)

Five times in these verses Jesus confirms the sacrificial nature of His death. The point is that His death was not as a martyr having His life taken from Him; it was the death of a substitute who chose to give His life. He makes that abundantly clear in verses 17 & 18. There is an incident that only John records which gives evidence that no one can take His life; it was given. When the temple soldiers came to arrest Jesus in the garden, something happened that showed His absolute power over them and how voluntary His death was. **John 18:4-6 (NKJV)** “<sup>4</sup>Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, ‘Whom are you seeking?’ <sup>5</sup>They answered Him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am *He*.’ And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. <sup>6</sup>Now when He said to them, ‘I am *He*,’ they drew back and fell to the ground.” This sacrifice, this laying down of His life was planned from before the foundation of the world. **Acts 2:23 (NKJV)** “Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death”. When He hung on the cross, his life wasn’t taken from Him. **John 19:30 (NKJV)** “So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He **gave up His spirit.**” He was born to die and His whole life was on a time schedule as He made his way to the cross. Don’t ever see Jesus’ death as a tragedy. His sacrificial death was the turning point of all history. Far from a tragedy, it is the greatest subject of our praise and throughout eternity, we will not cease to praise Him and give Him thanks for the cross.

In contrast to the good shepherd was the “hirelings”. He was speaking of the Jewish religious leaders who were the shepherds (spiritual leaders) of Israel. By implication it refers to all shepherds of God’s people who do what they do for the wrong motives and don’t care for the sheep. Read again what Jesus said to them in verses 12-13. The hireling was someone who was paid to watch the sheep, but really didn’t care about them. The Pharisees were motivated by the money and prestige. When the enemies came along, the hirelings fled. In contrast, Jesus the good, the true, the beautiful, the ideal shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The word “for” has the idea of “in exchange for” or “for the benefit of”. He died in exchange for and for the benefit of the sheep.

##### 2. He Unites the Sheep (V16)

When He spoke of “this fold”, He was speaking of the Jews. He says there are Gentiles who are among the elect – His sheep. When they come to Jesus in repentance and faith, they will not be a separate fold, but in the church, Jew and Gentile will be one with one shepherd. Jesus earthly mission was to the lost of Israel, but He says that His church (flock) will include Jews and gentiles. In fact, Revelation gives more detail about who will be a part of His flock. **Revelation 5:9 (NKJV)** “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of **every tribe and tongue and people and nation**’”. There are people from every people group that are among those chosen by the Father as a gift to the Son (elect). Oh how that motivates us in evangelism and missions. We know that in our lost city in India, and in Tibet, and in West

Africa, and in Indonesia there are those who are sheep of His fold. The Apostle Paul was discouraged in Corinth and God gave him this message: **Acts 18:9-10 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> “Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; <sup>10</sup> for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.’” He was referring to those who were elect who would come to Christ when the gospel was given to them. David Livingstone trudged through Africa in the mid 1800’s and could not be turned back or driven to quit. What motivated him? You get a hint when you read what he had written on his tombstone: “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring”. Those who are His will hear His voice and choose to come to him. What encouragement for missions! He willingly dies for the sheep and he unites the sheep.

### 3. He Gives the Sheep Eternal Life (V28a)

Eternal life is not just living forever. Even those in Hell are going to have conscious existence forever. What then is eternal life? Let’s let Scripture answer that. **1 John 5:20 (NKJV)** “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son **Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.**” Jesus’ life is eternal life and at salvation we become a partaker in his life. We are united with Him, baptized into him and we share His life. His crucifixion becomes ours as He goes to the cross bearing not just our sins but the old us in Adam. His righteousness is ours, and His resurrection is ours. **Colossians 3:4 (NKJV)** “When **Christ who is our life** appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” We receive this eternal life not when we die, but when we are saved. All of His sheep who have come to him and savingly believed have been made a partaker in His life and thus have eternal life as a present possession!

We have seen His person and His provision.

### C. The Protection of the Shepherd (V28b-29)

These are among the most comforting and reassuring verses in the entire Bible. In one of my favorite songs by Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend, “In Christ Alone”, we sing these words:

*No guilt in life, no fear in death-*

*This is the power of Christ in me;*

*From life’s first cry to final breath,*

*Jesus commands my destiny.*

*No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand;*

*Till He returns or calls me home-*

*Here in the power of Christ I’ll stand.*

- Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend

I can never understand how anyone could study this passage and not believe in the eternal security of true Christians. One of the best confessions that deals with this truth of Eternal security is the Westminster Confession of the seventeenth century: “They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved” [Westminster Confession XVII.1].

When we talk about security, remember that we are talking about true believers (sheep and not hogs or dogs). I agree with Dr. J. Vernon McGee when he said, “I believe in the eternal security of the believer and the eternal insecurity of the make believer”. Some say, “Well the devil can’t snatch us out of his hand but we can take ourselves out”. Where is that in this text? “Anyone” in verse 28 includes you! It doesn’t say, “Neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand except the person himself who is in my hand”. There is no “except”. Think of it; the hand of Christ above us; the hand of the father beneath us – we are secure in the clasped hands of omnipotence.

We have focused on the Shepherd; let’s look at the sheep.

## II. The Sheep

Three things describe the sheep of His flock.

### A. The Sheep Know the Shepherd (V14)

The word “know” and “known” here is not the “know” of intellect; it is the “know” of experience and intimacy. It is the “know” of a love relationship. For instance, God says of Israel in **Amos 3:2a (NKJV)** “You only have I **known** of all the families of the earth...” That certainly doesn’t mean that He was unaware of other nations existing. It means that He had a relationship with Israel like no other nation. Jesus talks about a group of people who will stand before Him on the last day and boast of all the religious works that they have done. Listen to Jesus’ response to them in **Matthew 7:23 (NKJV)** “And then I will declare to them, ‘**I never knew you**; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” He was not saying that He did not know that they existed; He is saying that He never had a love relationship with them; they were not among his sheep. We see the same use of this word when the Apostle Paul expresses the desire of his heart in **Philippians 3:10a (NKJV)** “that I may **know** Him...” The true sheep have a love relationship with the Shepherd as does the Shepherd with the sheep.

Let’s do some personal examination. Do you **know** the Lord? Do you treasure Him and adore Him and delight in Him? Is your relationship with the Lord one of ritual, checking off items on a list, doing the minimum that you have to do to keep Him from disciplining you, or just going through the motions because if you don’t you feel guilty? You need to closely examine whether you are one of His sheep. Do you know Him in the sense of the word “know” in this verse.

#### B. The Sheep Hear the Shepherd (V27a)

Jesus has already made this point back in verse 3. Jesus is referring here to hearing His voice in the call (effectual call) to salvation. Let me quote what Warren Weirsbe says about His call to salvation that His sheep hear. “There is a mystery here that we cannot fathom or explain, but we can accept it and rejoice (Romans 11:33-36). God has His sheep and He knows who they are. They will hear His voice and respond. The lost sinner who hears God’s Word knows nothing about divine election. He hears only that Christ died for the sins of the world, and that he might receive the gift of eternal life by trusting the Savior. When he trusts the Savior, he becomes a member of God’s family and a sheep in the flock. He then learns that he was ‘chosen... in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world’ (Ephesians 1:4). He also learns that each saved sinner is the Father’s ‘love gift’ to His Son (see John 10:29; 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24). In the Bible, divine election and human responsibility are perfectly balanced; and what God has joined together, we must not put asunder” [Warren Weirsbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Page 332]. The sheep know the Shepherd and hear the Shepherd.

#### C. The Sheep Follow the Shepherd (V27b)

The shepherd doesn’t brand sheep like you brand cattle. The sheep’s “brand” is that they hear the Shepherd and follow the Shepherd. The good shepherd’s sheep continue to hear His voice after they come to know Him because He has opened their deaf ears. They not only continue to hear His voice, they follow Him as a pattern of life. We read in **Romans 8:14 (NKJV)** “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” Those who are His sheep hear and respond to the call to salvation and they continue to hear and respond to the Spirit of Christ as He guides them. No one becomes His sheep by following the Shepherd, but true sheep follow the Shepherd as a pattern of life. Someone who as a pattern of life does not follow the Shepherd can talk about their experiences or they can talk about church membership and baptism and what they accept as true from the Scriptures, but if they, as a pattern of life, do not hear and follow the Shepherd, they are not one of His sheep.

### CONCLUSION

Jesus Christ is the good shepherd. Those who have savingly believed on Him are His sheep and as His sheep, they have a loving, living, and lasting relationship with the perfect, sufficient shepherd. (3090)