

I Am the Good Shepherd

Scripture Reading: John 10:1-18

In our previous lesson we studied, from John 10:1-10, that Jesus is the door of the sheep. This thought reveals Christ as a true shepherd, who is devoted to the sheep's welfare. He gives intimate and personal care to each sheep. We now consider Christ as **the Good Shepherd** (John 10:11-18): He will sacrifice his life for the sheep. Let's look at some other characters mentioned in this discussion:

The Hireling (John 10:12-13)

There are people hired to assist the shepherd. They do not have a personal interest or investment in the sheep. Watching the sheep is just a job, certainly not worth losing your life! There are people who get involved in Christian ministry who have personal motives: things like fame, power and money – perhaps just an easy, secure job. They do not sacrifice for the Lord's sheep. They will get out before it causes them any harm. See Matthew 23:1-12; Galatians 6:12-13; Philippians 2:19-30 (*vs.20-21*); II Timothy 4:1-11 (*vs. 10*); I Peter 5:1-4 (*vs. 2-3 ~not forced by compulsion; not for money; not dictators*).

The Wolf (John 10:12)

This can represent trouble and spiritual warfare that happens during ministry (I Timothy 6:12; II Timothy 2:3-4; Ephesians 6:10-13). Enemies to ministry can include **1) Sin within us** (Genesis 3:7 ~ *"sin lies [crouches] at the door"* – like a lion or wolf might sneak up on their prey). *Consider the problem of sin (Hebrews 12:4; I Corinthians 5:6-8; Ephesians 5:1-21)*; **2) False teachers** (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:29-30); **3) Satan** (I Peter 5:8-9 ~ lion and wolf metaphors are similar *cp. Jeremiah 5:6; Zephaniah 3:3*).

The Father (John 10:15, 17-18, 29-30)

This is not a metaphor. Jesus directly talks of the Father's involvement with what Christ is doing with the sheep (God's elect – the true believers). The Father is in charge of the operation. He has given these endangered sheep to His Son and commanded Him to sacrifice His life to rescue them. The Father and the Son are intimately working as one. Therefore the Son of God willingly lays down His life and will also take it back through resurrection from the dead. The entire plan is based on love. See Isaiah 53:1-12; John 3:14-16; 6:37-40; Ephesians 1:3-14 [*cp. Revelation 13:8*]; II Timothy 1:9-10; I Peter 1:18-21; 2:22-25; I John 4:7-14.

Other sheep, which are not of this fold, becoming one fold with one Shepherd. (John 10:16)

Christ first came unto His own – The lost sheep of the house of Israel, but the plan was larger than that. God's design is to create a family of faith; a godly people who are made of Gentile and Jew alike. See Genesis 12:1-3; John 1:9-13; 3:16-17 [*cp. I John 2:2*]; John 17:20-26; Romans 15:7-12; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-22; I Peter 2:9-10; Revelation 5:9.

Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep. (John 10:11, 14)

The goodness of Christ is seen because He demonstrated the greatest love that the world has ever seen (John 15:9-15). The goodness of Christ is seen because what He did on the cross has led many sinners to repentance (Romans 2:4 cp. II Corinthians 5:14-15, 17; 8:9). Christ's obedience on the cross has brought redemption and salvation to many (Isaiah 53:10-12; Philippians 2:5-11).

Christ is the **Good Shepherd**, who gives His life for His sheep – John 10:11 cp. Psalm 22 = **The Cross**

Christ is the **Great Shepherd**, who cares for His sheep – Hebrews 13:20-21 cp. Psalm 23 = **The Crook**

Christ is the **Chief Shepherd**, coming again to gather His sheep – I Peter 5:4 cp. Psalm 24 = **The Crown**