

The Good Shepherd

Brynmawr Family Church Sermon
Stuart Wheatman, Sunday 10th May 2009

Read John 10:1-30

Intro

- Comes when Pharisees reject man healed by Jesus (see John chapter 9). They had already decided to excommunicate from synagogue anyone who said Jesus was the Christ (would have meant total isolation from society- called 'herem'. The excommunication could last anywhere from a day to a lifetime, depending on the crime, and depending on their repentance. The Talmud gives 24 different reasons why someone may be excommunicated. The act was first announced by the blowing of the shofar in front of an open ark. The community would lament, holding black candles as if in mourning. The congregational leader would shout Biblical curses at the person being excommunicated. Finally a public warning was decreed forbidding all to associate with the convict as the community symbolically smothered the candles. People were forbidden to come within six feet of a person who has been excommunicated). Jesus spoke this parable to encourage the man who had been chucked out of synagogue and to speak against those who rejected Him as messiah.
- Fulfills messianic prophecy which predicted God coming as the good shepherd to shepherd His people- Ezekiel 34; 37:24; Is 40:11; Micah 5:4; Zech 11; 13:7- one good shepherd.

The Door- Protecting Shepherd- the door to life- v7-10

- Jesus is our door to safety 'saved' **v9**. 2 pictures-Shepherd sleeps over entrance or shepherd is the only one trusted to enter the door by the gatekeeper. No other way to God- not good works- not religion, but Jesus. 'There is a way that seems right to a man but it leads to death'-Prov 14:12- The Pharisees were instruments of death ('steal, kill, destroy'- they did not enter by the door, not did they allow others to enter -see Matt 23:13). *Application- analyse the foundation of people's beliefs- e.g. J.W's- ask questions to see if the Jesus they refer to is the same that you know- does the message present the real Jesus, and Him alone as the only means of salvation? 'If it works for you' is nonsense- truth is all important- 'No one comes to Father but by me'- John 14:6. Any spirit which denies Jesus has come in the flesh is not from God (see 1John 4:1-3). Me & J.W's, Hare Krishna's.*
- Accountability- shepherd accounts to chief shepherd for the sheep. Thief (wolf) avoids the shepherd & climbs the wall- Satan speaks to woman when God not physically there (although God is always present). Leadership is from God for our protection & growth. *We need to cultivate accountability in our lives to leadership and not follow those who have a bad attitude to leadership.*
- **V10**- Our door to life and life more abundantly- Satan makes God out to be a kill-joy, stopping our fun. Jesus only asks us to give up things harmful for us. Many doors are inviting to walk through in life, but we need wisdom to see their final destination.
- *Application- are there doors in your life you need to close- for me occult.*

The Good Shepherd

- **Cares for the sheep**- enough to die for them. Real love shown by commitment rather than just feelings- someone who fancies someone else's wife/husband does

not have the same level of love for that person as their spouse -they just have a feeling- they are like the 'hireling'- when trouble comes they're gone. Following Christ is hard- get home truths don't want to hear, can lose friends, have to give things up, go through trials and stuff we don't understand. Sometimes we don't have all the answers. But if we don't follow Christ whom will we follow? Would they be willing to die for us? Who could love us as much as Jesus? Jesus still cares for His sheep even though not here physically, so says to Peter- 'feed+tend my lambs & sheep' (John 21:15-17). *Application- ask for a fresh revelation of His love. Ask for a fresh revelation of husbands/wife's love. Be motivated by love rather than duty- remember your first love. Leave the 'hireling' mentality behind.*

- Knows His sheep by name-v3- Me bad at names- Persil (Pete Levers). Sheep hard to tell apart unless know them. God knows your name- John 1:42 (knew Simon son of Jonah's name & renamed him). Number of hairs on your head (BLONDE – 140,000; BROWN - 110,000; BLACK - 108,000; RED – 90,000). Knows your likes, dislikes. *You matter to God. Look after yourself. Love yourself. Don't put yourself down.*
- **His sheep know Him & follow Him-v4-** not driven- a relationship of trust, not fear. He is your daddy & He loves you & likes you. Learn to trust Him when He asks you to do something- step out in faith & do it. **You can Hear His voice (John 10:4, 27)-** we can each hear God for ourselves. Choose to stir up the prophetic- Timothy told to stir up the gift in him.

The One Who Holds Onto Us-v28-29

- The thief (v10) does not come except to steal, kill & destroy, but Hallelujah God is holding onto us!- v28-Jesus gives us eternal life (i.e. life without end- life with no death) so the thief cannot kill or destroy us ultimately. Even if we lose our physical lives we have eternal life! This is just a tent!
- The thief tries to steal us away from God, but he cannot! God is too strong and is holding onto us (v28-Jesus' hand holds us too tight & v29 Daddy's hand holds us too tight!). However, the thief will do his best to rob us of believing the rest of the promises of God- the solution=our faith- (1John 5:4)! Believe your beliefs and doubt your doubts. Don't allow Satan to rob you of who you are in Christ.
- *Application- realise you are secure in Christ. Deal with any condemning thoughts which say otherwise- Rom 8:1!*

Conclusion

- Jesus is our door and our good shepherd. We need to be wary of doors which lead us away from Christ and close them. We need a fresh revelation of God's loving shepherd's heart for us, so that we are motivated by His love. We need to rest secure in His love for us.

Song: *The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want*