

Jesus The True Shepherd

John 10:1-6

Pastor John Miller

I'm going to read all six verses, as I like to do, and we're going to go back and unpack them. Beginning in John 10:1, Jesus is speaking. He says, "Verily, verily," or truly, truly, "I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." Notice verse 6, "This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them."

John 10 is a wonderful chapter and a wonderful book. It's rightly been loved by Christians in every age, place, and time. Anyone that knows the Bible, knows John 10, where Jesus actually makes two more of His great "I Am" statements. I want you to notice them. It's the third of the seven statements in verse 7, "I am the door of the sheep." Again, He repeats it in verse 9, "I am the door," and we'll look more at that next week. Notice in verse 11, the second statement in John 10, and the fourth of the seven "I Am" statements in John's gospel, "I am the good shepherd." Again in verse 14, "I am the good shepherd," or I am the Shepherd, the Good One.

The focus of John 10 is not on Jesus the door, although that "I Am" statement appears, but the focus is on Jesus the Good Shepherd. Now, why is Jesus seen as a "good shepherd?" I believe it's because few images in the Bible could better express the relationship between our Lord and His people than that of a shepherd and sheep. Now, we don't really, you know, we're not rural. We don't see a lot of sheep. We have open space around here, and we do see sheep and shepherds. But we're not that much involved or engaged in this, so we don't really understand this expression. In the time Jesus spoke these words, sheep were everywhere.

Years ago I made a bunch of trips (for about eleven years I made eleven trips) over to Australia to minister once a year. If you've ever been to Western Australia, half the continent of Australia, the west side is all one state. It's only about a little over a million people in the main city there of Perth. Everything outside of that is sheep, sheep, sheep, sheep, and lots of sheep. The first trip I made there I went way out into the sheep farms, and I preached in a little country church—talk about the pews being empty that morning, three people showed up for church, and they rode bicycles to get there. It was this little church on this beautiful rural area, and all there were were thousands and thousands of sheep everywhere. I kind of got a tour of a 400,000-acre sheep ranch. It was amazing.

We're not really up on sheep. We don't really know a lot about sheep. We don't really understand sheep. But when Jesus spoke these words, they understood the relationship between a shepherd and the sheep. Wherever you see sheep, you can bet there is not far away a shepherd—sheep need a shepherd. You don't just see a band of wild sheep that run off

on their own and kind of rebel against their shepherd, “We don’t need the shepherd. Let’s go do our own thing,” you know, you don’t really see that. They’re dependent and needy animals. I believe that’s one of the reasons why the Bible likens us to sheep and God as our Shepherd because we are weak, we are frail, we are needing Him, we’re dependent, and we have no natural defenses. I mean, who’s afraid of a sheep? If you’re walking down an alley at night and you hear, “Baaaaa,” you don’t like freak out, you know, “Oh no! There may be an attack sheep in the alley.” What football team is named the Sheep. You have the Rams, the Bears, the Cougars, the Leopards, or whatever there is in the NFL, I don’t know. You can tell I watch football, right? Anyway, all those real cool names, but you don’t have the Sheep. “We’ve got a new NFL team moving to LA, the Sheep,” you know, “welcome the Sheep on the field, ‘Baaa baaa!’” That doesn’t really speak of strength.

It’s not really a flattering statement when the Bible says that we’re sheep and He is our Shepherd. In the Old Testament, Psalm 23, we’re so familiar with that. The psalmist there says, “The LORD is my shepherd,” and then he makes that amazing statement in verse 1, “I shall not want.” Some translations have, “I have everything I need.” I love that. When the Lord is your Shepherd, you have everything that you need.

In Psalm 100:3, the psalmist says, “...we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” In Isaiah 40:11, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd...and gently lead those that are with young.” In the New Testament gospel of Mark 14:27, Jesus was quoting Zechariah 13:7 when He said there, “I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.” He’s talking about His arrest and crucifixion and His disciples scattering, but He likens Himself unto the Shepherd and His followers unto sheep. It’s an interesting statement, too, when Jesus in Mark 6:34 was looking over the great crowds. He says, “...they were as sheep not having a shepherd.” That concept and that idea in the oriental mind was a sad and tragic thought—the idea of a sheep without a shepherd.

Millions of people live today without God as their Shepherd. They try to live their lives on their own without the Lord as their Shepherd and they “shall want” both now and in eternity. They fear to “walk through the valley of the shadow of death,” because they have no shepherd to guide them and to lead them.

In John 10, why is Jesus called, “the good shepherd?” Well, He’s using here in verse 6, I want you to notice, a “parable.” The word “parable” in the Greek is a unique word, different than the normal parables (it’s not the word *parabole* that is used in the other gospels). As a matter of fact, there are no parables in the gospel of John; and later in the gospel, in several places, this Greek word translated “parable” is actually translated as the word “proverb.” The idea is that it’s more of a proverb than it was a parable or better yet might be that it’s a metaphor or an allegory. It’s metaphorical or allegorical language. Jesus isn’t literally a shepherd, and we’re not literally sheep; Jesus is not literally a door who swings on a hinge, but He’s speaking here as a metaphor or an allegory that has spiritual significance and meaning behind it.

What’s the background and the setting, and this is why I only wanted to cover six verses, to

John 10? John 10, let me make it simple, is completely linked together with John 9. You say, "Well, that's common sense, John 9 leads to John 10." Not just chronologically, but is in its subject, so in reality, John 9 and 10 are one unit. The way the gospel of John is laid out is Jesus would perform a miracle, then it would bring Him into conflict with the religious leaders, the Jews, and then He would preach a sermon. So, He performed a miracle in John 9, which was healing the blind man, it brought Him into conflict with the Pharisees and the religious leaders, and now He's preaching a sermon about who He is. In this "good shepherd" metaphor, He's contrasting Himself with the Jewish leaders that rejected the blind man and rejected Jesus in John 9.

I want you to back up into John 9, and I want you to look at verse 39 to get a little running start on John 10. Jesus said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." He's referring to the Pharisees who wouldn't admit that they were blind, thought that they could see, so in reality they were spiritually blind; but those who realize they're blind and confess their sin and turn to Christ were restored and given sight, so the contrast between the blind man and the Pharisees—they thought they saw but they were blind. Now, notice they're named in John 9:40. "And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? 41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." In other words, "If you knew you were blind, and you confessed your sin, you'd be forgiven. But because you think you see, and you don't repent and believe in Me, you will not be forgiven. You are still in your sins."

There's no break between chapters 9 and 10, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." Jesus is contrasting Himself with the false teachers, the false leaders, of the Jewish people here known as the Pharisees. So, back in John 9:40, the Pharisees are those who are referred to in John 10:1 where He said, "Verily, verily," or truly, truly, "I say unto you," who's the "you?" They're the Pharisees at the end of John 9. You need to keep that in mind, what Jesus is talking about, the contrast between Him being the true Shepherd and calling His sheep and those false shepherds—those false teachers, those Pharisees of the Jewish people. That's the contrast that Jesus is trying to develop.

Whenever Jesus says, "Verily, verily," in our English Bible, the word literally means, "truly, truly." Whenever He repeats Himself twice like that, it means, "Listen very carefully." He's going to say something very important. So, "Verily, verily," or truly, truly, "I say unto you," He's speaking to the Pharisees who are blind leaders of the blind and were thieves and robbers and had tried to come in another way. That's the contrast that He's trying to develop there.

Let me outline these first 18 verses for you of John 10. Jesus, the true Shepherd, came to form His flock, verses 1-6. We're going to look at that tonight. The picture is that of early in the morning when the shepherd would gather his sheep out of the fold before he would lead them midday out to the pasture. Secondly, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, came to feed His flock,

verses 7-10. He's forming His flock, verses 1-6; He's feeding His flock, verses 7-10, that's a picture of midday where He's leading the sheep during the day out to the pastures, feeding them; and, thirdly, Jesus, the Great Shepherd, came to protect His flock, verse 11-18. Now, those three divisions are going to be our study tonight and the next two Wednesday nights. Jesus is coming as the Good Shepherd to form His flock, to feed His flock, and also to protect His flock. That's a glorious truth! This is the evening time when He puts them back into the fold and protects them there.

The first scene is that of the shepherd forming his flock early in the morning. I want to talk a minute before we unpack these verses about the sheepfold. The sheepfold is actually what we would call today a pen or a corral. It's believed there were two kinds or types of sheepfolds in those days that one of them was near the city or town. It was larger, had more construction involved, many different flocks would come, and different shepherds would actually put their sheep in this fold at night. In the morning, the individual shepherds would come and call their sheep by name. Their sheep knew their voices, and they would come out of the fold and follow them into the pastures.

There's also those folds that were out in the pasturelands, out in the wilderness or the hills, where they would take stones and build or form a wall. It didn't really have an actual door. The porter or the shepherd would lay in the door there, and maybe the individual flock would be there in that fold. The shepherd would then lead them out during the day. It's believed that this metaphor or allegory is that of the larger fold where multiple (and you need to understand) different flocks from different shepherds would come and call the sheep out. There are all these different flocks belonging to different shepherds. The shepherd would come and just his own sheep, which knew his voice when he would call them, would hear his voice and follow him out, which is a fascinating thought.

What does the sheepfold represent? I believe the sheepfold does not represent...and it's a bit of a challenge to understand this allegory or metaphor, but I don't believe that the sheepfold actually represents heaven. It doesn't represent the idea that these sheep are secure in heaven. In heaven there will be no thieves or robbers, verse 1. There are thieves and robbers in the parable or the proverb or allegory who come into the sheepfold, so obviously it's not a reference to heaven nor a reference to salvation (they're already his sheep when he calls them out of the fold) or to the church. The shepherd leads the sheep out of the fold, so he leads them out of the fold. They belong to him. He comes to them and leads them out of the fold.

Here's the best that I've come up with; that is, the sheepfold represents Judaism, some say Israel (kind of synonymous), but it represents Judaism, the law, the old covenant, and that Jesus came to call them out to follow Him as the Messiah, yes, but to create a new fold which would represent the church. I think that's important to remember.

Notice in verse 16, jump down there with me, Jesus said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." We'll do an in-depth study on verse 16 when we get there in a couple of

weeks, but I want to mention right now that when Jesus speaks about other sheep, He's talking about Gentiles, and you do well to remember that. You might want to put a note in your Bible or write it on a piece of paper. This is one of the common verses that is grossly used out of context and misinterpreted, especially by the cults. All the cult, fringe, and crazy groups want to be the "other sheep" to which are not of this fold. They want to start a new religion. A lot of new religious movements and cults have claimed to be the "other sheep," and they are not of that fold. But that's not what Jesus is talking about.

The first fold is a picture of Judaism, and He calls these people out. Not everyone that were Jews and in the Judaistic system rejected Jesus as Messiah. Many turned to Him in belief because they were His sheep, they knew His voice, and they followed Him. There would be other sheep that would be Gentiles who would actually come. Jesus was actually predicting in verse 16 that there's going to be Gentiles brought into this fold and we would have the church—which would be neither Jew nor Gentile, not bond or free, not male or female (which is what the message the world needs to hear today) but one in Jesus Christ—Amen?—the family of God. Jesus, the true Shepherd, came to form His flock. The shepherd is Jesus, there's no doubt about that. The sheepfold is Judaism, and He calls His sheep out of the fold to follow Him.

People today are confused about who Jesus is. Is He the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine that believe He was Michael the Archangel who became Jesus who died on the cross? Was He created by God the Father? The Jehovah's Witnesses have a very very unbiblical, perverted doctrine of Christ. They actually believe that He was created by God the Father, that He was created an angel. The Bible clearly tells us that He's the second Person of the Godhead and that He coexisted with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit for all eternity. He's eternal, John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," so in the beginning, Jesus existed. He's the eternal Word. He's the personal Word. He was face to face with God the Father, and then He is the divine Word, "...and the Word was God." In the Greek it's even stronger, "And God was the Word."

You jump down in John 1 to verse 14, "And the Word was made flesh," so now He's the incarnate Word. In John 1:18, He's the revealing Word, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," or made Him known. By the way, that verse actually reads, "The only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father hath declared Him," or exegeted or explained Him. So, is He the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses? Is He the Jesus of the Mormons, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? Well, they have His name in their church name, it must be a good Christian church. No. The Mormons, again, deny the eternality of Jesus. They teach that He's the brother of satan or Lucifer. They don't believe that He was God in the flesh who died for our sins and rose bodily from the dead and salvation is by grace alone in Christ alone. Or is He the Jesus of the New Age? There's a lot of Jesus in the New Age movement, but He's not the Jesus of the Bible.

Is He the Jesus of the liberals? The liberal theologians that deny either His deity or His full humanity. They deny His bodily resurrection. They deny all that the Bible teaches about Jesus

Christ. Let me just say this before I get into my points. I haven't even got to them. I'm just warming up to the text. Let me say this: Nothing more important for you than to have your theological term "Christology" correct. You better be right about Jesus Christ. When it comes to Jesus, you better be right because if you're wrong about Jesus, guess what? You're wrong about God. If you're wrong about Jesus, you're wrong about God. If you don't have Jesus, you don't have salvation. Jesus is the way, the truth, the life, and no one comes to the Father but by Him. There's no other way to be saved, "...for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." So make sure that your understanding of Jesus is biblical.

Let me give you four marks of the true Shepherd or you might say of Jesus, four marks that means He is the true Shepherd. Write them down. First, He came the proper way. Look at verses 1-2. "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." All these false teachers, these false prophets, the claimers to be Messiah, didn't come the proper way. They tried to climb over the fence.

If you're driving down the street and see someone breaking a window in a house and climbing through, you might want to make sure that they live there, okay? You might want to make sure that they're not breaking into that house. If you see someone throwing a rock through a car window and trying to get into a car, it could be they locked their keys in their car, but it's more likely that maybe they're trying to break into or steal this car. They're not really going through the front door, they're not going the proper way. All these other false teachers have come along before Christ, but they are thieves and robbers.

Notice verse 2, "But he that entereth in by the door," here it is, "is the shepherd of the sheep." Who's the shepherd? He that comes in the right way, through the door. Now, I believe the door here would speak of the Old Testament prophecies where the Messiah, Jesus, was predicted. Jesus Christ came the proper way through the door of fulfilled, prophetic Scriptures. Now, there's a whole slew of them, we don't have time to look at them, but let me mention a few. The Bible tells us in the Old Testament that He was from the tribe of Judah, and that's what is prophesied in Genesis 49:10 and is fulfilled in Luke 3:33. First, He came the proper way, that He was from the tribe of Judah. He was the son of David.

Secondly, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, house of bread. The bread of God come down from heaven, was born in Bethlehem, the house of bread. This was prophesied in Micah 5:2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel." In Matthew 2:1, "Jesus was born in Bethlehem."

Thirdly, Jesus was born of a virgin, Isaiah 7:14, fulfilled in Matthew 1:18. The Old Testament says He'll be from the tribe of Judah, born in Bethlehem, and He would be born of a virgin. How many people do you know that were born of a virgin, that came from the tribe of Judah, and were born in Bethlehem? As I said, the prophecies could go on and on and on and on and

on. When Jesus came in His first coming, He fulfilled over 300 Old Testament prophecies. Do you know what the mathematical probability of any one man in history fulfilling those prophecies is? One in a googol. That's one followed by one hundred zeros. It's been said that if you took the whole state of Texas and covered it a foot deep in silver dollars, marked one silver dollar and threw it out there in the middle of the state, blindfolded someone, spun them around a few times, and said, "Go searching for that one marked coin," and he has to dive into those coins with one grab pick the coin, pull it up, and find the right coin—one in a googol, one followed by a hundred zeros. Jesus Christ fulfilled so many prophecies that it's irrefutable that He is indeed the Messiah. He came to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies, so He came through the proper door.

Secondly, write it down, Jesus is the true Shepherd because He was received by the porter. Notice it in John 10:3, "To him the porter openeth," stop right there. What is the porter? It's kind of like the butler that opens the door, but He was more than a butler. He was the guy who's watching the sheep and knew the individual shepherds. He would only let the shepherds come in to get their sheep. He's kind of like security. He's kind of like the door man. He's kind of like the sheep bouncer you'd call him, I guess. If anybody tried to come in the wrong way, he would get rid of them. He opened the door and let the true shepherds come in.

There's controversy as to who this porter might be, so we can't be dogmatic. Some believe that it's the Holy Spirit that brings people to Jesus. Others think it's the Old Testament prophets. The most common view, which I think is probably the correct one but can't be dogmatic, is that it's a reference to John the Baptist. The porter could be a picture, a representation of John the Baptist. Remember John the Baptist was prophesied in Isaiah 40:3, "The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD," and that He would actually "make...every valley and hill...shall be made straight," but he was the forerunner of Messiah. When Jesus shows up, what did John say about Him? He said, "Look," (in Bible language that's, "Check it out") "the Lamb of God who carries away the sin of the world," right? He said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who will carry away the sin of the world." John pointed to Him and affirmed, John 1:29, that He is the Lamb of God. He is the true Shepherd because it was affirmed by the porter who, I believe, is John the Baptist.

Here's the third, His sheep hear His voice, and He calls them by name. I like that. Notice it in verse 3. It says, "...the sheep hear his voice: and He calleth his own sheep by name," stop right there. Now, it's interesting that the shepherd would actually go into the fold and would sing a song or he would start a certain whistle in a certain tone, or he would actually start calling his sheep by name. I don't know what he called them—fuzzy tail or fuzzy ears, lambie boy or whatever, Irving, Fred, or George. I don't know what names he gave to these little sheep, but he would actually have names for all his sheep. That's crazy! He would actually call their names out. Some say the shepherd would actually just start singing, and they knew the song and the voice and they would hear. These sheep would know the shepherd's voice. They're dependent, frail, and not very smart; but they're smart enough to know the shepherd's voice. Jesus actually says, "And a stranger will they not follow," so if they really belong to him, they're not going to follow a stranger. They know the shepherd's voice and will follow him and him

only. The shepherd would go into the fold and call them by name.

I believe this is true of us as well. The implication of this thought is amazing—that He knows my name and calls me by my name. They tell salespeople that when you're out trying to sell stuff, to use the person's name a lot that you're trying to sell the new car to, "Well, John, this car is really perfect for you," and "Well, John, this is a great car." "Well, John, you're really going to love the car," and every time you hear your name you're kind of like, "Ah, yeah!" You feel good when you hear your name.

How wonderful to think that God knows my name! All the billions of people on planet earth and He actually knows me intimately and personally. The Bible says that God has the very hairs of our head numbered, and when one falls out, He takes record in account of that. Not one sparrow falls to the ground but what He takes note of, but you are more valuable than many sparrows. The Bible here tells us that He actually calls us and calls us by our actual name.

I don't want to take the time to go in this direction, but I want to make mention as a footnote that I believe this is consistent with what is known as the doctrine of election. You know me, I like to open up cans of worms and like to just tackle subjects head on. This is what's called the doctrine of election. Now, I'm not a five-point Calvinist, so don't freak out; but I believe in the Bible it's irrefutable. The Bible teaches that Jesus said, "You've not chosen Me, but I've chosen you." Now we won't understand this, we can't comprehend this, but if you're a Christian, you are because God chose you and God called you by His grace and God knows your name. He actually called you personally and intimately and individually.

I look back in my life and I came to Christ in the summer of 1971. I look back at how God just reached down and called me by name. It's so powerful and so wonderful and so amazing! I still just get so thrilled to think about, God, why? I was running from You. I was rebelling from You. I was headlong in my sin and stubbornness, yet You knew me and called me, and You called me by name. That's true of every one of you that are children of God tonight. To think, He chose me? I didn't choose Him? How marvelous that is! This is the doctrine of election.

You know, when Jesus called people, He called them individually. He called Philip in John 1:43, "...and saith unto him, Follow me." Just that simple statement of, "Philip, follow me." In John 3, He told Nicodemus, "You must be born again." Then, there's the woman at Jacob's well in John 4, when He spoke to her individually and tells her she could have living water. Matthew is called the tax collector in Matthew 9:9, where He told Matthew to come and follow Me. I love the story in Luke 19 where Jesus, the Good Shepherd, went after one of His sheep. His name was Zacchaeus. You've heard the story? Zacchaeus was a tax collector, and he was despised and rejected and no one liked him. When Jesus was passing through Jericho, Zacchaeus climbed up a tree (talk about being up a tree). This guy was literally up a tree, and it was very undignified for a man of his stature to be in a tree, but he's hanging up in this tree because he wanted to see Jesus.

The story has it that when Jesus got right underneath Zacchaeus' tree that He stopped. I can

almost imagine that his heart started to beat kind of fast like, “Oh no! Why is He stopping under my tree?” And then He looked up, and he’s thinking, Oh man, am I busted! All the crowd could see Zacchaeus hanging on a branch up there, and Jesus actually called him by name. He said, “Zacchaeus, come down. I’m gonna go to your house today to eat,” and by the way, that’s a scriptural basis to invite yourself over for lunch. Jesus did it. You just stand in the foyer after church and say, “Hey, I’m going to your house for lunch today.” Can you imagine Jesus inviting Himself to your house to have lunch? And, they went together to Zacchaeus’ house and everyone was freaking out! All the religious Jews and the Pharisees and all the self-righteous people were like, “I can’t believe that He’s gone to be the guest with a man that is a sinner! How horrible! He’s going to get cooties!”

After a while, they came back out and Zacchaeus says, “Hey, if I’ve stolen anything, taken anything unjustly from anyone, I’m going to give them back more than I took.” Zacchaeus had gotten saved by the Good Shepherd. He was a lost sheep who belonged to Jesus and heard His voice, and he came to Him. Jesus said, “Today, salvation is come to this house.” How wonderful that the Shepherd goes out to seek that one lost sheep, leaves the 99 until he finds that sheep. He calls us by name and brings us back.

Read Psalm 139 when you get a chance and notice how intimately God knows you—your downsitting and uprising, your thoughts that are far off, that all your days were planned while you were still in your mother’s womb. God had it all arranged and designed. He calls us, we hear Him, and He knows our name.

Here’s the fourth mark of the true Shepherd. He leads His sheep out. This is the heart of this so-called parable or proverb. He brings them out of the fold of Judaism to salvation. It says at the end of verse 3, “...and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out,” notice that. Then, in verse 4, “And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”

I want you to go back with me to John 9 once again. Back up all the way to verse 34, and I want you to see the punchline of this whole parable or story that verse 6 tells us that the Pharisees didn’t understand or comprehend. Go back to John 9:34. It says, “They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins,” now this is the Pharisees talking to the man who had been born blind that Jesus had healed and that they had kicked out of the synagogue. He’d been disfellowshipped, and that’s a tragic thing to happen to any Jew at that time. He says, “Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?” Notice at the end of verse 34, it’s key to understanding John 10, “And they cast him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him,” this is the Good Shepherd going to His sheep, calling them by name, and bringing them out of the fold, “he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? 36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? 37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. 38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.”

Why did I have you go back to John 9 and read this little section? Because when it says that he brings them out and goes before them, and they follow him, this is a picture of what happened to this man born blind in John 9. As I said, there's no break there. To understand this, you have to tie it in with what has gone before, and if you need to, go to our website. Go back and listen to the two or three previous messages on John 9 as you go into John 10. It will help you to understand that, so He was the true Shepherd leading him out from the barren fold of Judaism to the green pastures of Christianity.

Here's the interesting point. In John 9, the religious leaders kicked him out of the synagogue, so he was disfellowshipped. That was tragic for a Jew, but in John 10 Jesus said, "...and he calleth his own sheep by name...he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him." Which is it? Is it the Pharisees that kicked him out and drove him to Jesus, or did Jesus go to him and draw him to Himself? I believe, both. It's a picture of our salvation and that God uses circumstances in our lives to awaken us to hear the Good Shepherd's voice. Maybe you lose a job or maybe you lose your health. Maybe you're dealing with other financial issues, but some problem. Maybe you get kicked out of your church, and it's a liberal church and you're not born again. Maybe it drives you into a church where you hear the true gospel and you come to know Jesus. I don't know, but God uses the circumstances of our lives. He brings us to the end of ourselves so that we might see our need of Him and begin to hear His voice.

I remember that when I became a Christian, I was just feeling frustrated, empty, and just began to think about God, my need for God, and that I'm a sinner. It was like, "Where did this come from? How did this begin to happen?" The next thing I know, I'm reading a Bible, which I thought, What's going on? All I ever read was Surfer Magazine, and I didn't even read that. I just looked at the waves in the magazine because I didn't really know how to read. I literally was illiterate. I got saved and learned how to read the Bible. Praise God, I got saved, right? I'm thinking, What is going on? Why is this happening? I started to cry, and I started to pray. I'm talking to Jesus saying, "This is insane. What's going on?" It was the Good Shepherd who came to me and called my name, and I heard His voice and followed Him. What a blessing it has been these many years to follow Jesus Christ, my Good Shepherd. Now I know when I walk through the valley of deepest darkness, He's with me, and He'll never leave or forsake me. I know that goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I, one day, will dwell in the house of the Lord forever because the Lord is my Shepherd. What a glorious truth that is!

Even as God worked in this blind man's life in the circumstances—he was driven out of the synagogue—he was driven into the arms of Jesus who was the Good Shepherd who called him and he followed. God does the same thing in your life and my life.

Notice verse 3, "...and leadeth them," He leads us. Shepherds never drove the sheep, they led the sheep. He goes before us, verse 4, and again in verse 4, we "follow him." How marvelous to know Jesus as your Good Shepherd!

In closing tonight, my question is: Is the Lord your Shepherd? Can you say with David in Psalm 23, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want," I have everything I need. The only way

to know Him as your Shepherd is to hear His voice and to turn from your sin and to trust Him as your Savior. You must believe in Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, and trust Him and be saved. I don't care if you're young, old, or middle-aged. I don't care if you were born in a Christian home. I don't care if you've been baptized. I don't care if you've gone to church. I don't care if you take communion. Have you been born again? Have you been born of the Holy Spirit?

You're not a Christian because you go to church, you're a Christian because you know Christ. He has to become the Shepherd of your soul, and He calls you individually and personally. You turn and you follow Him. Others may not go with you. Your family may reject you, they may cast you out like the blind man. Your friends may turn against you, but if you hear His voice, the Bible says, "Harden not your hearts." The Bible says today is the day of salvation, now is the acceptance time. If you haven't trusted Jesus as your Shepherd, this is where it all begins, and we're going to go through this chapter over many weeks looking at Jesus the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.

Jesus died on the cross for you, was buried, and rose again from the dead; and if you'll trust Him, if you hear His voice, if God is speaking to you, then turn to Him tonight and put your trust in Him. Let's pray.