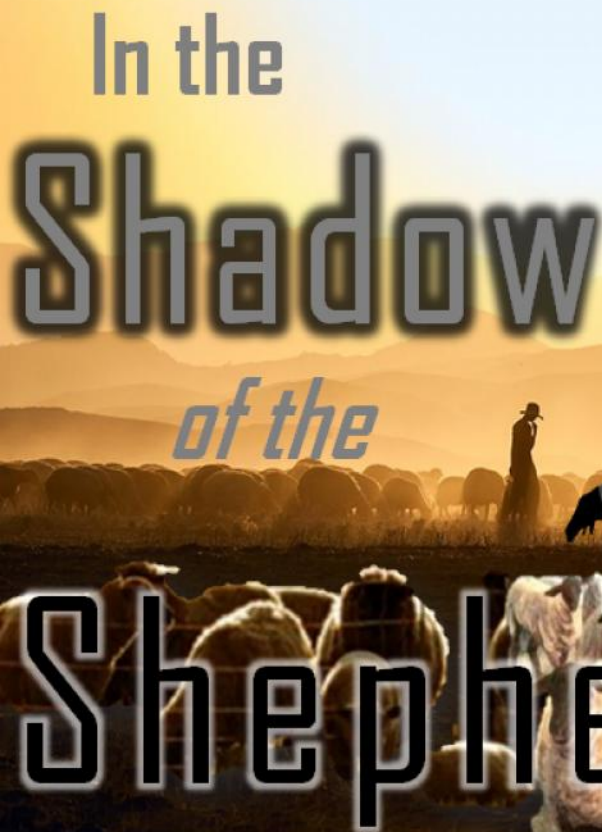


Leadership Training for the Church

# In the Shadow of the Shepherd



"I am the good shepherd.  
I know my own and  
*my own know me,*"  
--John 10:14 ESV

Sheep Becoming Like  
the Shepherd

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September – October 2015

*from the pulpit ministry of Christ E Free Church*

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# Jesus Christ

Our Highest Calling

Our Greatest Purpose

Our Soul's Source and Joy

And Our All Consuming Passion

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## INTRODUCTION

In a world that is determined to be their own person and do their own thing, the church must not allow that pursuit, to overtake us.

The Church must live out it's divine purpose without being deterred, distracted, derailed or discouraged from its calling.

Our culture is saturated with high energy, confident, not-hesitant leaders. We may be tempted to follow that flow, but before we can be qualified kingdom leaders, we must first become good followers, willing servants and sheep who serve the Shepherd.

Once we identify the Shepherd, we then imitate the Shepherd. We follow His lead and replicate His example. We eventually begin to act and live like the Shepherd, until we begin to minister like the Shepherd. At some point, the sheep begin to look and act and ministry like the Shepherd.

This is the focus of this study.

# “Identifying the Shepherd”

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**Text:** Psalm 23 / John 10

September 13, 2015

\* Taken from “*Becoming like the Savior*”, Aibi.org

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long,  
and *you still do not know me.*" -- John 14:9 ESV

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Careless shepherd make excellent dinner for wolf.

--Earl Derr Biggers

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## INTRODUCTION

**1John 2:4-6** “Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him *ought also to walk as Jesus walked.*”

This morning we begin a new series entitled: “In the Shadow of the Shepherd”. This series will focus on helping each of us, regardless of what level of commitment or maturity we may be , to be growing into a servant leader.

***In the Shadow of the Shepherd*** is about we as Sheep, who are Shepherds in the making .

The goal of Biblical Christianity, is not a broader database of religious information. But the goal of Biblical Christianity, is a life of Christian obedience, personal holiness and kingdom service with Jesus as our example in ministry.

This series is intended to be a time of Leadership Training for everyone of us.

Shadowing a Master Craftsman, is sort of like an apprenticeship, where the young, more inexperienced trainee, shadows or hangs around and works with a more experienced Master craftsman in order to learn the trade and ideally, become more like the Master tradesman he is shadowing.

In 1977, I spent 1 year in Vocational School in classroom and shop, learning the trade of steamfitter welder for the Tennessee Valley Authority. After that, I had a 2 year apprenticeship program, where I worked on the job, with journeymen pipefitters and welders in order to better learn the trade. I shadowed a more experienced tradesman in order to better learn the skill.

**Q:** How did Jesus connect with others and how did He minister to them? ***“In the Shadow of the Shepherd”*** is a study to identify the Good Shepherd, in order to become more like Him in the manner in which we view and minister to others, both inside and outside the church family.

Jesus said of his disciples:

**Joh 10:14** ESV I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own ***know me***,

While in the prison, Ford often asks people; “Do you know of Christ, or do you KNOW Christ?” In other words, do you know about him at an informational level or do you personally know Him on a faith based, experiential level?

As our Good Shepherd, Jesus wants His sheep to **KNOW** Him. At one point, He even rebukes his disciples for not knowing Him by faith.

**Joh 14:9** ESV Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me...

IN Scripture, Jesus invites those around Him to “Abide in Me”. “Follow me”. “Come unto me”. “Learn of me”.

This morning we’ll be looking at the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23. The main points of this psalm come from Mark Copeland of Executable Outlines.

- 1) The Shepherd's provision (1-3)
- 2) The Shepherd's protection (4-5)
- 3) The Shepherd's preservation (6)

### **Meditating on the Scriptures**

The LORD (ps 23) is all of the person of the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.. So that when we come to John 10 – Jesus claims to be the good Shepherd. It is important to understand that Jesus is not sort of taking this passage of Scripture hostage, as though He was attempting to make it say something about Him which it was never meant to say.

In Ps.23, “The LORD” is all of the person of the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Today we will see Jesus Christ, God the Son – as the Shepherd of Ps.23.

During His life Jesus did not simply make great claims. He was revealing who He was, and identifying Himself – not as someone claiming to be God. He is identifying Himself as God and spends 3 yrs proving and verifying His claims and His identity.

From the Bible, we understand that Jesus possessed the attributes of God.

\* He knew thoughts. In Mat.12:25, when the Pharisees attributed Jesus’ power to Beelzebub, the prince of demons, Jesus knew their thoughts.



\* He knew the future. In Mat.24:27 Jesus foretold the future and some of the coming events of the end times.

\* He forgave sins. In Mat.9:5, Jesus healed the body and forgave the sins of the paralytic. And in Lk.7:36, Jesus said of the sinful weeping woman, “your sins are forgiven”.

\* Jesus walked through walls, defying normal human limitations. Jn.20:19

\* He demonstrated the power of God in Creation - [Jn. 1:1-4; Heb.1:1-3; Col.1:15-17]

\* He received the worship of God [Rev.5:11-14]

\* He shared the glory of God [Jn.17:5, 22]

\* He was sent from God [John:2; 6:46]

Jesus as your Good Shepherd - Do you know of Him or do you know Him personally, experientially. As the Son of God, Jesus possessed the attributes of Almighty God.

Psalm 23 is that wonderful psalm that calms the soul, brings peace to the spirit, offers strength and hope to our minds and assurance to our faith.

## **THE SHEPHERD IS OUR PROVIDER (v1-3**

\* Ps.23:1-2) Source v3) Sustainer

The Shepherd’s job was to ensure that proper food, water and necessities of life were provided.

**Psa 23:1-3** ESV (1) A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (2) He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. (3) He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

## **Jesus is the Life Source of all Human beings**

**Joh 1:1-4** ESV In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through him, and without him

was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

This is the role of the Good Shepherd. He was the Provider and life source for His sheep.

## **Jesus is the Provider & sustainer of all things**

**Heb 1:1-3** ESV Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, (2) but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (3) He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- \* He is the manifest presence of Gods' glory.(v3)
- \* Jesus is the visible and visual person of the invisible Godhead.
- \* He possess and demonstrates the power of Almighty God Himself.

Jesus is not merely a man who claimed to be God, but God who became man or who took on flesh and blood to Show us the Father – HE revealed to us the Father and what he is like.

This morning we are “Identifying the Shepherd” as the Son of God – the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **THE SHEPHERD IS OUR PROTECTOR (Ps.23:4-5**

He is our defender. The job of the Shepherd was to defend the sheep from the enemy which could be hunger, fear, danger, wolves of other predators.

*Here we see...*

## **The Presence of God is in the troubles of His people (ps.23:4-5**

\* David the shepherd is writing this from the perspective of a sheep with God as the Shepherd of his life.

**Psa 23:5-5** ESV (4) Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (5) You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

\* It is important to understand and to be assured of this – that the presence of the LORD does not leave us in our times of trouble. IN fact it is the presence of God in the Troubles of His people who have given testimony over the ages, that in hardships, God comes through; In Weakness, God makes strong; in emptiness, God brings about fullness; what the devil means for evil, God the Shepherd, means for good.

### **The Shepherd Watches and Defends**

\* Charles Spurgeon writes about the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23.

“He rules, guides, feeds, and protects them; and they follow, obey, love, and trust him. Examine as to whether we are sheep;”  
[Treasury of David]

*The Shepherd watches and defends.*

**Psa.127:1** **A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.** Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

**Psa.146:9** The LORD watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

**Psa.72:4** May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!

**Psa.74:22** Arise, O God, defend your cause; remember how the foolish scoff at you all the day!

**Prov.31:9** Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

### ***Jesus as our Good Shepherd***

**John 10:11-13** ESV I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (12) He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. (13) He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

As our Good Shepherd, Jesus watches, defends and protects his sheep and ultimately laid down His life to deliver us from the devil, our devouring enemy.

## **THE SHEPHERD IS OUR PRESERVER (Ps.23:6)**

### **The Confidence of Trusting Sheep**

\* Our Shepherd preserves us from the evil and from the evil ONE. In so doing, we can expect God's goodness in our lives.

**Psa 23:6** ESV (6) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Because of verses 1-5, then v6 will surely follow. It's a natural progression. Because of God's faithfulness in our past, we can trust Him for our future.

### **The Power of the *Servant* Savior**

**John 10:14-17** ESV (14) I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, (15) just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. (17) For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.

The plan of Jesus was to lay down His life for His sheep. The power of the *Servant* Shepherd is that He would also take it up again. The Eternal Son of God, participated in His own resurrection.

**Heb 7:25-26** ESV Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. (26) For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

The power of the Servant Shepherd is also the power to save to the “uttermost”. Meaning wholly or fully, without lacking in anything; also meaning conclusively. He saves to the uttermost or in every way; at every point; without exception. He is our Preserver!

## **APPLICATION - ASSIGNMENTS.**

**Q: *How will we as sheep, respond?***

From Psalm 23, let’s list some steps to be taken which will help us identify the Shepherd in our Lives.

***The Shepherd:*** What God does. | ***The Sheep:*** What we are to do.

*Recognize and Identify the presence of the Shepherd in your life.*

### **1) IN THE AREA OF PROVIDER (VS1-3)**

***The Shepherd*** – What God does. The Shepherd shepherds. He makes us lie down. He provides food. He doesn’t make us eat it, but He faithfully provides for it. He also lead us beside peaceful, thirst quenching living waters. He doesn’t force us to drink, but He faithfully leads us to the bountiful supply.

He also restores the soul and leads in paths of righteousness. Its what the Good Shepherd does!

***OUR RESPONSE - The Sheep*** – What we are to do. We must allow the Shepherd to lead us. We are to follow and obey and receive from Him the spiritual food and living water and restoration of life as He provides. We are to study, believe and obey the food of His word in every way.

We are to follow Him in the paths of righteousness. We are to live the righteous life and make righteous choices. We are to allow our lives to reflect His holiness.

## **2) IN THE AREA OF PROTECTOR (VS4-5)**

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**The Shepherd** – What God does. He faithfully leads and is present in our troubles. He protects us from the evil (and the evil ONE). His rod and staff which are used to defend and ward off our enemies, are also used to gently guide our paths towards obedience and eternal life.

**OUR RESPONSE - The Sheep** – What we are to do. We are to trust Him fully through the darkness. We are to follow Him faithfully, through the path of righteousness, even though that path may lead us through the valley of the shadow of death. We follow!

We do not fear the evil or the darkness or the Shepherd's purpose. We also expectantly look for and recognize His blessings to be present and His mercies and goodness litter our lives, even when surrounded by enemies.

## **3) IN THE AREA OF PRESERVER (V6)**

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**The Shepherd** – What God does. He Assures us!

**OUR RESPONSE - The Sheep** – What we are to do. "I will dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life". Not that we move our bedrooms and clothes closet into the church. But that we live daily by faith and in a sense of abiding in His holy presence as the Good Shepherd of our souls.

We Trust. We Follow. We Obey. We Hear and experience and know Him. We Lie down and experience all He has for us.

We live each day as sheep who follow their Shepherd. We live each day in worship and obedience to our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. We view Jesus as the center and source of all creation and all of life.

We must identify Jesus as our Good Shepherd. We must abide in Him. Come unto Him. Follow Him. Learn of Him. Become like Him. Love as He loved. Live as He lived and minister as He ministered.

Do you know of Him or do you **KNOW** Him – personally and experientially? There is a big difference!

**1Jn 2:4-6** ESV Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

This is the focus of this series. The sheep becoming more like the Shepherd, not merely in moral character but ultimately in kingdom ministry.

-----**EXTRAS**-----

**Isa 40:11** ESV He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

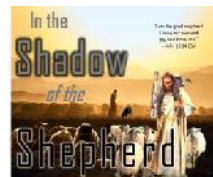
**Eze 34:15-16** ESV I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. (16) I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

**Zec 10:2** ESV For the household gods utter nonsense, and the diviners see lies; they tell false dreams and give empty consolation. Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd.

**Mat 9:36** ESV When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

**1Pe 2:25** ESV For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

**1Pe 5:4** ESV And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.



# “Imitating the Shepherd”

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**Text:** Psalm 23 / John 10

September 20, 2015

1 Jn.2:4-6; Jn.13:14-15; Phil.2:3-7;

\* Taken from “*Becoming like the Savior*”, Aibi,org

It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher,  
and the servant like his master... --Mat 10:25 ESV

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Imitation is not intended to be a deception, nor is it false. It is a true attempt of taking what we see to be of value outside of ourselves, and forming it into personal practice or character within one's self.

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--anonymous

Jesus said:

**Abide in me** – Jn.15:4,6,7,9

**Follow me**–Mat.4:19; Mat.8:22; Mat.9:9; Mat.10:38; Mat.16:24; 19:21

**Learn from me.** – Mat.11:29

**Come unto me** – Mat. 11:28

**Love me, obey?** - Jn14:



## INRODUCTION

Today our theme is this: *“Sheep must become more like the Shepherd, not only in moral character, but in Kingdom ministry.”*

If ever there was a time when the lost world around us needed genuine examples of Jesus’ life and love and Truth, it is in our time. With the radical, militant, extremists, Islam is spreading across the globe and our nation doesn’t really know what to do about it. Homosexuality is seeping into every area of America and we don’t know how to address it. Even many Christians don’t know how to communicate disapproval without expressing rejection. And racism is on the rise more than it has been in decades.

We will not be able to address these issues adequately as the people of God, until we learn how Jesus viewed those people and addressed them and respond as he did. We have to learn to Live as He lived. We must grow to Love as he loved. We must be willing to Minister as He ministered. Serving as the Shepherd served and Ministering as the Master ministered; this is the focus of today’s message; *“Imitating the Shepherd”*, with sheep becoming like the Shepherd, not merely in the area of moral character, but in also in kingdom ministry.

As the church of the Good Shepherd, we have to realize that our relationship with God is affected by our relationship with others. Do we care for others, the way Jesus cared? Do reach out to others in the same manner that Jesus attempted to reach them?

**Joh 14:15** ESV "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

**Mat 5:43** ESV "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

Do we love those outside the body of Christ enough to risk sharing our faith and God’s gospel with them?

Luke 15 – Jesus told 3 parables about how God feels about those who are outside His family. 1) Lost sheep, 2) lost coin, 3) lost son.

“For God so loved the World...” is the extent of the message of how God feels toward those outside His family.

So Last week we looked at “Identifying the Shepherd” Who is He? What is He like? How does He work and perform His job? How are we to relate and respond to Him?

Today our focus is on “Imitating the Shepherd” – not in a false sense of imitating. But what can we learn about Jesus – how he lived and ministered and how can we begin to live like he lived?

**1Jn 2:4-6** Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk as Jesus walked.

Remember our focus is on the sheep becoming more like the Shepherd, not merely in the area of moral character, but what was His view on His life and purpose, and can we learn something personally from that?

**Joh 13:14-15** ESV If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (15) For I have given you **an example**, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

That example was serving others.

**Mat 11:29** ESV Take my yoke upon you, and **learn from me**, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

So let's look at 3 questions that will help us as sheep, seeking to become more like the Good Shepherd in the area of ministry.

*Our first question this morning is...*

### **HOW DID JESUS VIEW HIS OWN LIFE?**

\* Jesus viewed his life as not his own and that He was called to be about His father's business.

## **As the Son of God, Jesus was called *out* of His position and heavenly palace.**

Perhaps some key words: Humility and Surrender.

**Phil. 2:3-7** ESV Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (4) Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (5) ***Have this mind [attitude] among yourselves***, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

**NOTE:** Not only was Jesus willing to leave the glories of heaven, he is willing to associate with the likes of you and me. Not only did he not hang on to what he had, He did not push away from becoming like us, in human form and suffering, in order to better serve, and save us. “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.” (Acts 16:31)

Perhaps we would be pleased to become like Christ in sonship to God, but not in sacrifice to one’s self. If it implies gain, we are more inclined to welcome it. If it implies changing or surrender, we are more inclined to avoid it.

Jesus was called out of His position and heavenly palace.

## **Jesus was called *into* a world of sin and broken humanity.**

\* He was sent into the world to connect with those separated from the Father by sin.

In Luke chapter 19, Zacchaeus trusted in Christ and his life was immediately changed. Following that Jesus stated:

**Luk 19:10** (ESV) For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

So Jesus viewed His life as though it was not his own and that He was called by the Father. Are we any better than our Master or Shepherd?

*Our second question this morning is...*

## **HOW DID JESUS VIEW THE WORLD AROUND HIM?**

We know that He was grieved over the world around Him, because He viewed it, that is its inhabitants, as valuable.

### **He was grieved over their spiritual need and lostness.**

Perhaps some key words: compassion or concern.

In Matthew chapter 9, Jesus' perception of the people around Him is described.

**Mat 9:36** ESV When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd

A shepherd's job was to care for the sheep in every way. The shepherd was to supply food and water, shelter, safety from predators and guidance to other grazing areas. These "sheep" were, practically speaking, shepherd-less, and that grieved the Good Shepherd, because He was deeply concerned over their spiritual need and lostness.

### **He was also outraged over those who were religious leaders, but uninterested in the needs of the sheep.**

That is, He was outraged at those who were in positions of religious authority, supposedly representing the Good Shepherd Himself, yet so disinterested in that calling, that they were more concerned with status, and position and their authority. They were failing at the very thing that was expected of them.

**Mat 9:37-38** ESV Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; (38) therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Why would He say this, with all the priests, scribes, Rabbis, prophets and pharisees? Because they weren't doing their jobs. So He asks his disciples to pray for laborers who will do what they are expected to do, that is Shepherd the people. This would involve connecting, discipling, teaching, leading, nurturing caring and shepherding.

**Mat 23:13-15** ESV "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. (15) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single convert, and when he becomes a convert, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

Not only were the “shepherds” and spiritual leaders of his day not doing their jobs, they were actually doing the opposite. They were not simply failing to lead and shepherd, but they were actually leading people astray, away from the paths of Righteousness that the good shepherds were expected to be doing.

So how did Jesus view His own life? It was not His own.

How did Jesus view the world around Him? With great compassion, concern and outrage.

## **SO HOW CAN WE BEGIN TO LIVE AS HE LIVED?**

First, we must begin by sensing that God wants me to be more like the Good Shepherd, both in life and in ministry.

Then, we must begin to desire in our own hearts, to willingly take steps to be like Him both in life, as well as in ministry.

So we must sense it as Gods call and purpose for our lives, but we also must desire it in our own hearts, because without it being a desire of our own hearts, we will not make it a priority to pursue or with which we need to follow through.

## **Realize that we are called to follow Christ's example.**

This is God's expectation for His children. But we often have become overcome by the “sin of Pre-Occupation” – that is preoccupied with the things of this world and distracted from the things that God wants us to pursue. The Church needs to disconnect from the things of this world and re-connect with God and His desire for us. Then we need to connect with others, in order to connect them to Christ. But this has to become a desire of

each individual heart and a point of personal interest before we will ever really change.

**Mat 10:25** ESV It is enough ***for the disciple to be like his teacher,*** and the servant like his master...

The sheep need to become more like the Good Shepherd, not merely in moral conduct and character but in kingdom ministry.

**1Pet 2:21** ESV For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you ***an example,*** so that you might follow in his steps.

How can we follow in His steps? 1) we must realize that He calls for us to follow His example.

*But also in order to follow Christ's example, we must..*

**Realize the Harsh Reality.** The Harsh Reality is that we can never truly connect with God and follow Christ, unless we do what He did, lived like He lived and serve as He served. Truly following Christ is not simply a label we can put on or a statement we can declare. It must be a genuine life lived as He lived, and being about the Father's Kingdom business as Christ was.

**1Jn 2:4, 6** (4) Whoever says "I know Christ" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,--  
(6) whoever says he abides in Christ, ought also to walk as Jesus walked.

Jesus was the Good Shepherd and He was a servant shepherd.

Remember, this is not a focus on becoming like Christ in character only, though that must be part of it. But our focus is Imitating the Shepherd, in that the sheep are becoming more like the Shepherd in kingdom ministry.

Psalm 100 is Another Shepherd Psalm. I'm going to read it and replace the name "LORD" with the title, "Good Shepherd".

**Psa 100:1-5** ESV (1) Make a joyful noise to the **GOOD SHEPHERD**, all the earth! (2) Serve the **GOOD SHEPHERD** with gladness! Come into the **GOOD SHEPHERD's** presence with

singing! (3) Know that the **GOOD SHEPHERD**, he is God! It is the **GOOD SHEPHERD** who made us, and we are the **GOOD SHEPHERD's**; we are the **GOOD SHEPHERD's** people, and the sheep of his pasture. (4) Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to the **GOOD SHEPHERD**; bless his name! (5) For the **GOOD SHEPHERD** is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

This Psalm is all about the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23 and John 10 and we are to “Serve the Good Shepherd with gladness”.

How did Jesus, as our Good Shepherd, treat others? Let us learn to treat others the same. How did Jesus address the sinners around Him? Let us begin addressing them like He did. How did Jesus view the irresponsible religious leaders around Him? Let us view them and perhaps ourselves, in the same manner.

Let us view hypocrisy in our own lives. Let the sheep seek to purge all that is not like the Good Shepherd, out of our lives, not just in the area of moral character but in kingdom ministry. I have found that its possible to view ourselves as morally OK, and that can become enough. I have found it possible to view kingdom ministry as secondary to personal, moral holiness.

Please understand we must strive for purity and moral character and lives of holiness. But if we somehow accomplished all that, but never grew in the area of Kingdom ministry, we are no better than the pharisaical hypocrites that outraged Jesus in His day.

How did Jesus live and minister? Let us, as the Sheep of His pasture, live and minister as He did and faithfully follow His example.

## **APPLICATION - ASSIGNMENTS.**

Here are some Steps to be taken which can help us *Imitate the Good Shepherd* in our Lives.

**STEP# 1) Give Up the hindrances as Christ gave up things that could have hindered Him.**

**Phil. 2:6-8** ESV who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but **EMPTIED** himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he **HUMBLED** himself by becoming **OBEDIENT** to the point of death, even death on a cross.

We can humble ourselves before God. We can attempt to empty ourselves of all the things we hold onto, which hinders us from genuine shepherd-like service to God.

**TAKE A QUICK INVENTORY: As we consider Step #1** - What attitude in your life keeps you from becoming more like your Good Shepherd? Consider asking God to give you an appropriately humble heart. Consider asking God to empty you of all the things that hinder you from becoming more like Christ.

## **STEP #2) Mix as the Shepherd Mixed; Connect with others as Jesus connected.**

**The Shepherd** – Jesus as Shepherd connected with those in His culture and environment, even the religious hypocrites and sinful outcasts. He did not insulate or isolate himself from coming into contact with others, in fact he did the opposite.

Jesus went to the well, looking to connect with others. [Jn.4:29]

Jesus spoke with a prominent man about eternity. (Nicodemus; Jn.3)

Jesus attended a banquet at the house of a Pharisee and discussed forgiveness. (Lk.7:47)

And Jesus did not schedule times to minister to others – it was his way of life. He was always looking for others to converse with and engage in conversation. But what He did have to schedule in was his down time, or alone time.

**Luk 5:15-16** ESV ...great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. (16) But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.



**Mat 14:23** ESV And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,

**Luke 9:28** About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray.

**John 6:15** So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Too often we do what we do, our job, our vacation, our free time, our down time, entertainment time and we have to squeeze into our schedule a time of ministry and service for Christ. Jesus on the other hand, served and carried out his father's business and had to squeeze in down time, alone time, refreshment time.

**TAKE A QUICK INVENTORY: *As we consider Step #2*** -What people are you around in any given week, that you mix with socially, but you have never connect with spiritually? (1) Meeting people are divine appointments. (2) A large percentage of people around you are sheep in need of a Shepherd. What if you were the one who pointed them to the Good Shepherd? What if you became more like the Good Shepherd to people that you mix with? Imagine what kind of difference we could make in our own corner of the world?

### **STEP #3) Make the Good Shepherd's goals and life focus our own.**

Jesus' goal and life focus was doing the work of His Heavenly Father.

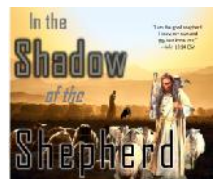
**Joh 4:34** ESV Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

We know what food can do for us in the area of motivation. "I'll gladly pay you Tuesday for a cheeseburger today." Jesus' "sustenance" for his life was doing what the heavenly Father had called Him to do. I believe that once we begin to view our lives like Jesus viewed His and viewed those around us as Jesus viewed those around Him – the we will begin to nurture the ministry

perspective that “our food is to do the will of Him who has sent us.” And that we must “be about our Father’s business”.

**TAKE A QUICK INVENTORY: *As we consider Step #3*** - (1) How many hours in a given day are you doing your work and how many hours are you doing the work of your Good Shepherd? (2) Think about – pray about and jot down how you can begin to “Imitate the Good Shepherd” at your work? Or during your entertainment? Or at School?

Begin taking steps toward becoming more like our Good Shepherd. These are steps each of us must consider taking, as we consider the difference for Christ we could make.



# “Seeking As the Shepherd Sought”

-- *Jesus Friend of Sinners* --

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**Text:** ; Lk.19:10; Heb.2:14-15; Lk.4:18-19      Sept. 27, 2015

\* Taken from “*Becoming like the Savior*”, Aibi.org

“For the son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”  
--Luke 19:10 (ESV)

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“The greatest enemy to human souls is the self-righteous spirit which makes men look to themselves for salvation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
-Charles Spurgeon”

## INRODUCTION

**1Jn 2:4-6** Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk as Jesus walked.

There is a poster in the church office that reads:

*They will not learn unless they are **taught**.*

*They will not seek unless they are **sought**.*

*They will not come unless they are **brought**.*

This message refers to sheep, seeking sheep for the Shepherd and carrying out His ministry until He returns. We have looked at “Identifying the Shepherd”. We looked at “Imitating the Shepherd”.

Today we look at “**Seeking as the Shepherd Sought**” – which is sheep seeking seek.

Key Verse Today:

<b>Luke 19:10</b> ESV “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”
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Seeking is the action taken. Saving is the intended result of that seeking. Together, it is the overall purposes “to seek and save that which is lost.”

Seeking the lost requires time, effort and determination. The cost is frustration, inconvenience, and sometimes discouragement.

Seeking and Connecting with the Lost is not a quick process, that we can check off at the end of a set period of time. It is not a quick process, nor is it a one time pursuit. And while the cost of seeking the lost may be great, the rewards are even greater.

**SEEKING AND SAVING THE LOST, REQUIRES** Personal desire, which is compelling you to seek and connect, **AND DIVINE INTERVENTION**, which prepares the heart and saves the soul. It also requires walking as Jesus walked.

This is a joint effort between human obedience and God’s grace. It requires seeking, pursuing, finding, connecting, teaching and nurturing faith.

“Jesus Friend of Sinners: Serving as the Shepherd sought.  
Ministering as the Master Ministered.

Jesus went about this task, as He fed the 5000, washed disciples feet, served as an example, touched the lepers, befriended the tax collectors, and appropriately and respectfully addressed the adulteress, without condoning her sin. Jesus lovingly conveyed disapproval, without expressing rejection.

## **GOD'S HEART FOR THE WORLD**

Here we learn that God is not satisfied with the lost remaining lost. He is not satisfied with those who are broken, fallen, sinful and separated from the family of God, to remain broken, fallen, sinful and separated from God. He wants them redeemed.

### **What God does *NOT* love.**

God does not love the effects of the evil one in the world and in the lives of human beings. Jesus wept over Jerusalem which had been led astray by the evil one. He was outraged at the money changers in the temple, who were distracted from their true spiritual business.

<p><b>2Cor. 4:4</b> ESV In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.</p>
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Jesus did not love the worldly effects that keep people from turning to God and remaining outside His family. Some take the statement, “the god of this world”, to refer to the fact that God has given Satan charge or authority or jurisdiction over the earth, until the time when Jesus returns to the earth to take it back and set up His righteous reign on earth. I see nothing in this text to suggest that. “The god of this world”, simply refers to the perspective of the inhabitants of the world, who reject God, reject Christ, reject Truth, but chose to allow Satan, the evil one, to guide them, influence them and fill them as they pursue their own desires and lusts.

### **Jesus Understood that Sinners are Prisoners of Satan** [Aibi, p7]

If we as sheep are to become more like the Shepherd, we have to

see people as Christ saw/sees them and we need to connect with them as Jesus connected with people.

**Mat 10:25** ESV It is enough *for the disciple to be like his teacher*, and the servant like his master...

Sometimes Christians get so angry, or so repulsed as they see the sins of those that are not Christians and will have nothing to do with them. Some Christians purposefully isolate themselves from those kinds of people. While attempting to keep themselves pure, they keep themselves insulated from the very people Jesus has called us to reach.

In contrast, Jesus understood the condition of those that have not yet placed their trust in Him. He knows that they are prisoners in bondage and He says that He came to set people free from that bondage. In John 8:36 Jesus said, "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." [Aibi, p7]

**Heb 2:14-15** ESV Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, (15) and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

These verses tell us that every person that is born is in bondage. [Aibi, p7]. Jesus also promises that there is freedom and deliverance from that kind of bondage to the god of this world.

**Joh 8:31-36** ESV So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, (32) and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (33) They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" (34) Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. (35) The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. (36) So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Jesus understood that sinners are prisoners of Satan, but He was not satisfied with the prisoners remaining enslaved or the lost remaining lost.

### **God Loves the Lost!**

God was not satisfied with the spiritually dead remaining dead, so He made provision for them to be redeemed and to receive new life in Jesus Christ.

**John 3:16-17** ESV "For God so loved the **world**, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

The "*world*" here is not the world system; or the thought process of the unsaved pagan world. It is not the wisdom of the world nor the ways of the world that He loves. The world here is the inhabitants of the earth whom Satan has hoodwinked and whom God loves. That's you and me.

**Rom 5:6-8** ESV For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die-- (8) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

*Jesus Friend of Sinners*, shows us God's Heart for the world.

*It also shows us...*

### **JESUS' MINISTRY OF SEEKING SINNERS.**

Jesus spent His ministry connecting with those who were disconnected from the Father, due to sin. *Sinners!* He was known as one who associated with despicable sinful people. He came to seek and save that which was lost – that is, those who were lost in their sins. <sup>[Lk.19:10]</sup>

## **Jesus Came to Connect with Sinners.**

He was not satisfied with sinners remaining disconnected from God. So He connected with lost sinners.

**Luke 19:5-10** ESV And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." (6) So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. (7) And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest **of a man who is a sinner.**" (8) And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." (9) And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. (10) For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

This shows us that the focus of the life of Christ was not to avoid the lost but rather connect with the lost, in order to seek and to save the lost. Christ was continually seeking those who were thought to be too lost or too sinful or too despicable to be around. Look for the outcasts and there you would find Jesus.

*They will not learn unless they are **taught**.*

*They will not seek unless they are **sought**.*

*They will not come unless they are **brought**.*

Early in His ministry Christ sought out the Samaritan woman at the well. He went to where she would be and attempted to connect with her. He asked her for a drink[John 4:7] The woman responded; "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

In other words, why are you, a Jew, mixing with me, a despicable Samaritan whom the Jews detest? Even Jesus' disciples were shocked that He'd talk with her[Jn.4:27] . Over time, the disciples understood why He mixed with and connected with the kind of people He did – because He came to seek and to save the lost.



## Jesus seeks until He finds

\* Believe it or not, God is not satisfied with unsaved people who are still outside of His family.

**Luk 15:1-7** ESV Now the **tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near** to hear him. (2) And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man **receives sinners** and eats with them." (3) So he told them this parable: (4) "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? (5) And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. (6) And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' (7) Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

Jesus is not One who gives up on us easily. In fact He is not One who gives up on us at all.

Sometimes we are quick to “shake the dust off our hands” with the attitude, “you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make it drink”. We sort of excuse ourselves of any further obligation or responsibility.

Reaching and Connecting with the Lost is costly. It will cost time and frustration. God reminded me this very week, that I should not give up on some whom I had basically “written off”. Jesus Seeks the lost until he finds them. He pursues the lost until he is able to connect with them, demonstrate His love and direct them with spiritual Truth. Likewise, we must begin to minister as He did. We must begin to seek the straying, the wandering, the lost and despicable, just as He did – until we find them or until they get connected to Christ.

Ray Comfort’s movie **Audacity**, has a subtitle stating, “Love Can’t Keep Silent”. In other words, if we truly love the lost, our mission field and even the homosexual community, avoiding them and keeping silent is not what Christ would have us do. But we must

find ways to encounter them, engage with them in conversation as Jesus did, and prayerfully and lovingly seek ways to direct them to faith in Christ and the error of their ways. That typically takes much more than a one time encounter over the topic of homosexuality. Seeking the lost takes time, effort and is often discouraging and frustrating.

*“Jesus Friend of Sinners” reminds us to strive toward...*

## **BECOMING LIKE THE SHEPHERD IN MINISTRY**

**QUESTION:** What did the **Shepherd** do?

**ANSWER:** The Shepherd assertively sought the lost. He mixed and connected with those whom He came to save. He lovingly addressed their sin, and called them to follow Him.

**QUESTION:** What the **Sheep** Should do?

**ANSWER:** We must Learn how to do likewise. We must mix as the Shepherd mixed - Connect as Jesus connected. We must Love others as Jesus loved and risk as Jesus risked.

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

**1) Assertively seek the lost** – seek to connect with them – seek out opportunities to mix with them, be where they are, interact with those outside the family of God,

**2) Learn how to lovingly** convey disapproval without expressing rejection.

**3) Practice how** to associate and communicate with those around us, outside the family of God, but who are also involved in sin that may disgust you.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Practice the **CPR Evangelism** booklets

**C** = Current events and items in the news

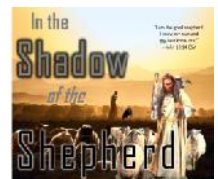
**P** = Personal Interests and Life Stories

**R** = Religions background and spiritual beliefs.

**Ev = Evangelism** takes place by sharing the God's gospel and your personal faith. An invitation is made to believe and be saved.

This evangelism strategy is centered around layers of conversation, beginning at the most superficial and least threatening, progressing to deeper levels of communication and disclosure. Ideally this will lead to the point of sharing the message of the gospel of Christ and inviting others to truly believe in Christ and evidence that faith by repentance and lifestyle change. This necessitates connecting, conversing and connecting to Christ and His church.

**1Jn 2:4-6** Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk as Jesus walked.



# “Sharing As the Shepherd Shared”

*-- Jesus’ Love for the Lost --*

**Text:** *Jn. 4; Jn.3; Lk.23*

October 11, 2015

“Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, (14) but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” -John 4:13-14

“A true shepherd cares more for his sheep than for his own safety.  
He cares for the sheep, and sacrifices for his sheep.  
Do the sheep ever really appreciate that?  
How can they - they are only sheep?  
\_\_\_\_\_ -a sheep turned shepherd

## INTRODUCTION

Remembering **CPR Evangelism** booklet.

**C**= Current Events and Items in the News – superficial conversation level – nonthreatening.

**P**= Personal Interests or Life Stories or circumstances.

**R**= Religious Background or Spiritual Beliefs

**Ev**= Sharing your faith and the gospel of Christ, with invitation to believe and be saved.

**1Jn 2:4-6** Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him Must walk as Jesus walked.

Our Focus is Sheep becoming more like the Shepherd, not only in moral character, but also in kingdom ministry.

[Video Clip: "I Want To Be Like You", Baloo and King Louie]

**1Jn. 2:5** whoever says he abides in him, must walk as Jesus walked.

Today, I hope we will leave with this tune in our minds and that desire in our hearts, but focused on the Shepherd – "Lord, I want to be like You!"

*Sharing Christ's love for the lost, we begin with...*

**JESUS AND THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.** (Jn.4

**NOTE:** HOW Jesus shows compassion for the sinful lost. The LOST – is in reference to those who were not believers in God or Jesus; they sins were unforgiven; their souls were unsaved; they had no hope of life after death in heaven with the LORD.

**PLEASE NOTE ALSO:** For one thing, Jesus does not look upon the sinful masses with disgust or detest. He wept over a pagan Jerusalem[Mat22:37]. He had compassion on the masses as they were like sheep without a Shepherd.[Mat.9:36]

Jesus also went the home of Matthew the tax collector. [Mat.9:9-10]

**John 4:5-6** ESV (5) So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. (6) Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

**CPR Evangelism**

**C = Current events, items in news or other chit-chat**

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**John 4:7** A woman from Samaria came to draw water. **Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."** (8) (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)

Jesus initiates conversation.

**At the initial superficial level, The Woman demonstrates a Willingness to Talk** (v9ff

\* She replies with a question.

**Jn.4: (9)** The Samaritan woman said to him, 1 "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) (10) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (11) The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. 2 Where do you get that living water? (12) Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." (13) Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, (14) but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Another interesting point, is that Jesus doesn't really answer her question. He doesn't get off track or get distracted.

**The Woman Expresses Interest** (v15ff-

\* Now the woman asks Jesus for a drink (cp. Jesus' request in v7)

**Jn.4:15** **The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water,** so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

They are officially entering into a deeper level of communication.

**CPR** = Personal Interests or Life Stories, circumstances or personal experiences.

**Jn.4: (16)** Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." (17) The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus

said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; (18) for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

The woman answered the question, disclosing very personal and private info.

**The woman is aware Jesus is unusual and evidences her own Spiritual Interest v19ff**

\* This brings them to the “**R**” level of “CPR” conversation.

**CPR** = Religious Background or Spiritual beliefs

Jn.4: (19) The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive **that you are a prophet.** – (they continue their conversation )-

(24) God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

*She evidences more spiritual interest.*

**Jn.4: (25) The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming** (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." (26) Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

The Woman leaves to tell others - (28) So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, (29) "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" (30) They went out of the town and were coming to him.

What does this reveal about her religious background? (she obviously knows about the Jewish Messiah.) This woman invites others to meet Jesus, much like what Matthew the disciple does.

**Mat 9:9-11** ESV As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. (10) And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. (11) And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

Interesting to me, it doesn't seem that Jesus was crashing the parties of the sinful outcasts where He may not have been wanted.

But in fact it was the sinful outcasts who were coming to where He was.

### **The Woman Influences others towards Christ (v30)**

\* This woman went back and shared her personal story (testimony) of her meeting with Jesus.

**John 4:39** ESV Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."

She did not have to be coerced. She does not attend a conference or training seminar. Her encounter with Jesus compelled her to tell others about Him and direct them to Him.

\* **PLEASE NOTICE HERE.** Jesus does not in any way, belittle this sinful woman. He offers no subtle insults because of her lifestyle. He is the perfect gentleman to her and the perfect example to us, because Jesus is able to hate the sin, while loving the sinner. Her sin may disgust him, but she as a person does not. He may communicate disapproval, but does not express rejection.

As the sinful culture creeps in all around us, seeping into every area of our society – we must not lose sight of those outside the family of God. These are people for whom Jesus died and for whom angels in heaven await in anticipation, of exploding in heavenly joyous celebration as they come to faith in Christ and repent from their sin. That's how Jesus dealt with a sinful woman.

### **JESUS AND NICODEMUS (Jn.3)**

Context: A man came to Jesus at night, hoping to escape the public eye, but with a compelling personal concern and religious interest.

**Joh 3:1-2** ESV Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. (2) This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."



## **Nicodemus approaches Jesus (v1-2**

This is a situation where someone approaches Jesus with religious interests and questions.

### **CPR Evangelism**

#### **CPR - Current Events or Cultural Issues**

Cultural issues, being that this was a religious culture and religious conversation and topics were a common part of their discussions and conversations. He expresses Personal interest about a religious topic concerning Jesus.

## **Jesus Addresses His spiritual question (v3f**

\*

**CPR - P** – Personal Interest or Life Stories – Specifically address the question Nicodemus asked him. This was of personal interest. As a result, Jesus shares spiritual truth.

**Joh 3:3** Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

### **Jesus continues with the openness that Nicodemus expresses.**

Jesus's spiritual Truth, sparks a religious question from Nicodemus.

**Joh 3:4 ESV** Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Nicodemus has a question. He is looking for clarification. He takes the conversation to a deeper spiritual level.

### **CPR - Religious Interests and Spiritual Beliefs**

**Joh 3:7-8 ESV** Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (8) The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

**Joh 3:9 ESV** Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

At this point, there is no reason to be afraid that Nicodemus is going to be offended or freaked out by deeper spiritual

conversation. Nicodemus is asking questions. He is seeking clarification. He is evidencing significant spiritual interest.

In this passage the conversation with Nicodemus is not resolved, we are only told in v22, that Jesus and disciples left and went into the Judean countryside where they continued ministering.

He is mentioned again in 7:51, but it is not until John 19:38-39, where Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus' body down off the cross, wrapped his body in burial cloths and spices and placed it in a tomb. It appears that Nicodemus became a follower of Jesus, after all.

How is Jesus sharing His love for the Lost with Nicodemus? He was not afraid of offending the person, merely carrying on the conversation as it was naturally flowing.

**1Pet. 3:15** ESV but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

In every situation, Jesus responds to others in a gentle, kind and respectful manner – and as sheep becoming like the Shepherd, so should we.

I believe we can see this as an example for us to follow. We, as sheep who are seeking to become more like the Shepherd, should not be afraid of Sharing the Shepherd's Love for the Lost. We should be able to follow His example in these personal contacts, which are turning into relational connections, whereby Jesus is mixing and connecting with those who are outside God's family.

\* Jesus is not satisfied with these people remaining outside the family of God. This is Jesus seeking and saving the lost and ultimately sharing spiritual Truth at the level that those hearing, might believe, be saved and be born into the family of God.

As Sheep who are becoming more like the Shepherd, we also must not be satisfied with the lost being lost and remaining outside God's family. His love and compassion for the lost is such that He takes risks in speaking in depth regarding spiritual matters, even matters of the person's life of sin. We should do likewise.

**2Cor. 5:11** ESV Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.

**2Cor. 5:14** ESV For the love of Christ compels us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died;

**2Cor. 5:20-21** ESV Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (21) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

This is what it means to ***Share as the Shepherd Shared***.

v.11) ***"Persuade"*** others – we connect with them and convince them to understand and believe differently. This is risky dialogue.

v.14) ***"compels"*** us – that is it presses in on every side.

v.20) ***"implore"*** you – to beg or plead. Seeking the lost as Jesus sought the lost and Sharing with those outside the family of God as Jesus shared. This is the sheep becoming more like the Shepherd, not only in moral character but also in kingdom ministry.

## **JESUS AND THE ADULTERESS WOMAN (Jn.8:3-11)**

\* Jesus communicates disapproval without expressing rejection.

### **The guilty woman**

\*Jesus displays the heart of God that He is not willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance. (2 Pet.3:9)

**Joh 8:3-11** ESV The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst (4) they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. (5) Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" (6) This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. (7) And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, **"Let him who**

**is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her."**

(8) And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. (9) But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. (10) Jesus stood up and said to her,

**"Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"** (11)

She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, **"Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."**

That is... Repent.

**Joh 3:17-18** ESV For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (18) Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

### **Jesus came to seek and save the lost.**

\* He came to reconcile the lost world with the Heavenly Father, who is not satisfied with the lost remaining lost. That was the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, while on earth and it must be our mission as well, until He returns.

### **ASSIGNMENT: APPLICATION**

**Question:** How have you done with your assignment from 2 weeks ago? Familiarize yourself with the **CPR** Evangelism booklet as a tool to help you share in conversations, in order to point others to Christ.

**WHAT DID THE SHEPHERD DO?** As the Good Shepherd, who was deeply concerned for the souls of the lost:

- 1)** Jesus did not hesitate to mix with the lost and sinful. They were the reason he came to earth. (Lk.19:10)
- 2)** Jesus found ways to connect with those outside the family of God. He used conversation and things familiar in their culture to bridge the conversations toward spiritual direction.
- 3)** He did not shrink back from inviting people whom the religious world detested and rejected, to follow Him or to believe in Him.

**QUESTION: WHAT SHOULD THE SHEEP DO?**

**ANSWER:** *Whatever we see the Shepherd doing, we do Like-wise.*

**1)** As Sheep becoming like the Shepherd, we should not hesitate to mix with those who are lost and outside the family of God. They were the reason he came to earth. (Lk.19:10) They are the reason we share our faith and carry out His Great Commission.

**Question:** Who are those whom you choose not to associate with due to their lack of spiritual life? List those.

**2)** As Sheep becoming like the Shepherd, we should find ways to connect with the lost in meaningful conversations. We can use conversation and things familiar in our culture to bridge the conversations toward spiritual direction, in order to eventually share our faith and the gospel of Christ.

**Question:** Who do you converse with on a weekly basis, who are probably not Christians? List those.

**3)** As Sheep becoming like the Shepherd we must not shrink back from inviting people to follow Jesus or to believe in Him. We must not shrink back from sharing our own personal story of faith in Christ and at some point invite them to do the same.

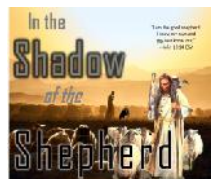
**Question:** When was the last time you shared your faith and the gospel of Christ to an unbeliever?

**4)** We should at least be viewing our conversations with people like that as being divinely ordained by God in order for us to share some Truth at some level.

**Question:** How many times in the past 2 weeks did you implement something you learned from the CPR Evangelism booklet into a conversation?

**ASSIGNMENT:** (1) Review CPR Evangelism booklet again. (2) Practice with others, taking conversations from “C” level to “P” level, as presented in the CPR booklet. (3) Pray for open conversations and connections with those from the lists we referred to in points 1-4 above.

This is not about being better sheep. It is about becoming more like the Shepherd in ministry. Complete these assignments and you will be on your way to doing just that.



# **“Living As the Shepherd Lived”**

*-- Jesus’ Call to Live “the Life”--*

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**Text:** Mat.11:28f

Oct.18, 2015

\*Taken from “*Becoming like the Savior*”, Aibi,org

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them,  
and they follow me.” -- John 10:27 ESV

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Careless shepherd make excellent dinner for wolf.

--Earl Derr Biggers

***In the Shadow of the Shepherd*** is intended to be Leadership Training from the Sunday Morning Pulpit format.

## **INTRODUCTION - “Living AS the Shepherd Lived”**

**1Jn 2:4-6** ESV Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

Jesus offers 3 Invitations to receive from Him and to become more like Him, both in moral character, as well as in kingdom ministry. These invitations can enable us to live the Life of the Good Shepherd. As we begin Living as the Shepherd Lived, His life will begin to be lived through us and into the lives of others.

*Invitation #1-*

**“COME UNTO ME”** (Mat.11:28-29)

\* This is Jesus’ invitation to life abundant. [Jn.10:10]

“Come Unto ME” is an invitation to find and receive the abundance of life that God desires to pour out upon His people. Too often we come to God wanting what we want to get, rather than what He wants to give.

In order to “*Come unto Him*”, I believe there must be an underlying, simmering interest and thirst for deeper and greater spiritual depth. There has to be a stirring desire and a growing longing for something beyond what we have experienced in Christ thus far. And at some level, there has to be a dissatisfaction with the way things are or have been.

*Come Unto Me holds...*

**The Promise of Rest and Renewal**

This is not rest and relaxation but Rest and Renewal or Restoration.

*Invitation #1--*

**Mat 11:28-30** ESV Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Some view this as referring to the “labor” of ministry. Some view “Labor” mentioned here as referring to the continuous toil of keeping the law and the ongoing offerings, and sacrifices for sins, with the various ceremonies and festivals of the Jewish law. Some believe it to be referring to every area of life that heaps up and weighs us down, crushing us under its life draining weight.



*Come Unto Me also holds...*

## **The Promise of Abundance and Revival**

Revival is “the fullness of God, filling the lives of His people” and is something God desires to do, but there is a requirement – that is, we must “come unto Him”. In order to come unto Him, there must be a laying aside of the former ways, a surrendering of the present ways and a looking forward unto Christ for life anew and abundant.

**QUESTION:** On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with your present spiritual state?

“Come unto me” is an invitation to receive from Christ abundance and revival.

**Joh 4:10, 13-14** ESV Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." .... (13) Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, (14) but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

**Joh 7:37-38** ESV On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. (38) Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

Rivers of water, was reference to the Spirit of God bringing refreshment, renewal, revival and new life upon the land.

Isaiah, the prophet frequently used the symbolism of water to represent the blessed work of the Holy Spirit of God in bringing about national and personal revival into the lives of His people. God's people often experienced drought and famine as God's response to their sin. God often poured out revival and living waters as His response to their repentance and return to Him. John records Jesus' reminder of that promise to God's people.

**Isa 44:3-4** ESV For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your

offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. (4) They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams.

**Isa 55:1** ESV "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

**Isa 58:11** ESV And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

The physical imagery of pouring water onto sun scorched land was to be a lesson on God's Spirit being poured out upon His people in the form of Revival and Abundance of life as they walked with Him.

*Come Unto Me* is Jesus' invitation for all of us to come dry and receive rivers of living water, abundant life, resulting in revival.

**QUESTION:** Is your spiritual life dry and lifeless or like a constant renewing, refreshing flowing river of life and depth for you AND for others?

((Come Unto Me, is Jesus' Invitation to life Abundant.))

*Invitation #2--*

**"ABIDE IN ME"** (Jn.15:5, 8

This is Jesus' Invitation to newer and deeper spiritual life growth and sensitivity in ministry productivity.

In 1John.2:4-6, "Abide In Him..." means to walk as Jesus walked and Live and the Shepherd Lived.

[Consider Reading: "Abide in Christ", A. Murray]

**IIA. Abiding in Christ is intended to be a very Personal experience**

\* "Abiding" refers to continuing in our relationship with Christ. It is not about simply refraining from backsliding, but is about continuing in an ongoing deepening spiritual journey.

**Joh 15:4-10** ESV **Abide in me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it **abides** in the vine, neither can you, unless you **abide in me**. (5) I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever **abides in me** and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (6) **IF** anyone does not **abide in me** he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. (7) **IF** you **abide in me**, and my words **abide in you**, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (8) By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. (9) As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. **Abide in** my love. (10) **IF** you keep my commandments, you will **abide in my love**, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Jesus takes a physical reality as an object lesson of spiritual life. It is continuing in Him as our Source and Him as our Life giver. Like a fruit branch staying connected to the life giving branch. abiding in Christ is a life focus and worldview of our life source being Jesus Christ. If we feel we can live without Christ we will also live without His blessings.

Fully abiding in Christ is closely related to personal obedience. **“IF”** you keep my commandments...

Jesus presents this as a conditional promise. 3 times the text says **“IF”** you do not abide, you do not have life. **“If”** you abide in Me, you will bear fruit. **“IF”** you keep my commandments, you abide in my love.

So abiding in Christ, encompasses a personal spiritual experience, but extends beyond that to obedience in ministry.

## **Abiding in Christ is ultimately Ministerial**

\* John 15:5 & 8, refer to bearing fruit. Coming Unto Jesus, and Abiding in Him for life, is a prerequisite to bearing fruit in ministry. Bearing Fruit means becoming more like Christ our Good Shepherd. It means purity, prayer life, heart passion, and discipleship ministry. It means a focused life on fruitful kingdom advancement.

## Abide in HIM

**1Jn 2:24-25** ESV Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will **abide in the** Son and in the Father. (25) And this is the promise that he made to us--eternal life.

“Let What You heard”: This refers directly to what they had heard from Jesus Himself. His Personal teaching was to be taking affect, growing in to the similar Shepherding ministry of discipleship.

Abiding in Christ is about His word abiding in us in the form of obedience. Abiding in Christ is also about “Living as our Good Shepherd lived and loving one another.

**1Jn 4:12-16** ESV No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God **abides in** us and his love is perfected in us.[1Jn.2:4-6] (13) By this we know that we **abide in him** and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. (14) And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. (15) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God **abides in** him, and he in God. (16) So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever **abides in** love **abides in God**, and God abides in him.

Coming Unto Jesus, and Abiding in Him for life, is a prerequisite to bearing fruit in ministry. The repetition of this “abiding” terminology in these passages emphasizes the fact that it is a key component in the spiritual life of God’s children.

*((<sup>1</sup>“Come Unto Me”, is Jesus’ Invitation to life Abundant. <sup>2</sup>Abide in Me is Jesus’ Invitation to newer and deeper spiritual growth.))*  
*Invitation #3---*

**“LEARN OF ME”** (Mat.11:29)

\* This is Jesus’ invitation to ministry with greater fruitfulness.

**Mat 11:28-30** ESV Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and *learn from me*, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Follow Me. Observe me. Listen to me and learn from me. Get to know me, and find reason to believe and lay down your life. Become like me. Serve as I serve. Minister as I minister.

**2Jn 1:8-9** ESV Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. (9) Everyone who goes on ahead and does **not abide in** the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever **abides in** the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

Abiding in Christ means remaining in His teaching, persevering in His calling and purpose and being obedient in sharing Him with others.

*In this 3<sup>rd</sup> Invitation...*

### **Learning of Christ involves taking on The Yoke of Christ**

\* This is our Job assignment and life purpose. Consider the farming term, yoke.[Mat.11:29]

1) A yoke bound an animal to its assigned implement. An ox was bound to its plow by a yoke. A horse is bound to its carriage by a yoke.

2) But a yoke also bound one beast of burden with the other, as they labored together. Together, the yoke kept both animals pulling the same load, working in the same direction, accomplishing the same task. Taking the yoke of Christ involves us as sheep, sharing His ministry and job assignment until He returns.

### **Learning and Following go hand in hand.**

Learning from Christ necessitates following Christ. Following Christ anticipates Learning from Christ. You can follow Christ

without really learning from Him, but you can't learn from Christ, without following Him.

Following = observing, watching, listening / Learning = taking it all in and taking it to heart.

**Mat 28:19-20** ESV Go therefore and make **disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) **teaching** them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

A "disciple" is basically a learner. The Great Commission is all about making learners who follow Christ, and take Him and His teachings to heart. Learning is crucial in following Jesus Christ. Learning necessitates understanding.

**Mat 13:19** ESV When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does **NOT understand** it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

**Mat 13:23** ESV As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and **understands** it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

(1) Understands – implies he must be taught; must become a learner

(2) Obeys – implies acting upon what they understand; or what they have learned.

Godly leaders do not just demonstrate good moral character. They also demonstrate the heart of Christ in their willingness to...

- to serve others
- to sacrifice themselves in the interest of others growth and benefit.
- to see the end to which they have been called and make the necessary adjustments in order to fulfill the call of God in Christ for their lives.

- to seek life change in others [AIBI, Shepherd, p3, personal notes.]
  - Continue daily, taking up one's cross and dying to oneself, for the sake of fully following Christ.
- 

### CHRIST'S 3 INVITATIONS –

**(1) Come Unto Me** – This is Jesus' invitation to life abundant.

**Question:** What prevents you from responding to this invitation and receiving the promise of personal renewal and revival and abundant life?

**(2) Abide In Me** – This is Jesus' invitation to a newer, deeper and more productive spiritual life.

**Question:** What prevents you from abiding in Christ as your life Source, so as to bear fruit for God's Glory?

**(3) Learn of Me** – This is Jesus' invitation to join Christ in His kingdom work and minister with greater kingdom fruitfulness.

**Question:** What keeps you from following Jesus and being fully yoked with Him in ministry?

### ASSIGNMENT: APPLICATION

**Consider Your flock.** **Consider** those around you as those whom God has brought to you or you to them. **Consider** those around you as sheep needing a shepherd and you are the closest thing to the Good Shepherd they presently know.

**Consider** yourself the Shepherd of your block where you live.

**Consider** yourself as the shepherd of where you work or of your office. **Consider** yourself as the Shepherd on your floor, or your wing, or over your group or team, or class.

**Consider** those in your areas of connection and influence as your flock- and that you have been given the job you have or the position you hold and the responsibilities you have – not just to make money. But you are there because those there, are scattered like sheep without a shepherd. Imagine you have the job you have, not because you are so skilled, or because of your expertise or

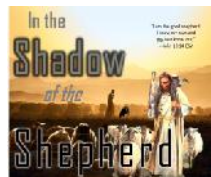
know-how. But you are where you are because God has placed you there, and given you influence into the lives of those around you, because He has a job for you to reach and disciple them.

“Living as the Shepherd Lived”, is about not viewing your life as your very own, or your job as merely a way of making money. But it is about Living as Jesus lived, loving as He loved, seeking as Jesus sought and connecting with others around you as Jesus connected with those around Him, with the purpose of helping others to become learners of Christ, believers in Christ and devout followers who are ultimately serving Christ.

**Question:** How deep is your spiritual life? Does your spiritual life involve ministry? Have you fully accepted these 3 invitations from our Lord Jesus?

If not, Will you fully accept these 3 invitations from our Lord Jesus, which can enable us as sheep, to become more like Him, our Good Shepherd in service for His kingdom cause? The Depth of your spiritual life, will have a bearing on the spiritual lives of others. We should be bearing fruit!

“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.” – Jn.15:8 (ESV)





# “Serving and the Shepherd Served”

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“Loving examples of A Servant’s Attitude”

**Text:** Jn.13: / Mat. 13:

Oct.25, 2015

\* Taken from “*Becoming like the Savior*”, Aibi.org

“Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!” --Psalm 100:2 ESV

“A great man is different from an eminent one in that he is ready to be the servant of the society”

—B. R. Ambedkar

## INRODUCTION

**1Jn 2:4-6** (4) Whoever claims to abide in Him, but does not obey his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever obeys His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are truly in him: (6) whoever claims to abide in Him, must walk as Jesus walked.

“SERVING AS THE SHEPHERD SERVED” is all about demonstrating Loving Examples of a Servant’s Attitude. Bill Hybels refers to Christ’s examples of Servitude, as “Descending into Greatness.”

**Rom 8:29** ESV “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be *conformed to the image of his Son*, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”

For most of us, when we hear that Bible verse, we consider being “*conformed into the image of His Son*”, as referring to an issue of character. We take being molded into the image of Christ as referring to growing in character and virtue; we think of holiness and righteous living; purity and love. We typically don’t tend to think about it referring to us as sheep, becoming more like Christ, our Good Shepherd in the areas of Christian ministry.

A Shepherd is by job description, a servant. For a Shepherd’s position, non-servants need not apply. Jesus modeled the servant leadership perspective. The servant leader leads by example and invites others to follow and serve together with Him. That is opposite to leaders who lead by issuing orders, delegating to subordinates and seldom see or experience the level at which ministry actually takes place.

Jesus said...

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”  
-John 10:27 ESV

This was in context of, not merely following Him in character, but in the ministry or connecting with others and making disciples. The Shepherd goes before the sheep and in doing so, He leaves an example for us to follow and emulate, as it pertains to His life and ministry.

*“Serving as the Shepherd Served” involves...*

## **THE EXAMPLES OF HUMBLE SERVANTHOOD**

\* Jesus’ examples of servanthood were meant for us to imitate.

*An Example of Humble Servanthood was...*

## **The Washing of Feet** (Jn.13:1-2)

\* Servanthood is loving acts of humble selflessness.

1) In serving, Jesus demonstrated His love for his disciples (v2

**Joh 13:1** ESV Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he 1showed them the full extent of His love. (1some versions state: "he loved them to the end."

2) In serving, He also humbled Himself.

**Joh 13:4-5** ESV rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. (5) Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

(Consider. Phil.2:7-8)

Jesus humbled Himself, by taking on the role and responsibilities of a lowly house servant. This presented an unexpected and particularly awkward situation for the disciples, so that Peter even initially, refused to let Jesus wash his feet. [Note: James 4:9 / 1Pet.5:6]

3) In Serving, Jesus left us an example for us to follow.

**Joh 13:12-15** ESV When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? (13) You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. (14) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (15) For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

**Joh 13:16** ESV Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

If we desire to be great in the eyes of God, then we must descend from our present notions of leadership and enter into the realm of true greatness, by becoming a servant.

**Mar 9:35** ESV And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and *servant of all*."

Servant leadership operates on humility rather than ego. Christ's example of ministry was serving, participating in the hands on ministry and being an example. Jesus did not give orders to follow, but examples to follow, and imitations to serve as He served.

**John 13:15** For I have given you an example, ***that you also should do just as I have done to you.***

**Question:** Am I willing to follow the example of Jesus, in humbling myself in order to become the servant leader as He was, in connecting with others and serving them in His name?

*another example of servanthood was...*

**The Feeding of the Hungry** (Mat. 13:14-20)

\* Jesus served and met the physical needs of others, in order to reach them and teach them the spiritual lessons they needed.

*In feeding the hungry...*

1) Jesus has compassion on others. This was part of what motivated Him.

2) Jesus also evidenced servanthood. As the Good Shepherd, this was how He was oriented.

*Jesus Gives us Examples of Humble Servanthood.*

*Serving as the Shepherd Served, also involves...*

## **THE ATTITUDES OF CARING SERVANTHOOD**

\* Along with humility, there is the attitude of personal sacrifice. In John 10:11 Christ said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

The Good Shepherd makes personal sacrifices on behalf of the sheep he is called to care for. Shepherd Leaders who are becoming godly leaders will also be willing to experience personal sacrifice for the sake of those that they are leading, and serving.

*Jesus caring Servanthood was evidenced in...*

### **The Attitude of Gentleness** (Mat.11:29)

\* In the world's perspective of achieving success, ruthlessness is often valued higher than gentleness.

**Mat 11:28-30** ESV Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for ***I am gentle*** (or mild) ***and lowly in heart***, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

"Lowly of heart" = humble attitude or disposition.

"Gentleness" = demonstration of that humility in action.

**GENTLENESS:** I Thessalonians 2:7 says, "But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children." The first attitude that helps developing leaders become more like their shepherd is an ***attitude of gentleness***.

This might be illustrated with the concept of Salsa. A ruthless leader may actually lead like a cattle driver rather than a shepherd. That kind of leadership might be viewed as spicy salsa. That is salsa that carries a lot of heat. It is salsa that burns the throat, causes your eyes to water and causes sweat to trickle down the back of your neck. Some may prefer that kind of leadership, but many find the heat, too much to tolerate.

On the other hand "mild" salsa is more the example Jesus offers. That is the kind that is full of flavor, and is pleasant going down. This is the style which is often more easy to take and more effective in getting others to follow you in ministry.

New Christians are like newborn babies. They need someone who has an attitude of gentleness to lead them if they are going to grow into healthy Christians. If they do not have one or more Christians who become spiritual parents to them, they will have a difficult

time growing and we will not see Christ formed in their lives.  
[Aibi, Shepherd, p.1]

Peter even gives us this admonition in how we share our faith and the gospel.

**1Pe 3:15** ESV but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with **gentleness** and respect,

Yelling and finger pointing doesn't do much for winning the lost for Christ and developing disciples that will endure.

*Jesus' Caring Servanthood was also evidenced by...*

### **The Attitude of Sacrifice**

\* This is the attitude that puts others interests before our own. A new Christian needs someone to lead him and help him in his spiritual growth. A Servant Leader will only be effective in helping that new Christian grow if he or she has the attitude of a sacrificial, godly shepherd. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus is an example of the attitude of personal sacrifice on behalf of the needs of others.

**Phil 2:3-4** ESV (3) Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (4) Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. .

**SACRIFICE:** I Thessalonians 2:9 says, "For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God."

The attitude that helps developing leaders become more like their shepherd is an ***attitude of sacrifice***. Paul, Silas and Timothy said that they worked night and day to help these new Christians in their growth.

They also said that they did not want to be a burden to the new Christians. Instead they chose to make their lives available to the new Christians. New Christians do not always choose ideal times to need help. Sometimes when they are going through difficult

times they need help and encouragement at inconvenient times.  
[Aibi, Shepherd, p2]

*Jesus' Caring Servanthood was demonstrated by...*

### **The Attitude of Willingness**

\* This evidenced genuine interest, or heart felt desire to serve.

**Mat 20:25-28** ESV But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. (26) It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, (27) and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, (28) even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus did all he did, willingly. He experienced all he experienced, willingly. He sacrificed all He sacrificed, willingly.

**Phil 2:5-8** ESV (5) Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

He made Himself, nothing – willingly. He humbled Himself, - willingly. HE laid down His own life for his Sheep – willingly.

**Joh 10:18** ESV No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

Jesus evidenced a servant's Attitude of Sacrifice, gentleness, and willingness. As Servant Shepherds, we must demonstrate these kinds of attitudes towards others as we serve them for Christ, even giving them examples of our own lives.

*Jesus Caring Servanthood was demonstrated in...*

### **The Attitude of Patience**

\* If you are not presently a patient person, then being a servant will certainly test and develop that needed patience.

**1Thes. 5:14** ESV And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be **patient** with them all.

After His resurrection Christ showed another kind of strengthening ministry to two of His disciples. Christ joined them and began walking with them as they walked along the road to Emmaus. (Luke 24:17)

He asked them to tell why they were sad. After hearing why they were sad, Christ said “Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:25-27) And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” He strengthened them by patiently helping them to understand the Old Testament and the teaching about the promised Messiah.

Sometimes all a person may need is a little patient understanding.

**Question:** How has God been patient with you throughout your spiritual journey? Who in your past, have you viewed as having been very patient with you and never gave up on you?

In “Batman Begins”, Bruce Wayne is presented as quite a lustful, wandering, billionaire playboy. At one point he leaves Gotham City for an extended period of time. And when he finally returns, Alfred – old faithful Alfred, is still there, keeping the mansion and the grounds just like it was when “Master Bruce” left. Bruce comes to Alfred and says, “Alfred, after all I have done, after everyone I have let down, you have never given up on me.” To which Alfred says, “NEVER, Master Bruce – NEVER!”

Who in your life has been “long suffering” with you? Should you and I not act likewise toward others who now need someone who will be patient and not give up on them?



*Serving as the Shepherd Served involves....*

## **THE CHALLENGES OF SERVANTHOOD**

\* If you are a true servant in the lives of others, then you have to learn to accept the challenges that come with being a servant.

*The Challenges of Servanthood are demonstrated between...*

### **Jesus and Judas**

\* This represents those who are going through the motions; non-compliant; or unreceptive to your influence and ministry. We may be tempted to quickly quote: Mat 7:6 ESV "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you."

**Jesus and Judas:** Even when people chose to reject Him, that did not change the attitude of Christ toward those people. This is illustrated most clearly by the way Jesus responded to Judas. Matthew 26:48-50 says, "Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him."

***At the very moment that Judas was betraying Him, Jesus still treated Judas with love and respect*** and called him "Friend". He gave Judas the freedom to make the choice to reject and even betray Him and still treated him as a friend. We want to teach developing leaders to follow the example of Christ and keep loving people whether those people choose to follow Christ or to reject Christ.

Christ still continues to reach out to people even when they reject Him and we want to show developing leaders the importance of giving people a clear choice while continuing to love them and reach out to them even when they reject. [Albi, Savior, p23,24]

*We also see the Challenges of Servanthood demonstrated between...*

### **Jesus and Simon the Pharisee**

\* This represent those who are critical, defiant, and perhaps oppositional and disruptive to your ministry.

**Jesus and Simon:** Christ also chose to spend time with the Pharisees so that He could share with them how to have eternal life. Luke 7:36 says, “Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.” Here we see that Jesus had time to have dinner with a proud Pharisee who needed eternal life. This Pharisee even had a negative attitude toward Christ.

Luke 7:39 says, “Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, “This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.” Here we see that the Pharisee had a negative critical attitude but Jesus knew that he needed eternal life. In this case Jesus gave Simon and the other Pharisees a short parable. Luke 7:41-43 says, “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?”

Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” Jesus told Simon he was correct that the one who is forgiven the most loves the most. Later Jesus showed Simon and his guests that He can forgive sins and give eternal life. Luke 7:47-50 says, “Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives 26 sins?”

Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.” Simon and the others saw Jesus forgive the sins of the woman and give her eternal life. They saw that they could also ask Jesus to forgive their sins and give them eternal life. Jesus chose to patiently spend time with Simon and his friends so that they could see and hear how to have eternal life. [Aibi, Savior, p26-27]

*Finally, we see the Challenges of Servanthood demonstrated between...*

### **Jesus and Nicodemus**

\* This could represent those with whom we take much time, put forth much effort, teach, share, encourage, answer questions and it just seems that nothing of eternal value or depth ever takes place.

You may feel your work is in vain or that your words are falling on deaf ears. You wonder why in the world you continue wasting your time and breath on this person or on these kinds of people.

We need to ask ourselves this question: Who exactly are you serving? For whom are you doing the work, you are doing? For the person you are reaching out to? For yourself, to feel good about your Christian work?

Today, consider your flock; that is those whom you influence by your life and nurture in their faith.

### **ASSIGNMENT:**

What is your motivation and purpose for ministering as you do? “because it is meaningful to me”, or because “It makes me feel good about myself.” If you do what you do for any other reason, than for the Glory of God and because of His calling in your life, then ultimately you are doing what you are doing for the wrong reasons.

**1) Repent** from your chief motivation of Christian service being in serving others. We serve others, but those whom we serve must not be our primary focus or motivation for Service.

**Rom 12:11** ESV Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, ***serve the Lord.***

**2) Rededicate** all you do, to be for God’s calling, and Christ’s kingdom.

**1Cor. 10:31** ESV So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to ***the glory of God.***

**3) Resolve** to do what you do , because it is simply what God wants you to do. Resolve to do what you do, as your act of service and worship to God.

**Col 3:23-24** ESV Whatever you do, work heartily, **as for the Lord** and not for men, (24) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are **serving the Lord Christ**.

Consider this story.

**THE LEGEND OF THE STONES**, told by Elizabeth Elliott

There's a lovely little African legend about Jesus. Understand, it is not in the Bible. It is only a legend. But I think it's not sacrilegious and I do believe that there's a strong lesson here for all of us. It certainly was a lesson that hit me between the eyes. It's the legend of the stones.

Jesus was walking one day with His disciples and asked each one to pick up a stone to carry for Him. They all picked up a stone. Peter, rather a small one; John, a bigger one. Jesus led them to the top of a mountain and then He commanded the stones to be made bread. The disciples were by this time hungry, and so they were given permission to eat the bread in their hands. Of course, Peter didn't have very much. John shared with him some of the bread that had been made from the stone he had carried.

On another occasion, the same Jesus took the same disciples for a walk and again asked them to pick up a stone to carry for Him. This time you can imagine that Peter picked up a bigger stone. But Jesus did not take them this time to the top of the mountain. He took them to the river. As they stood on the bank looking with questions in their minds to Him, He said, "Throw the stones into the river," which they did at once in obedience to His command. Then they looked at Him, expectantly waiting for the miracle that would happen this time.

Nothing happened. They waited. They watched. Nothing happened. Jesus, with great compassion, looked on these disciples whom He loved and He said, "For whom did you carry the stone?"

**For whom do you carry the stone today? For yourself? For success? For notoriety? For the accomplishment of some great dream that you have held always in your heart? Or is it for Jesus?**

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**Personal:** As we left our last ministry assignment, one of the areas of ministry we were most active in was children's and youth ministry. It was well supported by our church, in fact I had more money in our children's slush fund than our church had in the bank.

It had come to the point where most of the children we had ministered to over the past 13 years, had grown up, and moved away. We were preparing to transition out of ministry there, but before we left, we heard that 3 of the little girls who were part of the original kids group were back in town. So I went to visit them one more time, before we moved away. 2 of the 3 girls had children out of wedlock and the 3rd was living with her boyfriend.

That was so profoundly discouraging to me, that I told my wife, I feel like we have been building sand castles for the last 13 yrs. And one great wave has just come and washed away all those sand castles, so that it felt like we were never even there.

I don't remember how, or from whom, but I know the Lord gave me this verse which changed everything.

<p><b>1Cor. 15:58</b> ESV Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.</p>
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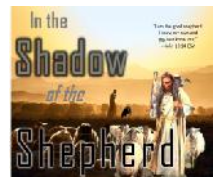
This is what we must keep before us. This must be our constant focus for ministry and our key source of motivation. We must do what we do for the Lord and in the name of Jesus and trust that, our labor in the Lord is not in vain, no matter how bleak and dismal it may seem at the time.

**4) Request** from God- If you mean business in obeying God and "Serving as the Shepherd Served", then request help from God!

**a.)** Ask God to help you follow Jesus' example of sacrificial servanthood, in serving others, and shepherding them along in their faith journey.

**b.)** Ask God to be developing in you, those attitudes which are important in Shepherding others – (i.) humility, (ii.) gentleness, (iii.) personal sacrifice, (iv.) willingness, and (v.) patience.

**c)** Pray for God to prepare you to face the spiritual, discipleship challenges and the challenging people God places in your path, as you are becoming more like the Shepherd.



# “Listening to the Voice of the Shepherd”

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- beginning to obey and becoming more like the Shepherd--

**Text:** John 10 and 15

Nov.1, 2015

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them,  
and *they follow me.*”  
--John 10:27 ESV

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There is a difference between listening and  
waiting for your turn to speak.

—Simon Sinek

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## INRODUCTION

[READ]

**1Jn 2:4-6** (4) Whoever claims to abide in Him, but does not obey his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever obeys His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are truly in him: (6) whoever claims to abide in Him, must walk as Jesus walked.

**Jungle Book Audio track:** “I wanna be like you” – by King Louie

We are sheep becoming shepherds.

## INTRODUCTION

This is our last message this morning, in our series, “In the Shadow of the Shepherd”. Please turn to John chapter 10.

Our lives are full of voices. Q: How do you determine which voices to listen to? Some are the voices of men. Some are the voices of conscience. Some may be the voices of the devil. Some are the voices of inner desires. The Good Shepherd seeks listeners.

“I'm fascinated with myself and love hearing the sound of my own voice. I'd like to hear what I have to say. A lot of people don't like being alone because they truly don't like themselves, but I love me.” --Gene Simmons, KISS

He's also the one who stated.... “I'm Gonna rock and roll all night, and party every day..”

Perhaps we *are* too interested in our own voice. What God desires are listeners. James 1 speaks of hearers who hear – that is they recognize the sound or noise – but they do not listen. The result is, they do nothing in terms of obedience.

Mat.13 speaks of hearers who hear but don't understand. They hear but have too many other concerns that crowd the heart and drown out the words they hear.

What voices make the most impact in our lives? Often times it's the ones we hear the most. “Listening to the Voice of the Shepherd” is about being attentive to God's voice and responding appropriately.

**Joh 10:27** ESV My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

If there is anything mind boggling about this, is that the Shepherd communicates with His sheep. God has revealed Himself and His Truth and He communicates with His children.

The expectation in all this, is that we as sheep, should begin to know and recognize the voice of our Shepherd and then begin



responding appropriately in obedience to what His voice says.

*So we begin today with our focus on...*

## **THE VOICE OF THE SHEPHERD** (Jn.10:3-4, 14-16, 27)

\* It is the Shepherd's desire for His sheep to experience Abundant life, which He came to offer. His voice, direction, example, expectation and desire is for His sheep to listen to His voice and follow His commands and experience Abundant life.

**Q:** So how do you determine which voices to listen to? We hope to figure that out by the end of this message.

*Listening to the voice of the Shepherd results in...*

### **His Sheep Knowing His voice**

\* The purpose of the Shepherd's voice is to give direction and to call His sheep to follow and obey.

**Joh 10:3-4** ESV To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep **hear his voice**, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. (4) When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for **they know his voice**.

**Joh 10:14, 16** ESV (14) I am the good shepherd. I know my own and **my own know me**, (16) And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will **listen to my voice**. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

Note the progression in these verses.

**Joh 10:27** ESV My sheep **hear my voice**, and I know them, and they follow me.

- 1)** The shepherd speaks to each sheep specifically (v3) – this is purposeful communication.
- 2)** He leads them out... (v3) – this is specific direction.
- 3)** He knows his sheep (v14) – this is close relationship.
- 4)** The sheep listen to His voice and follow Him. – this is reasonable expectation.

5 times in these verses, it says he speaks, He leads and the sheep hear and follow. And smack in the middle of all those is John 10;10.

**Joh 10:10** ESV The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

To remove the blessing of abundant life, from the requirement of listening and following His voice, will prove disappointing to the sheep.

The Voice of the Good Shepherd always leads in the perfect plan and good will of God.

**Psa 23:1-3** ESV A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (2) He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. (3) He restores my soul. **He leads me in paths of righteousness** for his name's sake.

That is always the path of the Shepherd. The voice of the Shepherd is the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Leading of the Holy Spirit is the will of God. And the voice of the shepherd with the leading of the Holy Spirit, resulting in the will of God is the Truth of Holy Scripture. All are not the same, but all work together in perfect harmony. The Father, Son, Holy Spirit and Holy Word all work together to accomplish the same goal.

We must realize that we do not automatically obey God's voice.

**Heb 3:7-8a** ESV (7) Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, (8a) ...do not harden your heart.."

\*Hardening the heart refers to hearing but not listening and hearing but not following or obeying.

*Listening to the voice of the Shepherd results in...*

### **The Sheep Obeying His will**

\* This is the ideal and the expectation. But sadly, there will be some sheep or apparent believers in Jesus who stray from His voice, choose the path of disobedience and unrighteousness, and forfeit the abundant life that He offers.

**Joh 10:27** ESV My sheep **hear my voice**, and I know them, and they follow me.

“hear my voice” – previous verses refer to them listening to his voice, meaning they pay attention, and are interested.

“They follow me” indicates they do what He says and that they pattern their own lives after His.

*Listening to the voice of the Shepherd results in...*

### **THE FRUIT OF THE SHEEP** (Jn.15:

Fruit = maturity. Mat.13, the parable of the sower, the preferred end result is for the seed of God’s Word, to bear fruit in the good soil of a human heart. Bearing Fruit is God’s desire, and intent for the sheep

In John 15, when Jesus presents Himself as the Vine, it is the Father’s desire that we bear fruit.

### **Fruit and Maturity** (Jn.15:1ff

\* Fruit = maturity. Mature fruit tree bears fruit. Likewise a mature Christian should bear spiritual fruit. Jesus said...

**Joh 15:1-2** ESV "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. (2) Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, **that it may bear more fruit**.

Note: This reflects a spiritual life that is not static, but growing and increasing in fruit bearing capability. This translates to ministry fruitfulness in discipleship relationships.

**Joh 15:4-5** ESV Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. (5) I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, **he it is that bears much fruit**, for apart from me you can do nothing.

**Joh 15:7-8** ESV If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (8) By this my

Father **is glorified, that you bear much fruit** and so prove to be my disciples.

\* This is a life that is not stationary but gaining, growing, and increasing in your fruit bearing capabilities, – from fruit, to **More** fruit, to **MUCH** fruit.

*The fruit and maturity*

### **The Test of Steadfastness**

\* Bearing fruit is not a quick process, but is a test of steadfastness and endurance as the sheep persevere in the maturing process.

All this does not take place quickly. It doesn't happen by attending a Bible focused discipleship class, though that is important. It doesn't occur by just learning to pray, and obey Gods Word, though those are important.

It takes time. It takes work. It takes a desire and resolve to live for God and allow Him to begin transforming you into the person He wants you to be.

**Mat 7:16-20 ESV (16) *You will recognize them by their fruits.***

Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? (17) So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. (18) A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) Thus ***you will recognize them by their fruits.***

In the end, and in the long run, their spiritual maturity or lack thereof, will identify who is and who is not one of Christ's devoted followers.

This is not implying perfection in this life. Its not saying there won't be times of stumbling, falling into sin, and getting back up again. But what it is stating that God's true children will – remain steadfast in time and will evidence in increasing measure – the fruit or maturity of the Life of Jesus being lived out through them.

At some point someone is going to look at you and say something like, "Hey, aren't you a sheep? But your running around acting like

a Shepherd. Whats up with that?" - I'm glad you asked. I actually gave my life to Christ and surrendered to Him as Savior and Lord. I don't know what you're actually seeing in my life, but I do know God has been changing me over the past few years. And I'm really not the same person I was 10 yrs ago. And what's more, I'm not the person I'm going to be in 10 more years.

**\*\*** You know what that does? It lets people know that you don't feel like you have it all together or like you're better than they are. Also, it lets them know that you are a work in progress and God's not finished with you yet. But also it lets them know that you are changing for the good and your life is in God's hands and He is the one who is making you into a new person in Christ.

You see, that's what God wants to do for those who trust in Him and place their lives in His hands, to transform their lives. But it is a life-long process and is definitely a test of steadfastness in the faith.

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE SHEEP, THE VOICE AND THE LIFE**

**\*** The Purpose of the Shepherd's voice is to give direction and call followers to obedience. The purpose of the sheep is to listen, follow, obey and eventually bear fruit.

The purpose of this series is to encourage one another to be fully following Christ as our Good Shepherd until He returns. It is our goal to be living Godly, holy Lives and becoming more like Him, as we nurture others to follow us, as we follow the Shepherd.

The voice of the Shepherd reflects the presence of the Shepherd in the life and ministry of His Sheep. His voice represents His desire for the Sheep to become like their Shepherd.

*The purpose of the Sheep is....*

**To Bear Fruit** (Jn.15:8)

**\*** **"Prove"** to be my disciples..."

**Joh 15:7-8** ESV If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (8) By this my

Father is glorified, that **you bear much fruit** and so prove to be my disciples

This is evidence of being a true disciple.

*The purpose of the Sheep is....*

**To Glorify God** (Jn.15:8)

\* “the Father is glorified..” - presently. Not “in days gone by”; not “well I did for years and now I’m just taking a well-deserved break.”

**Joh 15:7-8** ESV If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (8) By this my Father **is glorified**, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples

This is the purpose and goal of every true believer in the Lord Jesus: to bear fruit, thus glorifying our Father in heaven.

**ASSIGNMENT:** As Sheep, what should happen when we really listen to the voice of the Shepherd? We should follow and obey His commands and we should walk as Jesus walked- not that all of a sudden we start acting like something we’re not. But that over time, and in increasing measure, you begin to look like, talk like, and act more like the Shepherd. – You begin walking as Jesus walked and living as He lived. Like King Louie sang: “I wanna walk like you, and talk like you, too”.(Jungle Book)

**Remember:** This is always the path of the Shepherd. The voice of the Shepherd is the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Leading of the Holy Spirit is the will of God. And the voice of the shepherd with the leading of the Holy Spirit, resulting in the will of God, is the Truth of Holy Scripture. All are not the same, but all work together in perfect harmony. The Father, Son, Holy Spirit and Holy Word - all work together to direct the sheep in the same direction and ultimately, accomplish the same goal.

So, As Sheep, what should happen when we really listen to the voice of the Shepherd? Life Change that others notice.

**Tuning our minds to the “voice” of the Lord.** With all the other voices, how can we begin to listen to the voice of the Lord and respond appropriately?

**1) Soak** in the Truths from Scriptures \_\_\_\_\_

**Eph 5:26** ESV that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the **washing of water with the word**,

We must be diligent students of the Word of God. That means reading, thinking, memorizing, meditating on Scripture and ultimately obeying.

“I’d rather soak my soul in a few verses, than to rinse my hands in a few chapters.” – CH Spurgeon

**2) Transform** Your thought life and thinking process \_\_\_\_\_

**Rom 12:2** ESV Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**CONFORMED** means to be molded or remolded. We might become conformed to the culture around us with what we wear and how we talk. A person might be conformed to be like the crowd around them. They may begin to take on the values of the crowd they hang around with. They might begin to participate in the practices that those in their group or subculture participate in. We might call it blending into our surroundings.

**3) Bottom line**, you begin to change, to the degree that you begin making different choices, and living differently.

**TRANSFORMED** means to be changed into something else altogether. It’s the word we get our term for metamorphosis, meaning, we become something we previously were not.

**Rom 12:2** MKJV And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, in order to **prove** by you what is that good and pleasing and perfect will of God.

**Joh 15:8** ESV By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so *prove* to be my disciples.

Sheep becoming more like the Shepherd. *Proving* the will of God in our choices, proving to be His disciples in our living. This is the way of the Shepherd and the calling for His sheep.

-- **QUESTIONS: OBSERVATIONS / PERSONAL EVALUATIONS** --

Signs of personal **transformation** from sheep to shepherd or ministerial **stagnation** that does **not** reflect the Shepherd.

**1)** Am I **experiencing** an inner, foundational change from a “me first” perspective on life, to “Others first”. Is your focus of life “for my satisfaction”? or do you have a greater and growing concern for the sake and benefit of someone else?

**Phil. 2:1-3** ESV So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, (2) complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. (3) Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

We often read that and think Paul is encouraging the readers to be of the same mind that perhaps he is. But he is actually referring to having the mind of Christ which is more interested in others than in self.

**Phil. 2:4-5** ESV Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (5) Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

**2)** Is there a **growing** interest in Eternal Kingdom focused advancement? Or am I still earthly focused in my interests with, temporal pursuits that will fade away and be burned in the last days?



Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied. (Mat.5:6)

\*\* That will only be a blessing **then**, if it is a genuine desire **now**.

**3) Am I developing** into a sheep who is actively shepherding the lost, scattered and misdirected?

\*\* He has predestined that we become molded into the image of His Son, not merely in the area of character but in ministry. (Rom.8:29)

**4) “My Sheep know my voice and they follow me” (Mat.10:27)**

Am I **becoming** more Obedient to the known will of God and submitted to His Lordship and Shepherding model? Or am I simply living a life of religious show, while presently not that interested in sacrificing my own personal time, efforts and resources to genuinely follow the Shepherd’s voice?

**5) “The good Shepherd lays down His life for the Sheep.” (Jn.10:11)**

Do I have an **increasing** Concern and Compassion over the spiritual state of fallen humanity in general? (the Great Commission). And Am I willing to sacrifice of myself for the sake of those who are eternally lost and dying without Jesus Christ?

**6) Do I sense a new level of biblically oriented obedience than I have had before?**

**Col 1:9-10** ESV And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, (10) so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

\*\* This is the heart of the Good Shepherd toward His Sheep.

**7) Am I discovering** there are new situations and challenges to trust

God for the outcome, as a result of a new direction God is leading me or some new steps of faith I have been taking, as I am becoming more like the Good Shepherd?

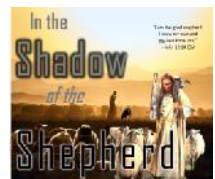
8) Am I *realizing the fallacy* when I pursue or desire that which is sinful, or even something that is simply not honoring or glorifying the Lord as I should? Being aware that you should not murder someone is one thing. That is the black and white basics. But are you aware of an increasing interest in what God wants for your life? Are you finding yourself listening and responding to the voice of the Lord, as you are sensing His impressions upon your heart, in a given area of your life? Are you beginning to sort through issues which may not have a specific command attached to it, but having a certain awareness that you should be doing something, or changing something, or a conviction in some of the “grey areas” of the Christian life?

**Joh 15:7-8** ESV If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (8) By this my Father ***is glorified, that you bear much*** fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

The purpose and plan of God for you right now, is that He be glorified in your life; that He be praised because of His work in your life and using you to fulfill His plan.

This is what, “In the Shadow of the Shepherd” is all about; that is, the true sheep, becoming more like the Good Shepherd, not merely in the area of moral character but in kingdom ministry.

May the Lord bless each of us with fruit for His glory – then ***more*** fruit – and ultimately ***MUCH*** fruit. –Amen!



# ***Don't close this booklet yet***

*without considering this all important question.*

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## **Is Jesus Christ the Savior or *your* soul and the Lord of *your* life?**

Every person is born guilty of sin and in need of forgiveness.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;  
--Romans 3:23

Our sin is against God, therefore our forgiveness can only come  
from God.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only  
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should  
not perish, but have everlasting life. --John 3:16

God has appointed His Son as the payment for sins and sent Him  
to die in our place.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is  
eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
-- Romans 6:23

God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial payment of  
Jesus Christ in our place for our sins.

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were  
still sinners, Christ died for us. ---Romans 5:8  
For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
will be saved." -- Rom 10:13  
But to all who did receive him, who believed in his  
name, he gave the right to become children of God, -  
John 1:12

Before you close this book, why not be absolutely certain that you  
are truly a citizen of God's eternal kingdom and loving family?  
*Trust in Jesus Christ today and receive forgiveness for your sins  
and citizenship into God's family and His Kingdom.*

## The ABCs

**A** - Admit you have sinned and are in need of a Savior.

**B** - Believe Jesus died in your place, and you can no way help yourself.

**C** - Confess your sins to God. He already knows. Also Confess Jesus as you LORD. He desires and deserves to be your Lord.

**Prayer:** Take time to talk to God right now and open your heart and life to His instruction and leadership.

**Connect** with a local Bible believing, Christ centered church.

**Commit** yourself to meeting regularly with other Christians who are growing in their faith.

**Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Act 2:41-42** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

For more information or for spiritual help, please contact us at:  
Christ E. Free Church, PO Box 619, 19682 Hill Rd,  
Saegertown, Pa, 16433, Ph: 814-763-2934, [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org)

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*It is our prayer that you find **Jesus Christ** to be...*

*your highest calling,*

*your greatest purpose,*

*your soul's source and joy,*

*and your all-consuming passion.*

Other Free Booklets

1 PETER, pt.1-2 (2Vol): *Suffering in Sojourning*  
1 PETER, pt.3-5 (3Vol): *The Church God Always Wanted*  
100 YEARS OF MISSIONS: *So Where Are We Now?*  
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--- All downloadable free resources at: [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org) --

















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*May each lesson bring a growing submission, a deeper obedience and an increase of the righteous reign of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His Spirit, in His Church and throughout our mission field.*

*--- Downloadable free resources at: [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org) --*