

A True Shepherd - John 10:1-6

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[0:00] Hey guys, thanks for listening to our Calvary Chapel Charlotte podcast. I will walk by faith and not by sight.

Good morning, everybody. Welcome to Calvary Chapel Charlotte. If this is your first time, welcome to the family. Okay, you can open your Bibles to John chapter 10.

When one of my daughters was younger, she would say when she had a good meal, much younger, she'd be like, oh, I wish we could start over again. I think, man, you know, and you just want to savor it.

And that's what John 10 is, getting to John 10. But then I was looking at John 11 and then 12, like, oh man, it's all good. But some of it's just so, so meaningful and so rich.

And John 10 has been so impactful in my life. So last week, we saw how frustrating it is when people will not see or believe what's right in front of their eyes. This man who was born blind, born blind, didn't become blind.

[1:34] This was a genetic issue. It was congenital blindness, which was at the time the Jews believed that that was something that could not be healed because it wasn't a sickness. It required an act of God to take care of that.

It required an act of creation, literally, to create blindness. I mean, to create sight. And so Jesus does that. He heals the man. And then nobody believes him. I mean, this guy hasn't seen anyone's face ever.

And then to have the greatest moment of his life where Jesus has changed his life. Jesus is opening his eyes. Jesus has given him a new reality. And his family won't even stand with him. Like, well, we don't know.

You talk to him. The Pharisees, the religious leaders, those who are in the temple. Finally, he can go into the temple. Finally, he can worship. And the result of it all is they put him out. And at the end of the chapter, the poor guy, he was alone in his blindness.

And now he finds himself right back where he started, cast out of the temple, standing outside, all alone. But what happened? Jesus found him, right? Now he can see.

[2:34] And now he has Jesus. I'd rather be alone and able to see, have spiritual eyes, and with Jesus. Jesus. And I was thinking about it. If you were that guy, right? If you're this guy, and you can see all of a sudden, and then everybody you know is now essentially ostracized you.

Jesus comes to you and says, hey, do you believe on the Son of God? And he said, who is he, Lord? He recognized the voice. We're going to get into a lot of that in John 10, a voice. And Jesus says, the one who talks with you.

He says, I believe. What would you do? What would you do if you were all alone? You were blind. Now you can see. And the one who's healed you is the only one who's essentially standing with you.

I think I'd probably follow him. I think I'd go with him. You got to wonder, was that guy in the upper room? Was he one of the 120 when the Holy Spirit came in the book of Acts? Was he there on the day of Pentecost when they all stood up and began to preach?

I don't know. Was he there when Jesus was on the Mount of Olives and he ascended back into heaven? Was this guy there? Don't know. But I think I would have followed Jesus.

[3:39] And I kind of think maybe as we go into John 10, we get that idea. That's what this guy did. We saw that Satan's work of blindness is great.

He's very good at blinding the minds and eyes, spiritual eyes of people. But God's work of bringing light is so much greater. At the end of John 9 there, Jesus says, for judgment, I'm come into this world.

He's saying to the man who was born blind, that they which see, which they would see not might see, I'm sorry. And they which see might be made blind. Meaning what?

Only those who see that they have been blinded by sin will seek the Savior. Who can do what? An act of creation in their life. A new work to give them eyes to see.

Only those who seek the Savior, we saw last week, according to his word, according to the truth of who he is, not according to their presuppositions. The disciples had their presuppositions.

[4:32] Who sinned? This man or his parents that is born blind. The Pharisees had their presuppositions about Jesus and about healing on the Sabbath. And even the man born blind, he had his presuppositions.

But he allowed his understanding of the word of God and of Jesus to change his mind to conform himself with the word. But only those who seek the Savior according to his word, as Jesus says he came to judge, to judge them worthy to see God.

We have been judged worthy to see God. Isn't that remarkable? Because we have believed according to his word. We're going to see here in John 10 that this is the first time in John that Jesus will contrast the Pharisees' work with his own.

The Pharisees have been questioning him constantly. And he's over and over saying, if you don't believe what I say, believe me for the work's sake. It is my Father who does the work. But this is the first time he will contrast their works with his.

We know he speaks pretty scathingly in some of the other gospels to them. But consider what's happened. There are supposed to be the shepherds in Israel. And here is a man who needed them.

[5:41] Who has been, a work of God has been done in his life. And now not only are they rejecting Jesus, they're essentially keeping the people, keeping the sheep, from coming to their true shepherd.

And that's what we will look at today as we begin to look at a true shepherd, as the scripture shows us. So we're going to get through the first six verses, which is the parable of the true shepherd.

Jesus does not use many parables in John. He does in many of the other scriptures, the other gospels. But John, he does not. This is one of the few where he will use a parable or a simile, something similar.

A parable is to lay one thing alongside another, the two things, and to compare them, to see it as a picture, essentially. The wording he will use in John for parable, if you want to look at verse 6, you can.

It says, this parable spake Jesus unto them. It is different than when he uses the word parable, a different Greek word in the other gospels. The other ones, it means exactly that, to lay one thing alongside another, to compare it and see a simile.

[6:44] This is more, it's used interchangeably. You'll see in John 14, he'll say, I speak these things unto you in Proverbs. So it has the same type of meaning, but it has within it the idea that it's more of to instruct as well as just to give a picture.

So Jesus in John, he gives us pictures. He gives us the vine and the branches. We have that picture in John 15, and we have this one here. You know, we're going to be looking at sheep quite a bit and shepherds as we go through this.

And God likens his people to sheep. And there's a reason for that, right? He doesn't liken his people to lions or bears or cats, even though sometimes we can act a little catty.

But it's sheep. There's a reason for that. So I'm going to give you some sheep facts, some sheepish facts about sheep. You know, a couple weeks ago, we looked at the man when he was born blind. Jesus made clay with spittle out of the dust.

Dust. We looked at dust and how God can do so much more with dust. How he creates, how he will raise dust. There's not a lot out there about, you know, not many sayings or things about dust.

[7:54] Took us a bit to find them. There's a lot of things out there about sheep. There's a lot of funny things out there about sheep. I like this one. The shepherd saying the sheep was on his phone. You can't unfollow me. I'm your shepherd. I thought that one was good.

There's a lot of things out there about sheep. There's a couple facts about sheep. Sheep need to be led. Sheep will follow to their death. There's an account of over a thousand sheep were found dead at the bottom of a cliff.

And this isn't a joke. It was actual because one of them went off and the next one followed the next one, the next one followed the next one, the next one. They will follow to their death. As we go

through these facts, put that in context of God speaking to us as his people, his sheep, man, we will follow to our death.

But who are we going to follow to death? Sheep are wanderers. Even in the best places that provide protection, water, and food, they're known to wander off, get lost, and sometimes get eaten by predators.

Like they're in the best pasture. Like, yeah, I know it's good here. But, you know, look at the dark woods over there with those ominous glowing eyes. I think I'm going to go try that out. Let's go see what's over there. They're wanderers.

[9:05] Sheep are defenseless. Nobody has a guard sheep. Nobody's ever, you know, it's not like, it's on the news, careful, a flock of sheep roaming through the yard, get through the neighborhood, get your kids inside.

And while it's funny and it's a good pun and a punny name, there are no Rambo sheep. There are no Lambo sheep. It's funny, but it's, they just aren't. There's no sheep that's like, you know, he's going to take me down.

God likens us to sheep. He says we are his sheep. Lord, couldn't you say maybe we're like your tigers or, you know, your horses or something?

No, we are sheep. For the Pharisees here, Jesus is going to put before them a picture. And while we get into John 10 and there's many truths and principles that we can apply to our life and we're going to see and observe about sheep and shepherds, we want to understand who he's speaking to here.

This is coming off of the end of John 9 where he said to them after they said, are we blind also? Oh, and Jesus says in verse 41 of John 9, if you were blind, you should have known no sin or you'd have no sin.

[10:14] But now you say we see, therefore your sin remains. He's many times pointed out to them their unbelief. They will not see that they need a savior. They will not see the son.

And so now he is specifically pointing out who they are in relation to God, to God's work and to the people. They think that they are the shepherds of Israel.

In John 5, 38, he had said to them, you have not his word, the father's word abiding in you for whom he has sent him. You believe not. So he's continued to tell him this.

Jesus will speak a parable to spiritually blind men who claim they see. However, what they refuse to see is their relationship to God as it truly stands, their relationship to the people as it truly stands, and their relationship to Jesus as it truly stands.

So before we dive into the text, though, I'm going to talk about parables. Because we see parables a lot in the Gospels, especially when you get into Matthew and the parables of the kingdom and Luke and good stewardship and Mark.

[11:19] John, not so much. But what is a parable? Well, we already said it's a simile, something similar to lay beside one thing beside another. So as we approach this scripture, we approach these parables, we're going to get a definition.

Jesus is going to tell us from John 10, verse 7 on, he's going to give us what the definition is. But I think this week, as we look at what the parable is, we're going to look at some observations.

We're going to observe some things. And I think as students of the scripture, the thing to remember, the first rule of approaching the scripture is observation. Observation.

What you find when you begin to study the scriptures, 90% of what you do is observation, observation, observation. What does it say? What is he saying? Why is he saying it? Who is he saying it to?

Does it apply to me? Does it apply to the church? Does it apply to Israel? What is going on here? And figuring that out, going through the context of it. What are the actual words that are being said?

[12:15] So often, a word changes the entire understanding of what I might have thought it was saying. Who is he speaking it to? So how do we understand and interpret parables?

A few different principles we can look at. One, check the immediate setting. What is the immediate setting of the parable?

Who is he saying it to? What is going on in the situation? What is the setting here? Well, Jesus has just opened the eyes of this man who has been born blind. He is cast out of the temple. And he has come and found him.

And there are Pharisees and people there with him. He is beginning to talk to them. What is the setting? This is not in Galilee. This is in Jerusalem. This is not in his hometown. This is not with disciples that he is speaking to.

They are there, but that is not who he is speaking to. Understand the original audience. So much false doctrine and misunderstanding of scripture is because of this point right here. Not taken seriously.

[13:13] Taking a scripture and not looking at who is the original audience. As we go into the Old Testament, we read promises and prophecies to Israel. That's the original audience. That's who the promises were to.

Do we partake in some of the blessing and the fulfillment of some of those promises? Absolutely. Is there still more to be done? Of course. But understand the original audience and what they would think of as they're hearing this.

No cultural references or customs. Context and background. We don't live in agrarian society anymore. We're not living and dying based off of how well our flocks and herds do and did our crop come in.

Right? That's, you know, we're clocking our time and putting in our expenses and we do it again next week. But the culture and the references and the customs, they would understand as Jesus speaks to them about shepherd and sheep.

You know, sheep are not cared for the same across the board all over the world. It's different. It's different in the States than it is in the highlands of Scotland to in Israel.

[14:17] Understand. There's two other things beyond just these basic principles. There's the structure of a parable. And what do I mean by that? So when we understand then the broad overall, like who is this parable being spoke to?

What is the situation? Well, then there's the very structure of the parable itself. And these are the things that are central to the parable. What is the central meaning? Central meaning of the parable we will look at today is how to identify a true shepherd.

There's the central meaning. There are many other meanings that we can see in there. Many other truths we'll look at about sheep. But the whole point Jesus is saying here is this is how you identify a true shepherd.

What are the central elements in it? You know, what are we talking about in it? Well, we're talking about sheep and shepherds. We're not talking about a kingdom or a king. We're not talking about a landowner.

We're not talking about a house. And then who are the central figures? You know, we can hypothesize and extrapolate some things.

[15:24] You think of the parable where Jesus told about the man who owned the vineyard, the landlord. And he lent it out to his tenants representing Israel.

And then he goes away and they say, well, he's not coming back. And so what we're going to do is we're going to take the kingdom. Or we're going to take the vineyard for ourselves. And he sends one of his servants and they beat him and kill him and on and on.

And so he's going to send his son. He does the same. Well, who are the central figures? Well, you'd have the landowner, the son, the servants, the tenants. You can't just interject someone into that. Well, you know, I bet those tenants had a really hard time at home. I bet their marriages weren't too great. And I bet they were coming to work and they were taking it out. And everybody there. And so we need to have good marriages.

Do we need to have good marriages? We need to have good marriages. But we can't just interject things into the text because we want to teach a truth or a principle. And then doctrinal support. A parable paints a picture to convey truth.

[16:25] But the truth already exists. The parable is just painting that picture to show us the truth. Do not build doctrine off of parables.

A parable shows me doctrine, but I can't come to it and begin to build doctrine off of it. A parable illustrates clear teaching found elsewhere in scripture. So it's a picture of something that's already true.

And then do not seek to allegorize or spiritualize the items in a parable. So you think of the parable where Jesus tells of the parable of seeking and finding is the central message to that.

And he talks about the woman who's lost her one coin. And she takes and she empties her house and she sweeps the whole thing out to find her one coin. And I can't spiritualize and say, well, the broom represents her faith.

And it's able to move things out of the way so she can find that coin. I can't just do that. Man, do I want a faith that moves obstacles out of the way so that I can find what I'm seeking in Christ?

[17:29] Absolutely. But I'm not going to interject something that's not there. Do not lose sight of the picture by trying to find meaning in every brush stroke. When we come to the picture of the parable, a beautiful picture, illustrating a truth, man, we can get lost in trying to find meaning in every stroke.

Why they stroke? Why this way? And why that way? And why? The Bible will tell us what it means. Jesus knows exactly what he's saying. Do you believe that? Do you believe Jesus knows exactly what he's saying and he knows what it means?

He does. He tells us in John that he says, I no longer call you servants. For a servant knows not what his Lord does, but I have called you friends.

For all things that my father has made known unto me, I have spoken unto you. He wants us to know. So if the Bible gives a direct interpretation to a parable or to features of a parable, no other interpretation is to be sought.

Examples, parable of the sower. The disciples even come to Jesus and say, what does this mean?

We can't read the parable of the sower and just decide what we want to attach to the items in it.

[18:39] There are places in scripture where the field, a field in a parable is the world. So in the parable of the sower, the sower goes out and he's sowing seed and it's going out and it's landing on good seed and not so good soil and not so good soil.

And we can say, see, that's taking the gospel out and spreading it to the world. Should we take the gospel to the world? We should. But in that parable, the soil is the heart. It's the condition of the heart.

Because the seed falls on hard ground. He said that is a hard heart. And then Satan comes and he takes that seed so it does not bear fruit. Do I want to go out and spread seed to the world? Yes, but I'm spreading it to hearts.

And how do those hearts receive that? In John 15, Jesus says, I am the vine. You are the branches. We have to maintain that interpretation all the way through that. I can't just switch that up because I'm uncomfortable with what it says happens to an unfruitful branch. That it withers. That's not good for anything but firewood.

[19:36] Oh, Lord, I don't want to get burned. I don't want to dry up and be burned. So maybe it's talking about you're not saved or I can't do that. I have to maintain the interpretation as the scripture gives it. Jesus knows what he means and what he says.

When we stay within the confines of a parable and of the scripture, we can observe so much rich spiritual truths in parables. If we stay within those confines, there's so much to be gleaned and gained from it.

And this is where the disciples come to Jesus in Mark 4 after he gives them the parable of the sower. And they asked him, they said, what is the meaning of this? And he said unto them, unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God.

But unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables. That seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted, their sins should be forgiven.

It doesn't mean he's saying he doesn't want their sins to be forgiven. He's saying that at any point they could, but they won't. And the only way I can get them to even listen to what I have to say is to put these truths in these parables.

[20:44] You see, parables have a unique ability. They identify those who see and those who are blind. They have a unique ability to identify those who are of the truth, who can see, who can hear, and understand.

Those who are not within, they say, well, I don't know. Okay, it's some story about a sheep and a shepherd, whatever. I'm not very interested in that. For you and I, it's a story about us and our Lord. And so as we look at this scripture today, and then into next week, the parable of the true shepherd, verses one through six, give us the parable of the true shepherd.

That's what we're going to look at today. We're going to take time observing things about it to set us up for next week, but we'll also see a whole lot that can be applied just through this parable. Verses seven through 18 is the parable explained, and then that is broken down, where Jesus will give the two statements where he says, I'm the door of the sheepfold, and I'm also the shepherd of the flock. He's the door of the fold and the shepherd of the flock. Now in Jesus' day, there were two types of sheepfolds. Again, this is where we need to know the cultural context, we need to know the background. As he begins to speak about a sheepfold, there were two types.

[21 : 58] In Jesus' day, there were communal folds that held multiple flocks. If you remember in Genesis, when Jacob, he's heading down to Paddan Aram, he's fleeing from his brother Esau, who wants to kill him because he's just stolen the birthright by wearing freshly skinned, goat skinned.

Ugh. And then his dad said, yeah, it feels like my son Esau. Both of those are disturbing. But, and so he flees down there, and he gets there, and he gets to a well, and there's some shepherds and some flocks gathered around.

And he said, why are you here? It's not yet time to water. Water them and go. And they're like, no, we don't all water until everybody's here. And so then, Jacob sees Rachel coming. I think he said, water them and go because he saw Rachel coming, and he's like, let's get rid of these people, and I can talk to her.

But the idea was, at the end of the day, they would all gather their flocks to a watering hole. They'd water them, and then they would stick them in a larger sheepfold with one guy who would be the door who would keep them in there.

And you'd have a flock, you'd have a fold full of flocks together. That's one type of sheepfold. And that was, again, usually in an area where they were watering the sheep or an area where there's more people.

[23 : 16] But if you were going to take your flock out into the wilderness and you were going to go from pasture to pasture to fatten them on it, then usually there were smaller areas. And the pictures I have show rocks. I mean, it could have been, you know, thorns, sticks, whatever, something to create a barrier.

But then it would be a smaller enclosure, and you'd bring your sheep in, and as the shepherd, you would lay down in the door to keep the sheep in and to keep the wolves and predators out.

Primarily, Jesus is going to be speaking of this communal fold. But as we go through this, especially next week, we're going to see it kind of, he uses both pictures. But primarily, we're talking about this one where you have a bunch of flocks together in there.

So our central meaning is identifying a true shepherd. So what would then be the central elements, as we said, about a parable? There are central elements. Well, the central elements, the structure to this parable are the care of sheep, the location of sheep, the calling and leading of sheep, and the taking advantage of sheep.

Ironically, we're going to talk about a shepherd. But that shepherd is all in context of sheep. Is it safe to say that a shepherd without a sheep is not a shepherd?

[24 : 41] It's all in the context of the sheep. What are the doctrinal elements? What clear truths and teachings will be illustrated? Well, we have some teachings of Jesus that will be illustrated. In John chapter 9, as we just saw last week, where he said, judgment, I'm come into the world so that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind.

He says the Pharisees as he's showing them the fact that they're blind. In John 8, Jesus said, why do you not understand my speech even because you cannot hear my word?

And he's going to make the statement that my sheep hear my voice and they follow me. But as he's speaking this to the Pharisees, and we'll get to the text short. See, we're only getting through six verses today.

But as he begins to speak this to the Pharisees in their minds, as he begins talking about a true shepherd, false shepherds, their minds would go back to a couple scriptures. They would have some doctrinal truth that they would know from the scripture.

If you would turn with me, if you want to, to Jeremiah 23. Jeremiah 23.

[25 : 59] Then you can put your finger in Ezekiel 34. Jeremiah 23. And Ezekiel 34.

Jeremiah 23, beginning in verse 1. The Lord is speaking to the people through the prophet Jeremiah. And he's saying this. It's an indictment against those who were shepherding Israel at the time.

Woe be unto the pastors. Anybody here a pastor? That destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture. What's a pastor? Well, the wording for pastor is just he who pastures. So who's the shepherd here? Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture. So God is the one. He says, these are my sheep. I am the shepherd, but I have people who are pasturers, pasturers, who take my sheep, take them to pasture. Peter, do you love me? Feed my lambs. Peter, do you love me? Feed my sheep. Feed my sheep. How do you do that? You take them to good pasture. Take them to a place where they can be fed. [27:08] Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my flock. You have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not visited them. Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord.

And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries where I have driven them and will bring them again to their folds. They shall be fruitful and increase. And so the Lord here says, God makes that prophecy.

He will gather his flock. Who is he speaking to in the original text or the original audience? Israel. It's the promise that he will gather Israel. Today, they are being gathered in unbelief, but there is a promise, Ezekiel, the dry bones, that they will have life breathed into them, that they will then be gathered in belief.

When Jesus returns after seven years of Jacob's trouble and we, the church, return with him, Israel will be gathered and they will have a fruitful increase.

Verse four, And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them. They shall fear no more, nor be dismayed. Neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign over and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

[28:23] There is a promise for the king, the branch, the righteous branch, where Jesus will rule and reign physically over this earth, and at that day, Judah shall be saved.

They shall be delivered, and Israel shall dwell safely. This is his name, whereby he shall be called the Lord our righteousness. righteousness. Praise God for that promise.

How wonderful. Do we have anything in that? Do we have a part in that? We do. We do. We are not Israel, and we don't supersede their promises, but we, because of Jesus, are allowed to be brought in to the blessings of what is coming in that day for believing Israel.

We get to be part of that blessing as his body who rule and reign with him. If you want to turn over to Ezekiel 34, same type of situation.

And so the Pharisees, these are the things in their minds. These are what they, they are studiers of the law. They are studiers of the scripture. They know these things, and Jesus will begin to speak to them of shepherds and pasture.

[29:27] Ezekiel 34, and the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds. Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves.

Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Isn't that just basic 101 shepherding? You eat the fat and you clothe you with the wool. You kill them that are fed, but you feed not the flock, using it for their own gain instead of seeking for the gain of the flock.

The disease you've not strengthened, neither have you healed that which was sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken, neither have you brought again, that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost, but with force and with cruelty you have ruled them. And they were scattered because there's no shepherd. They became meat to all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains and upon every high hill.

Yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth and none did search or seek after them. And then he says this in verse 4, And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them.

[30:42] And they shall fear no more nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch and a king shall reign and prosper.

I think I just read the same thing and copied the same thing. That was the end of Jeremiah. I guess that was as far as I had in Ezekiel. Anyway, that was a good section too. We want to read that again. Jesus now responding to the Pharisees.

It appears that he's continuing this conversation with them. So if we go to John chapter 10, verse 1. Now on your own, continue reading in Ezekiel 34 as your homework through verse 12.

I didn't have it and we'll move on. But he essentially says the same thing where he will raise up shepherds, he will bring back his people, he will feed them, he will ensure that they're cared for. Now that is speaking of promises to national Israel.

But Israel, the remnant, is a remnant according to grace today. And we get to partake of that same grace. And so their shepherd becomes our shepherd. Verse 1.

[31 : 53] Jesus to the Pharisees who have just said, well, are we blind too? Truly, truly, I say unto you, he that enters not by the door into the sheepfold but climbs up some other way the same as a thief and a robber.

But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. That makes a little more sense now. We have a little more context with that. I mean, how are they going to climb over? What does that mean?

Well, in the context of what he's talking about, it makes sense. They hopped over the wall.

Someone who climbs over the wall, what are they? They're among the sheep.

They're with the sheep. Maybe they look like a shepherd. Maybe you can't tell the difference. We know from verse 7 and verse 11 of next week we'll look at where Jesus will say that he's both the door and the shepherd.

But we can make some observations here regarding a sheepfold, can't we? From verse 1. We can make some observations that a sheepfold contains sheep.

[32 : 58] That's a good one. A sheepfold, it protects the sheep. According to this scripture, a sheepfold has one legitimate entrance and only one. However, a sheepfold can be entered illegitimately by false shepherds, by those who would appear to be there for the sake of the sheep.

But what does Jesus tell us? They're actually there for their own gain and they will detract from the flock. A true shepherd. How do we identify a true shepherd?

Well, he says that he that enters in by the door is the shepherd. So that means a true shepherd is not identified by his looks. Does he wear a tie?

Boy, I hope that's not a requirement, guys. By his skill or his training, a true shepherd is known by his entrance. That's it. How did this shepherd come among the sheep?

There's only one way in. John 14, 6, Jesus will say to his disciples in the upper room, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes unto the Father but by me.

[34 : 11] Matthew 7, 13 and 14, Jesus will tell them to enter you in at the straight gate, narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and many there be which go in thereat.

Because straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leads to life, few there be that find it. One way, one way in. However, is this parable, in the parable, is the picture of the sheepfold, does it represent salvation?

I hope not. And I would say no. The sheepfold does not represent salvation. Look at verse 4. Verse 4 of John 10. He puts forth his own sheep.

Oh, now they're out of the sheepfold. Look at verse 9. They shall go in and out of the sheepfold. So is the sheepfold salvation?

No, the sheepfold is not salvation. But who is? The shepherd is. I am the door, in verse 9. By me, if any enter in, he shall be saved.

[35 : 21] He's salvation. The sheepfold is not. The shepherd is. Psalm 95, 7. For he is our God and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Praise God. There's only one way for a shepherd to be qualified to care for God's people. Only one way. That's Jesus. Here we have the Pharisees who have claimed to be the shepherds and Jesus is saying, you've rejected the only way to be among God's people, to care for God's people, to be legitimate.

The Pharisees have claimed to be shepherds of the people, but they have refused what? The door. They would not come through the door. And if by their refusal, they're identifying themselves as who?

Thieves and robbers. Two words that could mean the same thing. I love when I get to places in Scripture where it's like, why did he put that there? We could have skipped that.

You could take one of those out. You know, and all that ever came before me are thieves. By thieves and robbers. Well, the word for thieves means one who comes and steals by stealth. He takes by stealth.

[36:33] You know, it looks good. Sounds good. Seems like a shepherd. shepherd. But, instead of adding, there's a detraction that's happening. Robber is one who harms or plunders.

That's one that comes and it's more of a forceful, there's harm that's being done. Two different things. Meaning, the same thing. An illegitimate shepherd. They look like shepherds.

They claim the credential of shepherds. But they seek not the good of the flock. And instead, they intend to use the flock for their own ends. Man, that's rough. That's a rough place to be in.

I don't ever want to be there and it's a shame that there are people that are there. They seek to use the flock for their own ends and they're just thieves and robbers.

I think, wow, that's rough. Poor Israel. These are wicked, these Pharisees. But I'm sure this couldn't happen in the church, right? This was Israel. These were the Pharisees.

[37:36] This can't happen in the church. In Acts 20, verses 28 through 30, as Paul is speaking to the pastors of Ephesus, take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and unto all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.

For what purpose? To feed the church of God, which he's purchased with his own blood. Man, that's a valuable flock, isn't it? That is a valuable flock. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

How are the wolves going to get in? Because the shepherd's not watching. If there's only one way in, someone's not manning the door. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves.

They just, whoop, come over the wall and like, where'd you come from? You just seem to pop up out of the midst of nowhere. They shall arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.

Because we're going to find out that sheep, verse three, they follow a voice. To him, to the true shepherd, to the one who comes by way of the door, to him the porter opens, the doorkeeper.

[38:56] It's just an old English word for doorkeeper. And the sheep hear his voice, the true shepherd. And he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. So here we have one who keeps the door.

We're going to find out Jesus is going to tell us he's the door as well as the shepherd. So he's going to give us both pictures. But here he's giving us a picture as the legitimate shepherd. He's saying, I entered in legitimately because the way was made for me.

There is one who made a way for me. This doorkeeper, he keeps the way open for its rightful purpose, doesn't he? Makes me think in Genesis 3 after Adam and Eve had been cast out of the garden.

And then it says that God, he drove them out and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life.

He kept it. He kept that way so that one day his people would be able to eat of it again. You and I will partake of that tree because we've partaken of the life of Christ. There will be a day where we will see the tree of life next to the river in the new Jerusalem.

[40:04] He keeps the way open for its rightful purpose. We can make some observations about a door, can't we? What are the functions of a door? I guess you could run into it. A door keeps out or it lets out.

Keeps out what is not in or it lets out what's already in. It keeps in or it lets in. That's all a door does. So the door keeper then, he must be able to correctly identify those with a legitimate claim to the door.

If there's a door keeper and he lets him in, he has to be able to identify him. We today can identify a true shepherd. The true shepherd of God by the true spirit of God, our door keeper.

1 Corinthians 2, verses 9 through 10, but as it is written, eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him.

But God has revealed them unto us by his spirit. For the spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. Now, we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

[41:17] That door keeper, he has to be able to correctly identify the one with a legitimate claim to the door. How do we do that? And it's by the spirit that God has given us. As we come to the word and we feed in the pasture, we are able to identify the things that are of the true shepherd.

How is the shepherd identified? By his entrance, by the door keeper, and by his voice. By his entrance, by the door keeper, and by his voice.

Jesus, our shepherd, is so faithful. Jesus fulfilled every requirement for that door to be opened. For him?

Man, for us. A door into salvation. He fulfilled every requirement so that that door could be opened. Not just so he could enter in and say, see you guys later, I'm going back to my father.

But so that we could go too. He's identified by the door keeper. He's identified by the door keeper, the one that keeps the way, the one that does that.

[42:22] Spirit of God by the word of God. And he's identified by his voice. My sheep hear my voice and they follow. We can observe a few things about a true shepherd here, can't we, from the scripture.

What does this true shepherd do with his sheep? He doesn't drive his sheep, does he? You know, most sheep farming is done by driving.

You have sheep dogs. You have people who walk behind with the sticks. Come on, sheep. A true shepherd does not drive his sheep. He leads them. The true shepherd does not control his sheep.

He calls them. Do you know what that means? He's got to spend a lot of time with his sheep.

They've got to get used to his voice. They've got to come to trust him. They've got to hear that voice above all else because when he's in, when the sheep are in that pen with all his other flocks, how does the shepherd single him out?

Another thing about sheep, you know what they look like? Other sheep. It's like, that one's easy to identify. She's got pink hair. I know that one.

[43:34] Yeah, I know. I know that one. He's got that stubby tail. They all look the same. So the shepherd goes in and he calls them and his sheep come to him.

They single themselves out because they go to the shepherd. You know, when my kids were little, I don't know, I had read this thing or heard this thing from someone that they didn't want to yell all the time for their kids. So they whistled for them.

So I would whistle for my kids. They probably all just shuddered right now. We'd be at church and they were little and I didn't want to yell and so they'd be playing with their friends and their friends were like, where are you going?

My dad called. I didn't hear him. I was like, well, yeah, because he whistled. And then all my friends were like, do the thing, do the whistle, do the whistle. And then they'd all pop their heads up like, yeah. Then they got older and they're like, dad, we're not dogs.

You're not going to whistle for us. You can call us by name. But they identified that. They knew that sound. They still know it. Sorry, guys, we can get you therapy.

[44:40] But the sheep, they spent a lot of time with the shepherd. He put a lot of time in with his sheep. But they would know his voice. He can just call them. The relationship between a true shepherd and his true sheep.

A true shepherd calls and a true shepherd leads. And a true sheep, it hears and it follows. That's as simple as it is, guys.

That's as easy as it is to walk with Jesus. That's as easy as it is to have a relationship with the living God. He calls, he leads, just hear and follow.

And where does he lead them? He calls his own sheep by name and he leads them out. Lord, I liked it in the sheep fold. It's comfortable here, Lord.

I'll just come to the sheep fold once a week. You speak comfortable things to me. And we're good. There's a time to sit safely in the fold and there's a time to be let out.

[45:40] There's a time where you hear his voice and all the other sheep around you are just still staying. Didn't you hear his voice? I think he's calling me. I didn't hear anything.

Nah, sorry. It's bad. Dad jokes. And you gotta go.

You gotta decide if you're gonna follow or you're gonna stay. Verse four, and when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, this true shepherd. And the sheep follow him for they know his voice.

We had a true shepherd. Now we have true sheep. Sheep follow and respond to what they know. They're skittish creatures. They follow and they respond to what they know. They're not gonna follow something that they don't know or knew. Again, they're not cats. Cats will follow anything. Even it'll kill them. They're like, well, that's interesting.

[46:38] Sheep only follow what they know. They'll only follow what they're comfortable with, what's familiar to them. True sheep, they hear his voice.

They know his voice. They follow his voice. As the true shepherd, he calls to them. They hear his voice. It's not just, I don't know what that is.

Why? Because they've spent time with him. They've been around his word. They recognize his word. That's the Lord. And they follow his voice.

True sheep are willing to leave the comfort of the fold to follow the shepherd into the wilderness. Out into the high country to look for pasture. Psalm 78, 52, speaking of having led his flock, Israel, out of Egypt, he says, but made his own people to go forth like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

The true sheep, they spend a lot of time with the true shepherd. The wording here, it says, put forth. He goes before them. He puts them forth and then goes before them.

[47:48] The word put forth means to cast out or to send out. It's a scary moment. It's a scary moment. When you hear his voice and you step through that door out into the big, big world, out of the fold, and in that moment, where's Jesus?

He's put you forth. He's called you out. There's a moment where we must step out alone through the door to follow a call that only we may hear. That's a scary moment. In that moment, we've left the comfort and safety of our familiar fold and we've yet to catch a glimpse of our shepherd.

We've heard his voice and we step out and we're looking. Where are you? Which way do I go, Lord? I've taken a step and now it seems like a dead end. I can't see you. I can't see where to go. You've called me.

All the other sheep stayed behind and I'm here. And one other guy who came too. We've stepped out. Where are you, Lord? We can feel lost and alone as we follow his voice.

But if we follow on in faith, we will soon see his form. When we follow a shepherd or the sheep are following a shepherd, what are they seeing? Seeing his back, aren't they?

[49:05] You see his back. Right now we are following our shepherd and we see him. We see his back. The scripture tells us that now we see through glass darkly but then face to face.

You see the day when he gathers all his sheep into his fold and we are there with him, there will be no need anymore to follow. We will see him face to face. We will be with him.

We will be like him. Now I know in part but then I shall know even as also I am known. And the more we follow, the more time we spend with this shepherd. And there will be times where we are trekking and it's like it's dusty and I'm tired and where's the next watering hole, Lord?

I can't believe we're still going. It's long after dark. And there will be those times though where we will stop and he will have us lie down next to green pastures and still waters and we'll hear his voice and we'll see his face.

Do you know the voice of a true shepherd? Have you heard the voice of the true shepherd? I don't mean my voice. I'm just a pasturer.

[50:08] How familiar is that voice to you? If you are not willing to hear his voice, then what voice are you listening to in the midst of the flock? What voice is it?

Is it one that's hopped over the wall? Man, I really like how that guy talks though. I really like his voice. His YouTube channel has really good production value. I thought it's great. Do you hear his voice but are you afraid to follow?

It's a scary moment. Step through that door. Do you feel put out by where he's leading you? Oh, this is not where I thought we were going, Lord.

Are you ignoring his voice because you want to hold on to your comfort? As sheep, these are our tendencies. These are the things that make us bad sheep.

For he is our God and we are the people of his pasture. The sheep of his hand. We just read that verse. Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.

[51:15] Man, I love how the scripture weaves together. I love how it ties together. My sheep hear my voice and they follow me. You see, God is our shepherd. We are the people of his pasture. We're the sheep of his hand.

And his voice, it's his voice that calls to us. Come and follow me. And I'll make you fishers of men. Peter, James, and John. Will you leave your nets and come follow me?

Men who was born blind, who has nobody, may come and follow me. Don't harden your heart, Pharisees, who refuse to see the shepherd. Verse five.

And a stranger they will not follow. But will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers. The word there in the Greek for stranger is not one's own, belonging to another.

A stranger, one who's not theirs, one who belongs to another, one who they don't belong to. You know, there's a story of a, this man from Scotland who was a shepherd and he went over to Israel and there's, with the shepherds there and he wanted to test this.

[52:17] So he changed clothes with the shepherd over in Israel and to see if the sheep would follow him. But they kept following the voice. The other shepherd called him and they would follow his voice.

Sheep are known by their shepherd. That cuts both ways. Our shepherd knows us, but we as sheep, we're known by the shepherd we follow.

What type of sheep are we? What flock are we of? They will flee. It means to escape out of danger, be saved by flight. So a stranger, one who's not their own, one who they don't belong to and doesn't belong to them, they're going to flee from him.

They're going to escape out of danger. They're going to be saved by flight. Proverbs 18.10 says, the name of the Lord is a strong tower. Righteous run into it and it's safe.

We run from the stranger. We run into that tower. His sheepfold is strong, sufficient. As a true sheep, we have escaped the thief and the robber who we'll see next week.

[53:21] He comes to steal, to kill, and destroy. To steal our hope, to kill our joy, and to rob our peace. But as true sheep, we have escaped the thief and the robber by seeking refuge in the call of God through the word of God.

We've heard his voice. We've sought refuge because he's called us and we've gone to his word. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

You see, a sheep can only follow one shepherd. A sheep can only follow one voice and a sheep can only be led in one direction. He can't follow two at once.

He can only follow one shepherd, one voice, and go in one direction. Put that in context. John 9, 35 through 38.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out. That that sheep, he was cast out. And when he found him, he said, do you believe on the Son of God? And he answered, who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

[54:29] You see, he knew the voice. He knew Jesus' voice. He was blind, but he knew the voice of the one who had healed him. He says, Lord, you're the one who healed me. Well, who's the Son of God?

I'll believe you. I want to believe on him. And Jesus said unto him, you have seen him. And it's he that talks with you. He said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him. One voice, one shepherd in one direction.

He knew his voice. John 5, 24. Truly, truly, I say unto you, he that hears my word and believes on him that sent me has everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death, from the thief and the robber unto life.

The true shepherd. True shepherd is our savior. See, you and I, we have been saved by flight from the thief and we shall be saved by flight to the shepherd when he will call and we will hear his voice and we will go and we will meet our shepherd.

We will leave this flock. I can't wait till that door is opened and Jesus says, hey, come up here. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

[55:44] Listen, not even death can keep true sheep from the true shepherd. Then we which are alive and remain, we shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

What a comfort for us weary sheep. What a comfort when sometimes it's hard to see the shepherd. Sometimes you're like, Lord, I want to hear your voice.

It's been a while. He's coming and he's coming soon. Take comfort, little flock. Your shepherd delights in you. Luke 12, 32. For not, little flock, it's your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

And our last verse for today and this parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

It wasn't very hard to understand all that, was it? Things about sheep and shepherd, relationships between the two, inferences from the truth that were told. It wasn't that hard. It wasn't that they didn't understand because they couldn't understand.

[56:50] They didn't understand because they wouldn't believe. You see, we do not get to choose what the shepherd will speak. Jesus spake unto them, but they didn't understand.

But we do get to choose how we will respond. I don't get to choose what the voice that I hear speaks. I don't get to choose what the shepherd speaks. Lord, I'm ready to go.

Wait a little while. Lord, I've been in this fold for at least three weeks now. I'm ready for something, Lord. Just wait a little while. Stay there. You know, when we were raising our kids, I went through Calvary Chapel School of Ministry, a two-year program when I was 18 and 19 and had a call to ministry and I didn't pastor a church until I was 41 years old.

I'm like, Lord, why so long? Could I have done something different? Could I have been a more responsive sheep? Could I have...

I don't get to choose what he speaks and when he speaks it. I just get to choose how I'll respond. And I can look now and I can see that...

[58:04] I can see that Jesus has been a good shepherd and a true shepherd.

And I'm so thankful the way he's led us. It's been good. So how did the Pharisees, how did they respond to the voice of this true shepherd?

Well, they didn't understand. They didn't understand who they were. They were lost sheep and they didn't understand who he was. He was the shepherd calling them home. It's like, come on, guys. Come and be part of the flock.

They were claiming to be shepherds but they were robbing the people of experiencing the true shepherd. So for the first time here, Jesus is really putting this in their face saying, no, guys, this can't continue.

There's a true shepherd. As we look through the scripture already where Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me.

[59:06] The true shepherd is the true way, the true and only truth, and the true life of his sheep. I hope you found that to be true.

I hope you spend a lot of time with your shepherd. I hope you hear his voice. I hope you're willing to follow him. I hope you know how much he loves you. You know, the shepherd is a faithful shepherd. He calls. He doesn't control. Sometimes I wish he did, even in this picture. Sometimes when I'm going off this side, I wish he would just come and grab a hold of my fleece and be like, let's get back on the path.

He just keeps going. How do you know if God's called you to lead? How do you know if you're a good leader? Turn around.

Who's following? Is anybody following? Paul says, follow me as, in the same way, I follow Christ. Because we don't, we don't want to just be a bunch of sheep following each other in a circle or heaven forbid, off a cliff.

[60:11] We want to follow the shepherd. Praise God, he's put us among a flock that is following the shepherd so that I can look to you and I can look to your life and I can say, you know, I'm struggling right now.

I don't, I can't, I can't hear his voice. Sometimes all I hear is bleating of sheep. But you seem like you know where you're going. Yeah, I, follow me as I follow Christ.

Today, the true shepherd is calling you to go his way, follow his truth, and to be led into his life. If you will hear his voice, will you heed his call?

Where's God calling you? What area of your life is his voice speaking? What area of your life have you held on to your comfort when he says, let's step out, let's go?

What path have you been following? What voice have you been listening to? And it's detracting. It's just building angst and frustration and, man, that's not the shepherd. He is the way to peace.

[61:18] His truth brings hope and his life is joy and if you'll hear his voice, heed his call. I'm just going to give you a few moments just to sit quietly and open your ears and let his voice speak into your heart.

you know, sometimes the door that needs to be opened is this one. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man will open, I will come in and sup with him.

Father, we thank you so much as we just sit with you now and we're the people of your pasture, we're the sheep of your hand and we have the privilege of having the door open to us by the doorkeeper.

the Holy Spirit stands there and counts us as qualified to enter in. Not just into the sheepfold but into the life of the shepherd.

You are our salvation, you are our life, you are our hope, you are the way, you are the peace and joy in our lives. Forgive us, Lord, when we act like sheep.

[62:29] when we're stubborn, when we're stinky, when we're lost. Open our eyes to the true work of God that you're doing in our lives.

We love you, Jesus. In your name we pray, amen. So your homework for next week is read ahead and look at those principles that we talked about with parables and take where Jesus gives them meaning of the parable and backfeed them into it and you'll come next week and you can teach the message yourself.

If you need prayer, I'd love to pray with you. Don't be sheepish. God loves you. He cares for you. Now may the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and may the Lord be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. God bless you. Walk with the shepherd.

Walk with the shepherd.