

John 10 - the Good Shepherd (John 10:11-18) – Mark Friestad, 11/9/25

Takes place in the context of Jesus' ongoing clash with the Pharisees.

Who were the Pharisees?

- One of four sects of First-Century Judaism: Essenes, Zealots, Sadducees, Pharisees
- Rigid observance of the Law
- Guardians of Moses' legacy
- Belief in eternal life
- With that comes high responsibility, but a tendency toward legalism & judgmentalism
- Gospel theme: "Don't be like the Pharisees"

- They were *blind!* Not willfully blind.
- Eph 6:12 - our struggle is not with flesh and blood
- Something in the *spiritual* character of Jesus that can't be conjured by human effort
- Pharisees were taking it upon themselves
- Beware of the tendencies of Pharisees - read Matthew 23
- Right motive; dangerous means

Example of PHARISAIC TENDENCIES: Man Born Blind (John 9, see Oct 5 message)

The I AM statements are both:

- METAPHORICAL & OCCASIONAL
- *TO UNDERSTAND THE METAPHOR, LOOK AT CULTURE*
- *TO UNDERSTAND THE OCCASION, LOOK AT CONTEXT*

Context of "the Good Shepherd": Pharisees have condemned Jesus as "not one of us" because he healed on the Sabbath; this will progress to saying he is "demon-possessed" (10:20)

Chapter 10:1 "Very truly I tell you *Pharisees...*", and immediately turns the tables on them; they are not legitimate members of the flock, because they didn't enter through the gate (which is Jesus)

- Spiritual leading is a high responsibility
- Not everyone who claims the title "Christian" is a legitimate leader

Striking how many "I AM" statements are implied contrasts: "I AM" this..."I am NOT that"

How did Jesus say it? We should never speculate *too much* on tone of voice when it's not indicated in scripture, and we should never build doctrine around it – BUT – in this case, given this is a confrontation and rebuke, it is likely Jesus emphasized: "I am the GOOD shepherd (and, you are not good)"!

Implications

1. There are bad shepherds. Don't be one, watch out for them, don't give them power.
 - a. Matthew 24:23 *At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.*

- b. 2 Peter: *But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you.*
 - c. 2 Timothy 4:3 *For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.*
- 2. Trust the Good Shepherd with your whole life.
 - a. V. 11 - The good shepherd, unlike the bad shepherd, lays down his life
 - b. V. 12 - Endures all the persecution
 - c. A side note: trusting pastors – are *they* the good shepherds? Or hired hands?
 - i. A pastor/spiritual leader should never *take the place* of Jesus – the real good shepherd.
 - ii. Beware of false gospels
 - iii. NT word translated “pastor” is “shepherd”. Jesus tells Peter “feed my sheep”. Clearly, the role of a pastor is not unscriptural; but –
 - iv. DON’T worship pastors! (Revelation 19:10 & 22:9) We are to be examples to the flock, but a true pastor is humble and will “fade” so that you can see Christ
 - v. Right tone is set by Paul in 1 Cor. 11:1 – “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”
- 3. Follow THE Good Shepherd
 - 1. Study him: Learn his voice vs. the voice of the world. (Note that those could even be religious voices.)
 - 2. As you follow him...you should be becoming more like him
 - 1. How you respond to conflict
 - 2. Your value of the eternal kingdom vs. the temporal one
 - 3. Do you love the types of people Jesus loved? Who were they, anyhow?
- 4. Understand and LOVE the mission of the Good Shepherd: 16 *I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.*

The tendency inside the church is to eye outsiders with suspicion.

As a church, though, we have committed to building bridges to the community – to finding points in common.

Remember: Outreach beyond Israel was SCANDALOUS. But, it had to be done. It was God’s will.

17 “The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

What if Jesus had chickened out?

If Jesus had chickened out: There would be no forgiveness of sin!

We would have NO shepherd, but for false shepherds

World would be TOTALLY LOST.

Jesus is like no other shepherd