

## PARABLES OF JESUS

### THE GOOD SHEPHERD, JOHN 10:1-21

- A. Notes concerning the format of Jesus' teaching in the Gospel of John
1. Matthew, Mark, and Luke recorded what Jesus taught in parables which have one key point.
  2. John referred to his recording of what Jesus taught as a *figure of speech*.
    - a. He used comparison and contrast.
    - b. More than one point is developed in the same passage whereas there is only one key point in a parable.
- B. Jesus contrasted two types of shepherds (1-6)
1. A bad shepherd (1), ***Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.***
    - a. A bad shepherd is actually a thief and robber.
      - 1) He is a thief by means of trickery.
      - 2) He is robber by means of violence.
      - 3) Bad shepherds were portrayed in the Old Testament as those who misled God's people, Jeremiah 23:1-2, "*Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!*" declares the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "*You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD.*"
      - 4) God is portrayed as Israel's Shepherd, Psalm 80:1, *Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.*
    - b. He does not enter the sheepfold by the door.
      - 1) The sheepfold was an enclosure where they were kept when not at pasture.
      - 2) It would have one door for access which was guarded by a gatekeeper (note verse 2).
      - 3) A bad shepherd seeks another way to get in and cause trouble.
    - c. Jesus was identifying bad shepherds as religious leaders who are unfaithful to God.
      - 1) They rejected Jesus as the Shepherd Who is the door to the sheep.
      - 2) Their motives for gaining access to the sheep was for personal gain.
  2. A good shepherd (2-5)
    - a. He has authority (2-3a), ***But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens.***
      - 1) Jesus came as God's authorized representative, the Messiah.
      - 2) The gatekeeper represented the interests of the owners of the flocks being kept in the pen.
        - a) The pen represented the nation of Israel.
        - b) The gatekeeper corresponds to John the Baptist who prepared the way for Messiah, Jesus.
      - 3) The religious leaders had no authority from God because they chose to pursue self-interests.
    - b. He is recognized by the sheep (3b-5), ***The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.***
      - 1) The true shepherd's voice is recognized by the sheep.
        - a) Jesus called His sheep by name.
        - b) He leads them even as He led His disciples who followed Him.
        - c) The sheep given to Jesus by the Father follow Him whereas those not given to Jesus remain.
      - 2) The sheep will not follow a stranger because they do not recognize his voice.

3. The Pharisees did not understand what Jesus meant (6), ***This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.***
  - a. As noted in the introduction, Jesus was contrasting one thing to another.
  - b. He used this term only in the Gospel of John.
    - 1) John 16:25, *I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father.*
    - 2) John 16:29, *His disciples said, "Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech!"*
  - c. Jesus used figures of speech so those who followed Him would understand but those who rejected Him would not.
  
- C. Jesus compared Himself to a Door and contrasted Himself to a Thief (7-10), ***So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.***
  1. Jesus proclaimed that He is the true door of the sheep.
    - a) He provides safety and daily needs continually for those who come to Him.
    - b) He has come to provide abundant life.
    - c) Thomas Constable, *The eternal life that Jesus imparts is not just long, but it is also rich. He did not just come to gain sheep but to enable His sheep to flourish and to enjoy contentment and every other legitimately good thing possible.*
  2. Jesus declared that all who came before Him are thieves and robbers.
    - a) The sheep did not listen to them.
    - b) False shepherds come only to kill and destroy.
    - c) False shepherds at that time were the religious leaders who rejected Him as the true Shepherd.
  
- C. Jesus compared Himself to a Good Shepherd and contrasted Himself to a Hired Hand (11-18)
  1. He contrasted Himself with the hired worker (11-13), ***I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 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. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.***
    - a. He lays down His life for the sheep.
      - 1) It is a voluntary death, John 10:18, *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.*
      - 2) *for*, It is a sacrificial death, 1 Corinthians 15:3, *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.*
    - b. One who does not own the sheep will run from danger with no concern for the sheep.
      - 1) Hired hands have no vested interest in the sheep, only in themselves.
      - 2) Thomas Constable, *Israel's leaders acted as hirelings when they tried to preserve their own positions and willingly sacrificed Jesus. Christian leaders behave as hired hands when we put our own needs ahead of those we serve.*
    - c. The contrast between a good shepherd and hired hands, 1 Peter 5:2-3, *shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.*
  2. He compared Himself to the Father (14-15), ***I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.***
    - a. The Good Shepherd knows His sheep and they know Him.
      1. There is a special bond between a shepherd and his sheep.
      2. There is a special bond between Jesus and His followers which is similar to Jesus' bond to the Father.
      3. To know in relationship and fellowship is much better than just to know by facts.
    - b. Jesus lays down His life for the sheep.
      1. This special bond is based on Jesus' sacrificial death for His sheep.
      2. The depth of His love for His sheep is what binds His sheep to Himself.

3. He is the shepherd of more than one flock (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.***
    - a. The flock was the nation of Israel but Jesus intimated that another flock will join the fold, believing Gentiles.
    - b. John 17:20, *I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.*
    - c. *one flock, one shepherd*, Ephesians 3:6, *This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*
  4. He is loved by His Father because of His loving care for the sheep (17-18), ***For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 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.***
    - a. The Father loves the Son.
      - 1) He has always loved the Son unconditionally.
      - 2) Jesus' obedience to death deepened the Father's love for His Son.
      - 3) John 15:14, *You are my friends if you do what I command you.*
    - b. The Son had authority from the Father to die and rise again.
      - 1) Jesus chose to lay down His life for the sheep. He didn't die because of the will of others.
      - 2) He knew He would rise again and be our ever-living Good Shepherd.
- D. The response of the listeners (19-21)
1. Jesus's teaching divided the Jews (19), ***There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.***
    - a. John 7:12, *And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray."*
    - b. John 9:16, *Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.*
  2. Some said Jesus had a demon and was insane (20), ***Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?"***
    - a. There were some who believed what Jesus taught had to come from a person demon-possessed or insane.
    - b. They couldn't accept the message that He is the Shepherd of Israel (Messiah) and that He must die for His sheep.
    - c. A similar response came when Jesus declared that before Abraham was, *I am*, John 8:48, *The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?"*
  3. Others believed He couldn't be possessed by a demon because of His good works (21), ***Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"***
    - a. Others respected what He did for others.
    - b. They had heard of miracles performed by Him.
    - c. Especially, they thought a man possessed by demons couldn't or wouldn't open the eyes of a man born blind.
  4. Today, there is great disagreement concerning who Jesus is and what He did.
    - a. Our responsibility is to faithfully proclaim what the Bible teaches concerning the Good Shepherd.
    - b. Our privilege is to share how wonderfully different our lives are once we are known by Him and know Him.

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- A. Jesus has a unique relationship to His followers.
  1. He is the door by which one must enter into a personal relationship with God.
  2. He is the Good Shepherd who sacrificed Himself for His followers.
  3. He is the Good Shepherd who knows His own and His own know Him.
- B. Jesus has a unique relationship with the Father.
  1. The Father's love for the Son was intensified by His obedience to the Father's will.
  2. Jesus' relationship to us pictures His relationship to the Father.
- C. Jesus has brought division since His incarnation.
  1. Some despise Him.
  2. His followers worship Him.