

Text: John 10:11-18

Title: It's Personal – I am the Good Shepherd

Thesis: Because Jesus is the Good Shepherd, we must know His voice and follow His leading.

- I. Introduction
 - a. NTA:
- II. The Good Shepherd is not a hireling. (11-13)
 - a. E – Jesus is the shepherd, his people are the sheep, and the enemies of the people are the wolf. Jesus makes a personal investment into the security of his sheep – His own livelihood. He does not flee from difficulty, from danger. He is willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of the security of the sheep.
 - i. Clearly this makes reference to the sacrifice of Christ to gain eternal security for those who believe.
 - ii. It also points to the reality that faith in any substitute for the real Jesus will fail to provide true security and life.
 - b. I – It is said that Cyrus, the founder of the Persian Empire, once had captured a prince and his family. When they came before him, the monarch asked the prisoner, "What will you give me if I release you?" "The half of my wealth," was his reply. "And if I release your children?" "Everything I possess." "And if I release your wife?" "Your Majesty, I will give myself." Cyrus was so moved by his devotion that he freed them all. As they returned home, the prince said to his wife, "Wasn't Cyrus a handsome man!" With a look of deep love for her husband, she said to him, "I didn't notice. I could only keep my eyes on you- -the one who was willing to give himself for me."
 - c. A – How do you know you're following the real Jesus? The faith, once delivered to the saints, which has been passed down from the early church fathers:
 - i. Study – Scripture and what the early church fathers taught about Scripture.
 - ii. Certain creeds remind us and help us put into words the ideas taught in Scripture, i.e. Nicea – 3 Persons, 1 Essence; Chalcedon – 2 Natures, 1 Person
- III. The Good Shepherd knows His sheep and is known by them. (14-16)
 - a. E – Those who know Jesus recognize and respond to His voice, and at present they are not all in the same pen (fold). This tells us two very significant things:
 - i. If you are one of Jesus' sheep, you will recognize His voice, His leading, His prompting in your life.
 - ii. There are others out there who will be brought into Jesus' flock, regardless of where they are from. Part of Jesus' mission is to make that possible, and our mission is to be working toward that accomplishment.
 - b. A –
 - i. Discerning the voice of God.
 1. Bruce Waltke – Read your Bible, Develop a heart for God, Seek wise counsel, Look for God's providence, Does this make sense?¹
 - ii. Seeking other sheep to be brought into the fold.
- IV. The Good Shepherd follows a plan. (17-18)

¹Bruce Waltke, *Finding the Will of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995).

- a. E – Jesus follows the Father’s plan of redemption, which included not only the sacrifice on behalf of the sheep, but also the resurrection, the victory of the Good Shepherd over all the enemies. The plan may not be pleasant or enjoyable, but the result is worth it.
 - b. I – Hudson Taylor had definite convictions about how God's work should be done. We can make our best plans and try to carry them out in our own strength. Or we can make careful plans and ask God to bless them. "Yet another way of working is to begin with God; to ask His plans, and to offer ourselves to Him to carry out His purposes."²
 - c. A – We may not always see, or appreciate, the plans God has for us, but we must remember that His plans are ultimately beneficial for His sheep.
- V. Conclusions

²Warren Wiersbe, *Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching and Preachers* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 243.