

Heaven: The Throne Room of the Universe

True Sheep Hear the Voice of Jesus Christ as Their Shepherd and Follow Him

John 10:1-14

As we open our Bibles to John 10:22, Jesus is walking in the winter, Hanukkah time on the great porch of Herod's Temple. It is amazing to find times in the Gospels that we can so relate to.

Jesus was Teaching John 10 in December

First, it was cold and because of the weather Jesus stayed on the eastern side of the Temple (John 10:22-23). This is the exact same place where the early church continued to meet (Acts 3:11; 5:12).

Second, it was during the month of December. Look at v. 22, this is the Jewish Feast of Dedication, more commonly called in our time: Hanukkah. This year Jews celebrate Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights from December 9-16, remembering the re-consecration of the Temple after the desecration of the Holy of Holies in 170BC by the Greek General Antiochus Epihanes.

Finally, it was here that Jesus used the most enduring and comprehensive name for believers. Here in John 10 the term "sheep" is used 16x (out of 40x in all the New Testament, and 21x in John).

"My Sheep" is Christ's Powerful Term for Believers

When you think about it Jesus comes as the Lamb, He calls His Church His flock, He calls Himself the True and Good Shepherd, and He calls those who lead His Church in His stead: shepherds (that is the meaning of the Greek word ***poimen***), and it is usually translated pastor.

There is only one designation of Christ that fills the New Testament. We are His sons and daughters, and His disciples and servants, but the most integrated term, into the fabric of the early church was we are sheep, Christ is our Shepherd, and those who guard Christ's flock are shepherding, pastors.

Jesus calls us as believers more by one term in the Gospels "My Sheep" than any other term among those found outside the Gospels. My sheep is His description of us.

Why does God Call us His sheep?

It¹ may be because sheep are the most helpless creatures known in the world of zoology. They always lose their way. In the amazing aggregation of entertainment and instruction that modern man calls the circus, we have seen almost every known animal perform, but we have never seen a trained sheep.

A dog or cat, all the farm animals, and everything that can be caught in traps, may be taught to perform for the amusement of man with the apparent exception of the sheep.

Perhaps the Lord God, considering the utter helplessness of the human family, just shook His head and said, "We will call them sheep."

What Jesus Sees in Us His Sheep

1. As Sheep: We Need His Constant Guidance.

Sheep are UTTERLY HELPLESS and cannot find their way without a guide... Though there be pasture within easy reach, the sheep is apparently incapable of finding it for itself. It must have a guide. So God, looking at stupid, lost humanity, said, "All they like sheep have gone astray."

2. As Sheep: We Need His Constant Cleansing.

Sheep are among the dirtiest animals associated with man. The natural tendency of wool in its raw and wild state is to pick up any defilement with which it comes into contact.

There is a very unpleasant odor that is natural to the sheep. Mud dries on the pelt of the sheep in the most bedraggled patterns imaginable. The adherence of the mud is persistent. No matter how dry it may become, it does not seem to powder and fall away.

Above all creatures that are associated with the life of man, the sheep in unquestionably the dirtiest. The poet who sings the praise of the snow-white sheep rarely sees them in their typical natural conditions, journeying together in great flocks. The dust of their passage adheres to their person until they become as brown as the terrain over which they travel.

¹ Quoted from Harry Rimmer, Science, p. 248.

Sheep are one of the few animals totally incapable of self-cleansing. The dirtier a sheep gets, the more helpless it becomes. In this respect it seems to be below the hog.

3. **As Sheep: We Need His Constant Care.**

Sheep are among the most tender of creatures, always suffering hurt and pain. When sheep are processed at meat markets it is rare to find an un-scarred pelt or an un-bruised carcass.

Sheep spend half their days bleating because of physical distress, and the rest of their time bumping into something else to hurt themselves again. Without natural joy because of the tenderness of their constitution, they become the perfect type of man. They are dependent, and must always be provided for. Indeed, their only alluring quality is their very helplessness.

Our Good Shepherd Died for His Sheep

The only way to rescue the sheep headed to destruction was to come down, and show them the way out. And that is exactly what God did in Jesus. So when John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and exclaimed, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29), he identified Jesus Christ as the perfect, personal fulfillment of all the Jewish sacrificial system.

So as His sheep, we are so helpless, so totally incapable of cleansing or protecting ourselves. Into this utter need comes our great Shepherd.

There are few verses more comforting in all the Bible, than those we have come to today. It was just about this time of year that Jesus walked around the Temple area and spoke the words of John 10 that we have before us this morning.

True Sheep Hear the Voice of Jesus Christ as Shepherd and Follow Him (John 10:1-14)

14. In John 10: ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who hears and obeys Christ's voice, and enters into an abundantly satisfied life of personally experiencing Christ; and they belong to Christ, they respond to His word, they follow Christ, and they are eternally secure*** (John 10:1,3,10,11,14,26-30).

A BELIEVER ENTERS THROUGH JESUS. John 10:1 "Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door**, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

A BELIEVER HEARS CHRIST'S VOICE. John 10:3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and **the sheep hear his voice**; and **he calls his own sheep by name** and **leads them** out.

A BELIEVER HAS BEEN SAVED BY JESUS AND FINDS PASTURE. John 10:9 I am the door. **If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved**, and will go in and out **and find pasture**.

A BELIEVER HAS AN ABUNDANT LIFE. John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that **they may have life**, and that they may **have it more abundantly**.

A BELIEVER TRUSTS IN CHRIST'S LIFE LAID DOWN FOR THEIR SINS. John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd **gives His life for the sheep**.

A BELIEVER IS KNOWN BY JESUS AND PERSONALLY KNOWS JESUS. John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; and **I know My sheep**, and am **known by My own**.

A BELIEVER BELONGS TO CHRIST. John 10:26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.

A BELIEVER RESPONDS TO HIS WORD. John 10:27a **My sheep hear My voice**, and I know them, and they follow Me.

A BELIEVER KNOWS CHRIST. John 10:27b My sheep hear My voice, **and I know them**, and they follow Me.

A BELIEVER FOLLOWS CHRIST. John 10:27c My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, **and they follow Me**.

A BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE. John 10:28 And **I give them eternal life**, and **they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch** them out of My hand. John 10:29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them** out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one."

Believers Live and Believe in Jesus Christ as Shepherd and Follow Him (John 11:25-26,45)

15. In John 11: ***A believer is someone who lives and believes in Jesus.***

John 11:25-26,45 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who **believes in Me**, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And **whoever**

lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, **believed in Him.**

Believers Hate the World, Serve God, and Walk as Sons of Light (John 12:25-26,36)

16. ***A believer is someone who hates the world, serves God, and is a son of the light.***

John 12:25-26,36 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who **hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.** 26 **If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also.** If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become **sons of light.**" These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

Ephesians 5; I John 5

True Believers Believe in God the Father and God His Son (John 12:41-44)

17. ***A believer is someone who a believer believes in God the Father and God the Son.***

John 12:41,43-44 These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. 44 Then Jesus cried out and said, "**He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me.**"

Believers Know that All Their Sins are Paid for and Removed (John 13:8-10)

18. ***A believer is someone who knows Christ has bathed them completely.***

John 13:8,10 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 10 Jesus said to him, "**He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean;** and you are clean, but not all of you."

Believers Have Supernatural Love (John 13:35)

19. ***A believer is someone who has supernatural love for others.***

John 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, **if you have love for one another.**"

Believers Come, Drawn to Christ, Obey, Love, and Become the Home of God (John 14)

20. In John 14: ***A believer is someone who comes, drawn to Christ, obeys, loves, and is the very habitation of God.***

John 14:1-2,6,10,12,20,23 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through Me.** 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me**, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father. 20 At that day you will know that **I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.** 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word**; and My Father will love him, and **We will come to him and make Our home with him.**

Believers Bear Fruit by God's Power, and Get Pruned to Be Even more Fruitful (John 15)

21. In John 15: ***A believer is someone who bears fruit, gets pruned, and bears more fruit.***

John 15:2-4,6,8,16 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and **every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.** 3 You are already **clean because of the word** which I have spoken to you. 4 **Abide in Me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you **bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.** 16 You did not choose Me, but **I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit**, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you **ask the Father in My name** He may give you.

If the vine speaks of all of life as one growing season, then we should get

more fruit filled the older we get (as in Psalm 92), if it is many seasons then life is a succession of growing/pruning/bearing/resting and then growing/pruning...

Believers Know God Intimately (John 17)

22. In John 17: ***A believer is someone who knows God intimately.***

John 17:2-3,6,9,20,26 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that **He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.** 3 And **this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.** 6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. 9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for **they are Yours.** 20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it*, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, **and I in them.**"

Believers Hear and Respond to God's Voice through His Word (John 12:25-26,36)

23. In John 18: ***A believer is someone who responds to God's Voice from His Word.***

John18:37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. **Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.**"

We are Christ's Sheep

When you think about it Jesus comes as the Lamb, He calls His Church His flock, He calls Himself the True and Good Shepherd, and He calls those who lead His Church in His stead: shepherds.

There is only one designation of Christ that fills the New Testament. We are His sons and daughters, and His disciples and servants, but the most integrated term, into the fabric of the early church was we are sheep, Christ is our Shepherd, and those who guard Christ's flock are shepherding, pastors.

Jesus calls us as believers more by one term in the Gospels "My Sheep" than any other term among those found outside the Gospels. My sheep is His description of us.

Hebrews 13:20-21 (NKJV) Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you[a] what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Power of God's Simple Plan of Salvation

Jesus is just enlarging, explaining, and describing more of the simple way God saves. It is always divine, always miraculous, and always so simple.

Remember, we got here because John captures Jesus describing in 24 different settings, those believers who will surround the Throne, We saw last time that truly saved, born-again Christians are described in the Gospel According to Jesus, as:

1. ***A believer who possesses Christ, and becomes God's Child by a Supernatural event.*** John 1:12-13
2. ***A believer who understands that salvation is only by trusting in One who took my place.*** John 1:29
3. ***A believer who is overwhelmed by the Spirit of God.*** John 1:33
4. In John 2: ***A believer is saved only by hanging onto Christ alone.*** John 2:11 Salvation is a person, and He is our substitute, and we cling to him!
5. In John 3: ***A believer gets to start life over again, seeing Christ as their only hope to live the truth and love the light, and have God's wrath removed forever.*** John 3:3,7,15-16,18,20-21,36.
6. In John 4: ***A believer drinks Christ as the water of life, and finds Him the spring that never runs dry; and begins a life of worshipping Christ as our only hope.*** John 4:10,14,23-24,39,41-42.
7. ***A believer takes Christ at His Word.*** John 4:50,53
8. In John 5: ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who hears, believes, crosses over, and does good.*** John 5:21, 24, 28-29
9. In John 6: ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is securely drawn to Christ, partakes of Him, and stays in Him, because salvation equals abiding in Christ.*** John 6:27,35,37,39-40,44,47,51,54,56.
10. ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who has genuine spiritual life, because they are enabled by God.*** John 6:63,65,66
11. ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who chooses to do the will of God.*** John 7:17
12. ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone whose life is overflowing with the Spirit of God.*** John 7:37-39

13. ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who leaves their life of sin, believes in Jesus, dies sinless, holding Christ's teachings, really following Christ, knowing truth, set free by truth, belonging to God, and hearing His voice.*** (John 8:11,24,30,31,32,44,47):
14. In John 9: ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who worships Christ as their sight-giver.***
15. In John 10: ***A believer in the Gospel according to Jesus is someone who hears and obeys Christ's voice, and enters into an abundantly satisfied life of personally experiencing Christ*** (John 10:1,3,10,11,14).
16. In John 11: ***A believer is someone who lives and believes in Jesus.*** (John 11:25-26,45)
17. ***A believer is someone who hates the world, serves God, and is a son of the light.*** (John 12:25-26,36)
18. ***A believer is someone who a believer believes in God the Father and God the Son.*** (John 12:41,43-44)
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21. In John 14: ***A believer is someone who comes, drawn to Christ, obeys, loves, and is the very habitation of God.*** (John 14:1-2,6,10,12,20,23)
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