

## Worth It (Part 2) – John 10:1-21

John 10:1-21. This is Part 2 of a section we started last week, titled “Worth It.” To say that discerning all these truths, and applying them, is worth it. Worth our time, our effort, and our life.

And the whole discourse, the whole teaching, is based on a metaphor; a real-life object lesson comprised of a shepherd, a sheepfold, and sheep. And the first takeaway, from Part 1, is that . . .

Jesus is the door of salvation worth entering (v7, 9, 10b)

[9] *I am the door* [he said in v9]. *If anyone enters by me, he will be saved*. (ESV) Saved . .

- To escape judgment
- To be free
- To receive sustenance
- To have life

*Abundantly*. Fully. Gloriously. Eternally.

Second, from verses 8 and 10, we found that . . .

Thieves are false teachers worth avoiding (v8, 10a)

- Like those who spread a false gospel
- Like those who deny core biblical doctrines
- Like those who claim apostolic power and authority

All worth avoiding like the plague. Because they steal, kill, and destroy just like Satan.

Which brings us to Part 2 and v11-16. Jesus is still speaking, and says – [11] *I am the good shepherd*. [As opposed to all the bad ones. Before *and* since.] *The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep*.

Now, my guess, is that those who heard him say it at this point, probably thought he was speaking metaphorically. To say that he completely gives of himself; he lays it all on the line. Which is true. Jesus worked relentlessly on our behalf while walking the earth. And continues to do so by interceding for us at the right hand of the Father.

But with the benefit of hindsight, and the fact that he repeats this phrase in verses 15, 17, and 18, we know he also meant it literally. He *literally* laid down his life. He’s *that* good.

Then, in v12, he expands on this contrast between himself and others. [12] *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. [13] He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep*. It’s a contrast. Good shepherd, bad shepherd.

And then he repeats himself. [14] *I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, [15] just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep*.

The point is this:

Jesus is the good shepherd worth following (v11-15)

That’s the third takeaway. Not “a” good shepherd worth following, but *the* good shepherd. *The* leader. The one in a class by himself. Which makes him worth following.

But that’s not the only reason. There are 6 more in these verses. Starting with the fact that he’s . . .

• **The one who died for us (v11b, 15b)**

Think of it! We hear it so much we’re numb. V11b – *The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep*. For the sheep. And again in v15b – *I lay down my life for the sheep*. And *there* he personalizes it. *I lay down my life*, he says. Him for us. *His* death instead of ours. To pay the price for our sins, and save our soul, and make us whole. All of which makes him worth following.

If someone died for you, sparing your life, and then rose again, so you could too, doesn’t it make sense that you would follow him? As in go where he leads, do what he says, and think like he thinks? It does. And it’s worth it. No matter *what* the cost. *He’s* worth it.

Second, he’s worth following because he’s . . .

• **The one who owns us (v12a)**

Which is contrary to a bad shepherd; a non-shepherd in v12. *Who does not own the sheep*. Implying that the good shepherd *does*. And has a keen sense of responsibility for them. Having made us and saved us, sought us and bought us, Jesus owns us.

[19] *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you[?] . . . You are not your own, [20] for you were bought with a price*. (1 Corinthians 6:19–20a)  
Jesus is worth following because he’s the one who owns us.

Third, Jesus is . . .

• **The one who stays with us (v12b)**

Again, contrary to the hired hand who flees. V12 – *He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd . . . sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees*. Implying that the good shepherd stays. Jesus stays. With us and in us. Never to leave us or forsake us. (Heb 13:5)

Fourth, he’s . . .

• **The one who cares for us (v13)**

Again, contrary to bad shepherds. V13 – *He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep*. Just like those in chapter 9 who kicked the *blindman* to the curb. Or those whom God rebuked in days of old.

**Ezekiel 34:4** – *The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them*. Why? Because they didn’t care. They didn’t care for the sheep in their care.\*\*\*\*\*

Jesus *does*. The Good Shepherd does. He loves you and cherishes you. Holds you and helps you. Strengthens and nourishes you. He cares. And it makes him worth following.

5<sup>th</sup>, he’s . . .

• **The one who protects us (v12-13)**

Again, based on the contrast Jesus makes with *bad* shepherds. Verses 12 and 13. Instead of *confronting* the wolves, instead of *facing* the dangers, instead of *intervening* between us and threats, bad shepherds flee.

Not Jesus. He stands. He justifies. He protects. Just like Paul said in **Romans 8:33-39**.

Here it's by way of metaphor, there it's by way of precept.

[33] *Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?* [Any accusation that we don't belong.] *It is God who justifies* [God, who declares us righteous]. [34] *Who is to condemn?* [To say our sin deserves *judgment* instead of salvation.] *Christ Jesus is the one who died* [the Son of the living God]—*more than that, who was raised* [overcoming death]—*who is at the right hand of God* [the most prominent place in the universe], *who indeed is interceding for us* [advocating for us]. Jesus *protects* us.

But that's not it. [35] *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* [36] *As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."* A nod to the metaphor. To say that wolves abound. Danger lurks.

But shall it separate us? [37] *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.* [More than protected by Jesus] [38] *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,* [wolves of any sort; I'm sure that nothing] *will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* The love of God in our union with the Shepherd.

Nothing will separate us. Nothing will thwart us. Nothing defeats us. Not in the end. We're protected. And that makes Jesus worth following.

And 6<sup>th</sup>, back to John 10, he's . . .

- **The one who knows us (v14-15a)**

Jesus is the good shepherd worth following because he knows us by *name*. He already implied it in v3, and here he's explicit. V14 – *I know my own* [personally] and *my own know me*. It's reciprocal. To say we're close. There's a connection. A bond.

And then he gives us an analogy that's mind blowing. *I know my own and my own know me*, [15] *just as the Father knows me and I know the Father*. Just as! Just as God the Father knows God the Son, and vice versa, we know God the Son and he knows us.

You know what that spells? Relationship. When we follow Jesus as our chief shepherd – our Lord, our Savior – we have a personal relationship with him. A mutual rapport. Connected to one another heart and soul. Mind and strength. He knows us. And praise God we know him.

6 reasons he's good, and worth following. Going where he leads, doing what he wants, and thinking like he thinks.

So how about it? Are you following? If he's leading you to be a missionary, are you going? If he's leading you into ministry, are you responding? I hope so. Because he's worth it.

Or maybe he's leading you to grow; right here. To increase your *knowledge* of him; and his Word. To study and show yourself approved. To be a better church member. A better husband. A better wife. A better dad. A better servant. A better leader. Are you following?

Or maybe Jesus is leading you to die to *yourself* like he died for you. To give up your ways and your desires for his ways and his desires. To rely more on him and less on yourself. To be more content and less contentious. More submissive and less aggressive. More generous and less possessive. More engaged and less detached. More humble and less proud.

Whatever it is, wherever Jesus is leading, it's worth it. He's worth following. That's the third takeaway.

Fourth . . .

- **The church is Jesus' flock worth treasuring (16)**

After speaking of the sheep who *know* him, and laying his life down for them, Jesus says in v16 – *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.*

It's a reference to the church. The *flock* is the church. The "called out ones." The community of believers. The fellowship of saints. Those who have been saved by grace through faith.

And not just here and now, but all *over* the world. And all across time. A great cloud of witnesses comprised of those who have gone before, and a great multitude comprised of those who listen now. Those who follow. The church is Jesus' flock.

And it's worth treasuring. Worth cherishing. Holding dear. For at least *four* reasons in this verse. First . . .

- **Because we're included**

The church is Jesus' flock worth treasuring because we're part of it. If God has saved you, you're in. If you've repented of your sin and believe in Jesus, you're in. If he's Lord of your life, your in. If you've called upon his name, you're included.

Because when Jesus said – *I have other sheep that are not of this fold*, he's referring to Gentiles. Those *outside* the nation of Israel at the time. Non-Jews. The rest of the world.

And the rest of the New Testament confirms it. Like **Ephesians 2:11-16**. Where Paul says – [11] *Therefore* [in light of God's gracious salvation] *remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh . . . [12] were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise* [like the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants; promising divine provision and protection], *having no hope and without God in the world.* That *used* to be the plight of Gentiles.

[13] *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. [14] For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one* [Jews and Gentiles] *and has broken down in his flesh* [Christ's sacrifice on the cross] *the dividing wall of hostility . . . [15] that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, [16] and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.*

When Jesus said, "*I have other sheep that are not of this fold.*" he was referring to Gentiles. People from *every* tribe, tongue, and nation. (Rev 5:9) Including us.

Which makes the church worth treasuring. No FOMO, no wondering, no fretting; just the blessed assurance that Jesus knows us and loves us, and we're in.

Second, the church is worth treasuring . . .

- **Because we're gathered**

*"I have other sheep that are not of this fold [Jesus said]. I must bring them also."* "I must gather them too." Instead of leaving it up to us, to find our own way, he *gathers* us. He brings us.

And he *must*, he says. *I must bring them*. Why? Because he's compelled. Just like good *parents* are compelled to gather their family.

I'm quite certain my brothers and I would have stayed out all day and all night if mom and dad hadn't *gathered* us for dinner. And though we came dragging sometimes, the moment we drank our milk and took our first bite, we were glad. We treasured it. And even more so when we left for college and ate peanut butter. And longed to be together on holidays.

The church is Jesus' flock worth treasuring, because he gathers us.

Third, is . . .

- **Because we're led**

*"They will listen to my voice,"* Jesus said. *Will* listen. Implying that he still calls and still speaks. And if Jesus is speaking, Jesus is leading. Calling us out and leading us home. Lighting the way and leading on. Out of darkness and into life. Out of falsehood and into truth. Going before and behind us to say, *"This is the way, walk in it."* (Isaiah 30:21) He's still leading.

Which makes being part of his flock a treasure. Because the alternative is aimless wandering. Leading helpless and hopeless lives just like the world. *Sheep without a shepherd*. (Matthew 9:36) Thank God we're led. Treasure it.

And last, the church is worth treasuring . . .

- **Because we're one**

There will be *one flock* [Jesus said, and] *one shepherd*. One body with one leader. And he's not the Pope. His name is Jesus. The *chief* shepherd as Peter calls him. (1 Pet 5:4)

It's just like God prophesied through **Ezekiel** once again. 600 years earlier. Saying – *"My servant David shall be king over them* [over his people, his flock; referring to someone from David's lineage], *and they shall all have one shepherd*. (Ezekiel 37:24a.) And based on v16, Jesus is the one. Gathering and uniting us to be *one* in heart. Of one mind and one love. One hope. We don't act like it many times, but that's the reality and that's the end; where everything's headed.

All of which makes the church worth treasuring. We're part of something bigger than ourselves. *One* church, comprised of *many* churches. At least Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Christ-exalting churches. Churches all over the world and all across time.

## Summary

So whatever you do, don't miss out. Follow the one who knows you, loves you, protects you, and leads you. And treasure all that he gives us, as one. It's worth it.

Prayer – Lord, awaken us more and more to these things. Awaken us to what we have in you as our Shepherd, and in the church as your flock. Spur us on to follow no matter *where* you lead; no matter *what* you want. Gather us and bring us as only you can.

## You Are Loved