

Salvation Belongs to the Lord (Effectual Calling Part 2: The Teaching of Jesus in John 10)

Question: Why is that when the gospel is preached that some repent and believe while others remain obstinate in unbelief? I think we can give some good answers. We might say, *“He doesn’t believe the authority of the Scriptures.”* *“She doesn’t believe Jesus is the Son of God.”* *“He doesn’t want to give up his sin.”* *“She doesn’t really understand what I am preaching to her.”* On and on we could go with such reasons. From one perspective (manward side), at the end of the day, this is what a person wants. He/She doesn’t want to believe the gospel. We preach and we “call” them to repent and believe. This is the general “call” I spoke of last week. This is like the call I make to my cat . . . “kitty, kitty, kitty,” and she just turns and walks away. It is similar to the farmer say, *“I can lead my horse to the trough, but I can’t make him drink.”* It is like the prophets of the OT. As they preached repentance and faith in God, most of hearers do nothing; only a remnant is saved.

As we consider our topic, “Salvation belongs to the Lord” we know there must be more than merely a general call; there must be an “effectual,” “powerful” call of God that leads to repentance and faith. We saw this last week with Rom. 8:29-30. Listen to these words carefully: **“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”** Here, we see a very different kind of call. We see the work of God from eternity to save a people and bring them all the way to glory. **“Those he CALLS, he justifies and glorifies.”**

With this in mind, as we take the Lord’s Supper today, I want to answer the question: *“Does Jesus teach such and effectual call?”* I believe he does. We see this in John 10 (turn with me).

In this chapter Jesus teaches He is the long-awaited “shepherd” of whom the prophets in the OT preach is coming one day. And, He is the TRUE shepherd. In fact, there is NO OTHER SHEPHERD that can and will be the pastor of God’s flock. In this context Jesus is saying, *“Look to me! I am the ONE who has come to be the shepherd of his people.”* In this passage he speaks broadly and specifically. On the one hand he is saying to the larger Jewish unbelieving population that “I AM your shepherd. Look to me.” And then he speaks more specifically by saying that his sheep hear his voice. They recognize him as their shepherd. They trust Him. They follow Him, etc. And, as we will see, they follow him because they “hear his voice.” In other words, he “calls” his sheep by name and they come.

Let’s read through these verses, asking the question: “Does Jesus teach an effectual call?” And as we do this, I will make applications along the way as we take the Lord’s Supper this morning. In vv. 1-6, Jesus says: **“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. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out**

all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.”

In v. 3 Jesus teaches an effectual call. In other words, Jesus the Shepherd “calls” to his sheep. And he calls them by name. They “hear his voice” and they follow him as their leader. This is a very specific call. When He calls, there is a very clear response. They follow him as their leader. I must ask all of us here today, “Do you hear his voice. Do you follow him as your leader?”

By way of application, we see that the call of Jesus leads to salvation. In v. 9 those who hear his voice and come to him are safe. How so? In v. 11 Jesus says, “*The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*” In the Lord’s Supper today, this is what we remember! “*This is my body broken for you.*” Today, we remember that Jesus laid down his life as a sacrifice on behalf of his sheep. This is the Cross! Isaiah says, “**All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all**” (Is. 53:6). Brothers and sisters, if we were to bear our own sins, we would only receive judgment, death, separation from God, and Hell forever. Why? Because “**all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God**” (Rom. 3:23). So, what is different about Jesus? He was a man just like us. But, He was sinless. Heb. 4:15 says: “**For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.**”

I think of the story from John 8 where a woman was caught in the very act of adultery. And a group of very prominent religious leaders (Scribes and Pharisees) brought her to Jesus, saying, “*The law of Moses commands us to stone such women.*” He says to them, “**Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.**” And what do they do? They walk away. And then Jesus says to the woman, “*Has no one condemned you?*” She says, “*Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.*” Brothers and sisters, He had every right to condemn this woman. Why? He was sinless. And He could have had her judged with stoning according to Mosaic Law. But, as Jesus tells Nicodemus, “**For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God**” (John 3:17-19). Today, Jesus does not condemn his sheep. But instead, He lays down his life in their place. And how do we know we are not condemned? How do we know we are saved? We know because we have heard his voice and we come to him.

Let’s move back to answering our question: “*Does Jesus teach effectual calling*” by continuing through vv. Here, Jesus compares himself as the good Shepherd with thieves and robbers and wolves who try to take the sheep and hurt the sheep, etc. In v. 8 his sheep “**do not listen to them.**” Here, the implication is that his sheep hear his voice and listen to him; they do not listen

to other voices. As you contemplate your life, and think about making your “**calling and election sure**” (2 Pet. 1:10), which voices do you listen to?

Let’s continue. Look at v. 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.”** Stop for a second as we consider the call of Jesus to his sheep. Here Jesus compares the intimacy of his sheep to himself with the intimacy He has with the Father. Brothers and sisters, though mysterious, by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, our relationship with Christ is likened to Christ’s relationship to the Father. (think about that). With this in mind, how can a “call” be more effectual; that we might be united to Christ in the same way Christ is united to the Father. I think of Jesus’ words in John 17 as I think of WHY Jesus came. Look over at 17:20-26: **“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them”**

Can there be a greater result in the call of Jesus to his sheep than that they be “united with Father as He is?!” I cannot overemphasize this truth! Could there be a more GLORIOUS calling than this? I read this verse last week, but I must read it again. The Apostle Peter says to us: **“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire”** (2 Pet. 1:3-4). Is there a greater calling than this? And could this call be “more” effectual than this? Brothers and sisters, as we take the Lord’s Supper, we remember that the death of Jesus our shepherd is the reason we are in possession of the greatest treasure!

As we get back to answering our question: *“Does Jesus teach an effectual call?”* Let’s finish up with vv. 22-30 as John continues the same theme (Shepherd/Sheep, Voice/Hearing). **“At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. 24 So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” 25 Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I**

give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

Application: He keeps us. We do not keep him. This means "salvation belongs to the Lord." I think we've seen clearly with last week and this week that the Scripture teaches that God is the one who calls us to salvation.

Application. Also, He keeps us forever. In these verses we see the doctrine of eternal security. (vv. 28-30)

Application: He leads us not only to safety, but to fields of blessing. Today, if you are in Christ, you are the most blessed person in the world. Your sins are forgiven. The wrath of God has been taken away.

Application: We hear his voice through the Word of God.

At the end of the day, I believe John 10 teaches Rom. 8:28-30: **"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."**

Paul is merely teaching what Jesus has already taught. He is teaching the Romans to understand and obey all the commands of Christ.

And none of this happens if our GOOD Shepherd, our Lord Jesus, does not leave his glory in heaven, take on flesh just like us, and then as a sinless man lay down his life as a sacrifice and then call his sheep to himself in a way that produces fruit and unites us to God. Today, we celebrate these truths!