

April 22, 2018  
Sermon for Fourth Sunday of Easter  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
Bowie, TX  
Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
John 10:11–18

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

John 10:11–18 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup> 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.”

Grace, Mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

There's a wonderful thing about a Good Shepherd: He lays down His life for the sheep.

But there also a funny thing about a door: it has two sides. There's a blessed thing about Jesus: Jesus is both the Good Shepherd and a door.

In our text today, Jesus teaches that He is the Good Shepherd. But a few verses earlier, Jesus also taught that He is the door of the sheep: "*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*" (10:7–10).

John 10 gives us this great good news that couldn't be as great if it were just one or the other because Jesus is both the Good Shepherd Who protects His sheep and the Door that locks out those who threaten them.

It's a good thing about the Good Shepherd who's also the Door: there are those two sides.

On one side of the Door, there's grace and mercy. There's a good and loving shepherd who cares for His sheep. He opens to provide food and nourishment as He leads the sheep to pasture and streams of living water.

But He also closes to provide protection from thieves and hired hands and wolves, the terms Jesus uses in our text for false shepherds: *“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”* (vv 11–12). On one side is mercy, but on the other side is judgment.

In today’s First Reading, Peter and John stood before the Jewish council, those who should have been the shepherds of Israel, but the apostles were on trial because they’d been proclaiming resurrection in the name of Jesus.

The council was greatly annoyed, so Peter and John must account: *“Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well”* (Acts 4:10).

Peter went on to explain that Jesus is the stone that was rejected but has become the cornerstone and that there is *“no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (4:12).

Some of the same false shepherds had revealed their true colors immediately before our text.

In John 9, Jesus healed a man who was blind from birth. The Jews took issue with this healing because it had been done on a Sabbath Day. Jesus did not respect their laws, so they rejected Him and refused to believe in Him.

They threw the man who'd been healed out of the synagogue. However, when Jesus found him and revealed to him that He was the Christ, the man believed in Jesus and worshiped Him.

The Good Shepherd was His open door—but a closed door to those who rejected Him.

Think of it like the door that at God's command Noah and his sons built into the ark. On the day it started to rain, Noah and his family huddled inside the ark. The hand of God then closed that door. As the door shut, the rain that fell for God's judgment on the earth was kept safely outside.

For Noah and his family, for those who had faith and believed God, the door provided protection. And then, when the flood subsided and the waters were gone, the door opened and Noah went out to find God's blessing on the earth. The door shut for protection and opened for blessing.

But for those outside the ark, that door meant judgment. The door was shut to those who did not believe. They perished.

It's the same door, but that door is received much differently depending on which side of the door you're facing.

The same can be said for Jesus. Those of us who believe are on the inside of the door. For us, Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for us. He knows us and loves us, and likewise we know Him and follow Him.

We know the sound of his voice and follow where He leads. But for those who do not believe in Jesus, He is a harsh Judge.

They are blind and unable to see His goodness and mercy. They reject Him. They reject Him and those who believe in Him.

The formerly blind man was put out of the synagogue because he confessed faith in Jesus. Peter and John were arrested for teaching and healing in the name of Jesus.

So also for you, as you go in and out and follow Jesus, hearing His Word and recognizing His voice, following Him to green pastures and living waters, being defended against wolves and thieves and hirelings, being gently prodded back to the green pastures and away from danger.

You received Jesus as your Lord and master, as your Good Shepherd. But since He is rejected by the outside world, they will also reject you.

The world will see you and associate you with the judgment of Jesus. They will hate you and try to silence you even as the Jews hated Peter and John and the man born blind.

But you are safe. Just as Noah was safe from the wind and waves and flood as the waters rose to destroy the earth, likewise you are safe from God's judgment.

Just as Noah and his family were protected from the waters that rose to destroy the earth, you are protected from the wrath of God.

Just as sheep, who are tucked safely away inside the sheepfold, are protected from the dark of night and wolves that lurk in the shadows, you are protected from the devil and his evil angels. You are safe inside Christ's Church, where God feeds and nourishes you.

You hear His voice as it's brought to you through preaching and his Word.

You drink from the living water that flows from His font. You eat the food that He's prepared at His banquet table, bread and wine that is body and blood and that offers you forgiveness of sins, life, salvation.

Remember the old game show *Let's Make a Deal?*

The contestants were given some prize and then had the opportunity to trade that prize for what was hidden behind a door. The show was exciting and entertaining because you never knew if that prize hidden behind the door was something of greater value, like a new car or a dream vacation, or whether it was something worthless.

Jesus, the door of the sheep, beckons to you to come to Him and enter through Him. In our hands, we hold the prizes of this earth—the world and all its glory. We are tempted to reject Jesus and deny His gifts. But behind that door, on the other side of that door, lies heaven and all its glory, all the blessings of God almighty given for you.

Come, enter through the door that is Jesus and find your Good Shepherd waiting for you.

Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Amen.

## **Sermon Outline**

### **The Shepherd and the Door**

*John 10:11–182*

- I. See how that works with false shepherds.
- II. Remember how it worked with Noah's ark.
- III. Rest assured that the Good Shepherd works to keep you safe.