

February 21, 1943

John 10:1-5

1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4. When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

What is the symbology of the parable of the Good Shepherd?

The Good Shepherd represents the I AM, and so does the "door" by which the shepherd enters. The "porter" represents the will.

With respect to mankind what do the "sheep" represent?

They represent the thoughts of mankind. The thought life is the part of us that above all else needs to be guarded and developed if we are to rise to the Christ consciousness.

What part does the will play in our progress from sense to the higher level of the Christ consciousness?

An absolutely necessary part, for the ascent is a voluntary one. It is "whosoever will" that follows the Christ. "The sheep follow him: for they know his voice." Coercion of the inner life is an impossibility.

What thoughts determine our character?

The subconscious thoughts or deep impulses of the heart, of which we ourselves are not always aware, are the ones that control us and mold our character. "As he thinketh within himself, so is he."

How can we apply the words "When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them"?

We identify ourselves with our thoughts through the use of the I AM. By this means we claim from the universal mind the ideas that we choose to make our own or those which we are able to grasp.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1932

WHAT DO THE DOOR AND THE SHEEPFOLD REPRESENT METAPHYSICALLY?

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6. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7. Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8. All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9. I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.

10. The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.

12. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, when the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them:

13. He fleeth because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14. I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me,

15. Even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.

17. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations.

18. When we enter the Christ consciousness we find that all persons are of one nation and of one blood.

19. In time to come, all people will use one language. All will be one great nation.

20. Will the time ever come when all the nations of the earth will be brought into one common fold and made one great nation?

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33. Jesus said, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations."

34. The good shepherd is the Christ I AM, or the individual I AM. Christed, illumined, lighted by the understanding of Truth.

35. What is the meaning of the statement, "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep"?

36. When I AM identity receives illumination and then identifies itself with Truth, it gives up its life to all its thought entities, to the end that they may be lifted up to spiritual consciousness.

37. What does the hireling represent? The hireling represents the personal ego.

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Lesson 1. April 5. 1908

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD—John 10:1-18.

Print John 10:1-11.

- 1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door, into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
- 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
- 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.
- 4 When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
- 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.
- 6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.
- 7 Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.
- 8 All that came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them.
- 9 I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.
- 10 The thief cometh not, but that he may steal and kill and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.
- 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.

GOLDEN TEXT—*The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.*—John 10:11.

Christ represents Spiritual consciousness, the "door" through which every thought (sheep) must enter the fold (Spiritual Kingdom).

Those who try to get their thoughts into the Kingdom in some other way than that of true spiritualization are robbers—they are robbing themselves of great possessions, which would be theirs if they conformed to the law of the Christ-Mind and entered by the door of Truth.

Christ is also the Shepherd of the sheep. In Oriental countries a shepherd has his sheep under perfect control and they come and go at command when their names are called. Hastings' Bible Dictionary says, "It is one of the most interesting spectacles to see a number of flocks of thirsty sheep watered at a fountain. Each flock, in obedience to the call of its own shepherd, lies down, awaiting its turn. The shepherd of one flock calls his sheep in squads, and, when the squad has done drinking, orders it away by sounds which the sheep perfectly understand, and

alls up another squad. The sheep never make any mistake as to who whistles to them or calls them. In a flock of hundreds or thousands each individual has a name, knows it, and is known by it."

The great mass of thoughts in conscious and subconscious mind, which we call "man," are like sheep needing a shepherd. The central ego or "I" of this lower consciousness does not know the names of its own faculties and could not properly direct and control them if it did. The super-consciousness or Christ-Mind is the true "door" through which the man must pass his many thoughts, and all those who teach other ways of spiritualization are robbing men of their vitalities.

It is no idle warning, this, that there are soul thieves and robbers among men. All those teachers who ignore Christ and claim to show a better way to attain spiritual power come under this head. In I. John 4, it is written, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the Spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already. Ye are of God, my little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." John summed up magnificently the teaching of Jesus in that sentence. The spiritual *I Am* in man is greater than any spirit or adept without, and has a thousand times more power. It is this Great One in you that knows every thought and loves them as the shepherd loves his sheep. The shepherd will sacrifice his life in defense of his sheep because he loves them, so the Christ pours out his life to the soul that turns to the kingdom within and seeks to know the law of that inner life through Christ. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

April 2, 1905
John 10:7-18

7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

GOLDEN TEXT—*I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*—John 10:11.

"I am the door of the sheep." To get the individual application of this, we should put special emphasis upon *I am*. The "sheep" are the innocent, obedient, natural life forces of the consciousness. These thoughts aggregated make the personality, or "man," who goes in and out, and is saved by the I AM.

The "thieves" and "robbers" are those ideas that come into consciousness from the outside, and steal away our vitality. They are legion. Looking to the future for happiness is a thief, and robs us of the joys of the present. Regretting the errors and losses of the past is a great robber of vitality.

The innocent life substance of our organism is depleted and slain daily through our dependence upon some material remedy as a vitalizing agent. The belief that certain drugs are tonics and build up the system, is a "thief." Depending upon these things robs us of that true inner realization of Divine Life, which comes through the I AM door alone.

One may have temporary life through the many artificial sources, such as stimulants, electricity, magnetism, etc., but the true abiding life comes from the One Divine Mind. That Mind is made up of ideas, and among them is the idea *Life*. When man grasps this Truth, and through his own I AM affirms, "*I am Life*," he has found the Good Shepherd that eternally gives its life to the sheep.

The "hireling" state of mind is where one is constantly looking for rewards. This cultivates selfishness, which is the foundation of fear. One who puts a money value upon all his work, and expects pay for everything he does, is cultivating a dependence upon temporal things for his existence, and will eventually find that in the Kingdom of the Real he is counted but a "hireling."

The I AM must know the Father, and the Father must know the I AM. This means that we must become acquainted with God in our I AM demonstrations. This is a point of vital interest to metaphysicians. Everywhere people are catching the mental phase of New Thought, and using it successfully to a certain point—then something comes up that they cannot withstand, and they "go all to pieces." The reason is they have not worked under the guidance of Divine Mind—the Father and Supreme Wisdom of man and the Universe. When one works under the guidance of the Father he loses all thought about his own welfare—his life or how he is to be supported. He knows that he will be taken care of, and he freely pours out his life-giving thoughts to all.

When one in this supreme trust and realization of Divine Life, "lays down his life," he merely gives up the idea of *personal* life. This letting go, or giving up the thought of personal life, feeds the sheep by opening the way for the descent of the Spiritual Life, which is the real food, or vitality.

Laying down the mortal thought of life, and taking up the Spiritual Idea of Life, opens the door to the realization that the I AM has creative power, and can express the life manifestation or withdraw it at will. "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment I received I from my Father."

February 14, 1937
John 10:1-16

(See February 21, 1932 for scripture)

INTERPRETATION

EXPLAIN THE SYMBOLISM OF THE I AM.

The I AM or the identifying principle of consciousness is the door to man's mind and soul, and to the entire inner kingdom. The Good Shepherd also represents the I AM.

WHAT DO SHEEP REPRESENT, AND WHAT IS THE PORTER?

Sheep represent thoughts, and the porter is the will.

HOW DOES ONE THINK IN ONE'S HEART?

Since the heart is affected by the emotions it is accepted as the seat of feeling or subconscious thought. Man is conscious of the thoughts of his heart as impulses only, not as thoughts; but as he continues to hold a thought subconsciously it gains in intensity until it comes to the surface as conscious thought.

NAME SOME OF THE THIEVES AND ROBBERS OF THOUGHT.

Hypnotism, alcoholism, the drug habit, the mental tyranny of parents over grown-up children, and so-called psychic influences are all thieves of man's individual thought.

INTERPRET THE STATEMENT "THE SHEEP HEAR HIS VOICE."

Man learns to control his thought life through attention, study, and practice as well as through prayer. When his thoughts become orderly and obedient to his will, it is then that the sheep hear his voice.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE VERSE "WHEN HE HATH PUT FORTH ALL HIS OWN, HE GOETH BEFORE THEM, AND THE SHEEP FOLLOW HIM: FOR THEY KNOW HIS VOICE"?

(2)

This means that the man who is able to correlate his ideas and from the resultant product go on to new and better ones, becomes a leader in the thought world, creating new ideas instead of accepting those already thought out by others.

TO WHAT ARE THE CREATIVE PROCESSES OF THE MIND AMENABLE?

Only to the will of the I AM. Creative thinking implies true self-expression.

HOW IS MAN SAVED BY THE I AM?

By the Good-Shepherding of his thought powers, or by his learning to think in harmony with divine law and thereafter controlling his thoughts accordingly, man is saved. The I AM is the Good Shepherd that effects his salvation.

Sunday, February 23, 1947

7. Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8. All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9. I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.

10. The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came, that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.

12. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them:

13. *He fleeth* because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14. I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me,

15. Even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.

17. Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.

18. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from my Father.

Why is it essential for us to learn to control our thoughts?

Because it is through the proper development and training of the mind and soul that we enter the kingdom of heaven or realm of genuine peace and abundant life. As we think, so we are. Uncontrolled thinking makes our life more or less chaotic and irresponsible.

What means of control do we use?

The I AM in conjunction with the will.

By what are thoughts represented in this lesson?

Sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." To be conscious of our thoughts and to control and direct them is to gain mastery over life.

What is the "door of the sheep"?

The I AM. Through it we shepherd our thoughts and lead them to constructive conclusions.

What is the seat of subconscious thought?

The heart or emotional nature.

Why do we need to learn control of our subconscious thought as well as of our conscious thought?

As long as a thought remains in the subconsciousness it forms a basis for impulses and desires. Unless these desires and impulses are controlled and directed by the I AM, they are likely to lead us to ill-considered action.

Is suggestion sometimes permissible as a form of thought control?

Yes, as a temporary expedient under certain circumstances suggestion is useful, but it cannot be used as a means of developing power to think originally or independently.

Explain the meaning of: "They shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd."

When we accept the word of Truth (the Christ) and enter the Christ consciousness we find that all persons are children of God, alike in His sight. In time to come all will be one great world under the authority of the Christ.

February 21, 1943

John 10:11-16

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.

12. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them:

13. *He fleeth* because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14. I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me,

15. Even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.

How is it that the "good shepherd" layeth down his life for the sheep?

The individual I AM, the Christ in us, identifies itself with the universal I AM, the Christ, and becomes the "good shepherd." It draws and forms its thoughts from the true ideas of the universal mind. These thoughts are the "sheep" with which the shepherd becomes identified and to which He gives life in fullness and richness, for the I AM gives spiritual life to thought identified with it. The limited thought life has been given up for the richness of spiritual consciousness.

What are some of the thieves and robbers that steal, kill, and destroy the "sheep"?

Hypnotism or the putting to sleep of the conscious mind and will of one person by another in order to impress the thoughts or ideas of the hypnotist on the subject is a thief and a robber. Alcoholism is a thief that steals the reasoning mind as well as the will to reason, substituting heedless impulses. The drug habit is another thief of will power and rational consciousness. The mental tyranny of one person over another is a destroyer of initiative and individual responsibility.

February 21, 1943

John 10:27-30

27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

8. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.

29. My Father, who hath given *them* unto 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.

In training our thoughts can we "give unto them eternal life"?

By identifying ourselves only with true thoughts and ideas and proving both in our daily life, we give them vitality and permanence.

How can we make the closing affirmation of today's text our own in a practical way?

"I and the Father are one." We may use it in the same form in which Jesus stated it, or we may say, "I am one with Divine Mind, and I think divine thoughts."