

The Gospel of John: The Good Shepherd

John 10:1-21

The Shepherd & The Thieves (v. 1-10)

- Jesus continues to address the Pharisees (9:40-41) by using the OT imagery of shepherds as leaders of God's people
 - God rebukes the leaders who exploit the sheep rather than guiding, nurturing & guarding them (Ezk 34:1-10; Isa 56:9-12; Jer 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Zec 11)
 - God Himself promises to be the people's shepherd (Ezk 34:11-16; Ps. 80:1; Is. 40:11; cf. Ps. 23:1)
- The true Shepherd has come in Jesus
 - Those under-shepherds/gatekeepers who were tasked with guarding the sheep have failed to recognize Him
 - But those that recognize His voice are His sheep
 - Middle Eastern shepherds walk before their sheep, and the sheep follow their voice
- Jesus also acts as a gate for the sheep, how they enter the safety of the sheep pen and are led out to green pastures
 - To be part of God's people, where we experience eternal life & divine blessing, we must come through Jesus
- The religious leaders who have acted in their own interests & false messiahs are thieves & robbers
 - They steal, kill, & destroy
- Jesus shows how He is the good shepherd by laying down His life for His sheep
 - He blesses, gives eternal life, & heals

One Shepherd, One Flock (v. 11-16)

- Jesus claims to be the one Shepherd who will:
 - Secure for our salvation & a place among God's people through His death
 - Unite both these sheep (Jews) with other sheep (Gentiles) to make one flock, just like God promised (Ezk 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Jer 3:15; Hos 3:5)
 - He is a shepherd-king like David

Laying Down His Life (v. 17-21)

- Jesus foreshadows His death, stating that He will willingly lay down His life out of:
 - Obedience to His Father
 - Love for His sheep
- His audience is again divided over His claims:
 - Some think He is demon-possessed & crazy
 - Others question this because of His miraculous powers
- Both responses reflect whether they are blind/deaf to Jesus
 - If they were His sheep, they would hear His voice (Matt 13:14-15, cf. Isa 6:9-10)

The Shepherd-King

- On the night that Jesus was born, God sent angels to announce the good news to the shepherds near Bethlehem
 - Who better to recognize the Good Shepherd than fellow shepherds
- Through Jesus, God fulfills His promise of a Shepherd-King (Mic 5:2-5a)

So What?

- Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep
- Are we good sheep who listen to His voice?
- Do we, like the Bethlehem shepherds, tell others of our great Shepherd-King?

Meditation Verse: John 10:14-15

Next Week: John 10:22-42