

This Figure of Speech: “The Sheep & The Shepherds”

[John 10:1-16](#)

“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. ⁵ A 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.

⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 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. 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. ¹⁶ 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.

Sunday November 22nd, 2020 – Pastor Thom Rittichier:

Hello, good to have you with us. We want to welcome you here. Hey, I want to start off by using this quote, this was brought to me by a by person, "You can't take the Bible literally. And if you do, wow, wow".

Actually, it was a young lady in our fellowship here, who is now being used by the Lord in another location, has been a couple of times, that came to me with this, because she had spoken to someone and they said, "You can't take the Bible, literally". I mean, if you do, wow, you're going to, according to what Jesus said, need to be tearing out your right eye,

cutting off your right hand, chopping off your foot, because Jesus did say, if your right hand causes you to sin, what, cut it off, if your eye causes you to sin, do what, pluck it out. And another place in Mark, he talks about your foot causing you to sin. And he says this, for it is better, it is profitable, more profitable, for you to enter life lamed, blind than it is to be cast into hell. And even my wife noticed this, that at church she never saw anybody with an eye missing, that had plucked it out. So if you take the Bible literally, Wow. And if you take the Bible literally, the hand of God and the arm of God is being revealed. Even Thomas mentioned that, it was the hand of God. So this morning, we're going to kind of, well, we're kind

of going to take this exactly as being right. You can't take the Bible literally when it tells you to take it figuratively, because the Bible does indeed do that. As a matter of fact, Jesus tells us that, and I want you to turn with me to John chapter 10, where the Lord tells us that. Up here I have a little chart. This was the story about the girl, that wasn't particularly her. But this girl comes to me and was very upset about taking the Bible literally and how this was being asserted. Now, if you see this chart up here, according to the Gallup Poll and the Bar Poll, there are about a quarter of the population that they polled that said, yep, it is to be taken literally, word for word. And then about 50%, in each of these, the Gallup Poll actually ends up to 96% total, so 4% abstain, and the Bar Poll 99% so 1% abstain. But about half of those in each of them said the Bible is the inspired Word of God, but not everything in it can be taken literally. That's what they say. Okay. And then about another quarter percent of the population said the Bible is an ancient book has fables, legends, myths, moral precepts, recorded by men. So those are, according to their poll, the surveys of Bible attitudes. Now, I want you to say, I want to tell you that the Bible does present figurative things. Jesus did it intentionally. And if you're with me in John chapter 10, I want you to slide down to verse number 6, where literally, Jesus says, "Take this figuratively", okay, notice, "this figure of speech Jesus used", or Jesus said, "with them, but they did not understand what He was saying". Quite literally here, in John chapter 10, Jesus speaks figuratively, because we're told that it's figurative. And when this is presented as figurative, He uses a word. It's a word that is actually a compound word. It means beside-to make like,

that's what the word figurative is. It's a compound word that says beside-to make like. So what happened is Jesus made something like He was observing, with His words, because this is what He spoke, it says here, "this figure of speech Jesus said", He used it, He spoken, with His words He used, making something like, what He was observing, and He put it beside it so that others could see and understand. That's the use of a figure speech. It's using words that aren't actually the case for what's present. But it pictures it, it gives a figure of it so you better understand. And yes, the Bible does have symbols and it does have types and it does have parables, which are fictitious stories. But it lets us know what it is that it's doing here just like any other normal speech. So is it all literal? No, some is figurative. Like where Jesus here tells us, "this is a figure of speech". It's what's like it that I lay beside, so you can understand, but they didn't get it. So this morning, in John 10, we're going to talk about the figure of speech. And we're going to talk about this, in this passage that we're going to look at. It actually starts in verse number one of chapter 10. So let's read through this together. And as we do read it together, I want us to recall what has just happened here. In John 9, Jesus is talking to the Jewish leaders of their religion. Verse 40, "some of the Pharisees heard him say this", about coming to have people see, see

reality. See what's happening here, see what the truth is. And also by what He's presenting, some who think they see, are made blind. "And the Pharisees hearing this said, are we also blind? And Jesus said, if you were really blind, like this blind man was", if you were really blind, like he was both physically and spiritually, indicated by his physical, this spiritual truth is indicated by his physical blindness. "Then you'd be without sin. Your sin would be dealt with. But now because you say, we see" and what did they say they saw? Look with me at verse 22. at verse 22 we have the Jewish leaders, having agreed that if any would should confess Jesus to be the Christ, that person would be put out of the synagogue, he'd be put out of the assembly. And not only was that their plan, according to what they saw

Jesus was saying that He's the Messiah. Not only was that their plan, that they put him out, but they actually did it. Because if you slide down further, they revile this blind person. And they say to him, verse 28, "you are his disciple, but we are Moses disciple", and verse 34, "they put him out." They cast him out of Judaism, which was the practice of their religion, close them out to God. That's what they were attempting, not only God but also in their social circle, close them out to the synagogue, close them out to the social interaction that comes from that because it was a Jewish, it was a Jewish nation and close them out to all the connections from that. Not only did they say they would do it, but they literally did it because of what they saw

Jesus was,

that He was claiming to be the Christ. And they're not for that. That's the context in which Jesus immediately presents this figure of speech, what He sees. He's going to make an image and lay it beside that which He sees so that they will get the picture. Notice what happens. "Truly, truly" Jesus says. Now remember that His formula for being emphatic.

He is emphasizing this, some people, when they get emphatic, raise their voice, some people stare intensely, their eyes get big. Some people pick up a finger and point it in the air, when they get emphatic, talk loud, fast. This is what Jesus formula was. He emphasizes, this is true, this is true, this is the way it really is. "Truly, truly, I say to he who does not enter the sheep fold by the door, but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief", he's a stealer and he's a robber, he's a looter. That's actually renderings that would reflect well what he's saying here. He's a stealer, he's a looter. "But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." Here's what He's making, the picture of someone coming into a sheep fold and climbing up over the wall or coming through the door and He's laying it beside what they, what He sees here, so that they'll get the picture. "He who comes by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him, the door keeper, opens. The sheep hear his voice, he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he has brought out all his own, he goes before them. And the sheep follow him, for they know His voice, a stranger, they will not follow, but they will flee, they will run away from a stranger, for they do not know the voice of strangers". This is the figure of speech Jesus spoke with them. But they did not understand what He was saying. So Jesus again said to them, "truly, truly", and He begins to emphasize, well, this is what we're going to be looking at this morning. This

figure of speech is about what, it's about the sheep. Isn't that a beautiful picture of sheep? I love that picture of sheep. I think that picture of sheep needs to be printed and hung on my wall. That's a beautiful picture. I love the look on their face as they do that. These sheep are alert, do you see that? They say sheep are ignorant, these sheep are on it. They are alert and they are on it because of who's sheep they are. This figure of speech is about the sheep and the shepherds of those sheep.

That's what He's talking about and there are two things we're going to look at this morning. There's two things for us to get from the this. First of all, what they did not understand here in this figure of speech that Jesus gave, what they should have understood, what they needed to understand, but they didn't. Then Jesus gives an explanation of when they do understand. And that's where his promise comes in. We're in a series called Over The Top Promises Of God. And this, quite literally, is a very over the top promise. There's actually two here, two promises of Jesus and they are quite literally, and I'm taking the Bible here literally, and it presents a figurative image for us. But from this, literally, we see that these promises are over the top. So I'm going to ask you there to look with me here at John chapter 10. Now, as we do this, I want to emphasize that the promise here comes across loud and clear. And the promises are just not for us to understand, they are also for us to experience. And not just to experience, but for us to anticipate in our experience. Jesus brings this to us so that we will join him in what he pictures here, this figure of speech, what he pictures. Now we, even in COVID times, can be thankful. Let's see, this week is some holiday.

What's our holiday?

Thanksgiving? Yeah. And Thanksgivings are, already impacted our family and how it's going to be different. Folks who were coming from out of state, aren't coming from out of state, folks who were here local were planning, but are not now. And this Thanksgiving time, this whole holiday season is going to be tainted by the pandemic.

It's going to color this. And I remember during the presidential interviews and the vice presidential interviews, talking about the impact of COVID and how it was going to affect Thanksgiving for many people, and you can can I tell you this, far and near people are down. They're sad. They're afraid. They're missing things. You know what? I'm missing some things. I'm missing some things that would be present because of COVID , like some folks here, missing things, missing folks, missing people. But I want you to know that there is thanks. Thanks that can be given on this basis.

Whatever our holiday season is tainted with in COVID. And we need to take heart here, we really do. And we need to be advocates of this. I'm grateful that this comes up, that this passage on sheep and the shepherd comes up at Thanksgiving time. So let's do this. Let's take a look here, at first, in this figurative of speech, what they did not understand when he gave it to them, this image that he made, this likeness that he developed with his words, and laid it beside what was genuinely happening so they would get

the picture. That's what a figure of speech is, in this context. It's used several times in the Bible. It's used later in John when Jesus speaks to them again, intentionally, figuratively, and then speaks to them in plain language. It's used in 2 Peter chapter 2 verse 22, where this, this figure is laid out the Bible speaks that, as he lays this out, as he gives it to them, Jesus is presenting how to identify a sheep stealer and a looter. When he talks about a thief, he's talking about it in connection with the sheep. Because they're coming into the sheep pen, the sheep fold. It's a sheep stealer and a looter. A looter usually doesn't practice entirely alone, something's going on. And there's a group of them. And he's going to talk to us, how to identify a sheep stealer and a looter. This is a sheep fold. This is still used in the Middle East, it's actually used in other places, too. These are still used in the Middle East and how this thing works, is let's see if this will work. Nope, how this thing works. I don't know how this works. Let me tell you how this works, how this thing works is there would be a shepherd with his flocks out in the fields and it would be getting towards evening. So he would go to where one of these was located. And he would bring his flock into this, this enclosure. And this enclosure was exactly the way it looked. It was about waist high. It had a door opening, it had an enclosure by generally rock sometimes it involved a cave, and a shepherd in the locality of this would bring them in, and then another shepherd over there would bring their flocks in. And so there would be 1, 2, 3, 4 flocks of sheep gathered in here, in the sheep pen, and they did it for security. They did it for safety, for protection. They did it so that the shepherd could get a break because one of the under shepherds would then stay at the door, as the door guard of this, while the sheep were in there. And that's the picture that Jesus makes that's liked what he's seeing. And he brings it over to lay it beside what he saying. And he says this. "Truly, truly I say to you, he who does not enter the sheep fold by the door" Is that hard to picture here?

Yeah, come on,

"but climbs up another way. That man is a stealer, a sheep stealer and he's a looter". Now, let me put this up here. This is a model of a sheep pen in which it has, if you notice at the door there, a shepherd, one of the under shepherds, one of the ones who is watching this particular flock of sheep, so that they will be secure and protected and provided for from the predators and from the night, from wandering off. That's the picture that comes up in what Jesus presented. Now how to identify a sheep stealer and a looter is it is recognizable by entry through the door. That's what he's saying. You know, we get that. If you're going by a, if you're going by a house, it's your neighbor's house. And you go by and you look on the side of the house and you notice that there's somebody climbing into that house, having just broken the window, then you get the picture, something's up here. That person ought not to be doing that, right? I mean, that is not hard to see. So he uses that in connection with the sheep pen. Here are some actual live pictures from looters. Okay, this guy is definitely COVID conscious, he's got his mask on, that's a good thing. And this is during the whole looting, look at how they're getting in. Does this make you think, Oh, that must be the shop owner. Obviously not, the way that they're get in is they're breaking through. And that's what Jesus is using as he presents this image. This is out of sink, this isn't right, this is off. This past week, I was climbing out of my window onto my porch, there were cars going by, but I was fixing the roof. And nobody stopped and said, you're breaking in. No, you're not, because it's evedent when somebody is going in and ought not to be. Especially since I had tools on my roof and I was, yea, okay, so that's evedent, that's what we see here. Number two, how to identify, by the way, this is as

complex as that gets okay. Number two, how to identify the sheep's shepherd. That's what he takes up next. Look with me at verse 2. But in contrast to that Jesus said, "he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." The one who comes through that opening, that's not difficult either. "To him the gate keeper", the one you saw in the model, that under shepherd sees, this is the shepherd who had me stand here with his flock, and he comes and the under shepherd recognizes him and he opens the gate. "To him, the gate keeper opens the access to the sheep. The sheep then hear his voice, the voice of the shepherd, he calls his own sheep by name and he leads them out". You know this is very interesting how this would happen because they would have one of those sheep pens, like I pointed out here, sheep fold as it's called, and there would be several flocks in there and there would be this amalgamation, this mass number of sheep bodies moving around inside of there and doing what they do you know, baaa, that kind of thing and pushing each other and all that kind of stuff that sheep do. And they're in there okay and suddenly, the shepherd, he sounds his voice, heyboys, heyboys, heyboys. The reason I'm doing that is because when I was growing up on a farm, that's how we would call our cows. I would go out in the pasture and I would say in a loud voice, comeboys, comeboys, comeboys.

And you try to sound as much like a cow as a cow does, you know how a cow does it, moo, moo.

By the way, I'm

very studied on this. I saw them a lot when I was growing up. And he would go out there in the pastures and there would be these cows that were all over the field. But as soon as they would hear that, they would turn up their heads and suddenly these big, ready to be milked, cows would start to turn and they would lumber as they moved towards you, as you called them. That happened every single day that they were out in the pasture. And that's what happens here, when you're involved in what's called the animal husbandry, where you're involved in taking care of these sheep. This Shepherd goes out and he calls heyboys, heyboys, heyboys. I don't know how to make it sound like a baaa.

But all of a sudden, in this amalgamation, this amalgamation of sheep, there would be a line of sheep, two by two, one by one, three sometimes, and they would start to form a line and follow that shepherd, as he called them, not only with his general call, but by name, he called those sheep and he'd turn and start to walk. Now that's a unique thing about the Middle East. Most places shepherds drive their flocks, they're behind them, and they push them. But here in the Middle East, the shepherds call their sheep and they follow. Very, very interesting how that happens here. That's what Jesus presents. When, verse 4, "he has brought out all his own, all of them, all that belong to his flock, he goes before them, and the sheep follow. For they know His voice, a stranger, they will not follow. But they will actually run away from the stranger for they do not know the voice of a stranger". So that's the picture that he presents, how to identify a sheep's shepherd is that he is recognizable by shepherding kind of things. By, number one, he is recognizable by the way he enters, the person who guards the door recognizes him and he comes in through the door, he just comes in through the door. Number two, he's recognizable by the words he says, the distinction of his voice rings true to those sheep. And as they hear him call their

name, they respond and his actions. This is a great picture. This is a picture that Jesus is presenting for them to get and the picture is this, the shepherd individually calling them by name, when he is their shepherd, knows their name, they know His voice and all of them, all of them, have him walk before them through what they're going to face that day, that Thanksgiving season, that holiday season. He goes before them, and they follow.

He goes before them, whatever they're going through and they follow because they know His voice. I want you to know, that's exactly true with us during covid season. That's exactly what's true.

Exactly.

A stranger they will not follow. Last Sunday, there was a stranger on our property. All of a sudden, my youngest daughter was upstairs exercising in one of the rooms that looks over the backyard. And suddenly, we got this text "there's some guy wandering around in the backyard", which she saw out the window, as she was on the elliptical there in that upper room. Now, I had been alert that the neighbor had come over, walked through our front yard. And you see our neighbor has this dog who likes to wander over to our yard. And the way he was coming through the yard and looking around, I thought "I'll bet he lost his dog again. " And he walks through the backyard and I walked into the kitchen and looked out to see how it was going for him and where he was at and what it was doing. And so now, the reason I'm telling you that is because sometimes when there is proximity, there's, as a matter of fact, I sent a note back to my youngest daughter and she sent a note back, "he's probably looking for his dog", because you just kind of know what happens.

That's the way with the shepherd and the sheep, only it's more intently personal because he knows them by name when he leads them through holiday season in COVID time. And they know him and they trust him and they follow him.

This is a great figure of speech, I can't tell you how many times I've used this figure of speech when talking to people about ready to face surgery or going through a very dark, unknown in their life. And I've talked about a shepherd who knows them by name, who calls them by name, and intentionally leads them through this. They didn't get it. However, they didn't get it. So because they don't get it, Jesus does this, he goes at this again, look with me at verse 7. So, Jesus again, said to them, and now he's going to lay it out plainly, he's going to lay it out in such a fashion that they will get it, they will understand. And he starts in the same place with this emphatic statement. This is very important, "truly, truly I say to you, "and he begins to lay out what they need to understand. twice, he says this, "I am the door", the door, the door that we've been talking about, get this, here's what the image is, "I am the door", and I put that in emphatic. This "I am", because that is what's emphatic here. "Truly, truly", his emphatic statement, "I say to you, I am the door of the sheep". Now some people say

ha,

it looks like he kind of changed the image here a little bit. No, he's giving explanation. This is not a change in figure or image. You know, before there was the door to the sheep fold and the door keeper opening. And now he says I am the door, that is not a change. That is not a change. He's giving an explanation. And he's telling them clearly what this figure is. As a matter of fact, what he presents here is very much in line with the whole Bible. Jesus said this, in John chapter 5, "He said to them, you search the Scriptures", that's the same Jews he's talking to here. He said, "you searched the scriptures, because you think in them, you have eternal life". And then he goes on and says, it is these, the scriptures, all of it that they had in the Old Testament, the same old testament they have, we have, the very same one, very same one, they called it different things. They called it the law, the prophets and the writings, they different things. But it was the same content. He said, "you searched that because you think in that you have eternal life. It is these that tell you about me. But you are unwilling to come to me that you may have life", John 5:39 and 40. That's what he says. And what he's saying here is that

he,

presented throughout the whole Bible, he presented throughout the whole Bible is the door. This is how you enter into being in God's sheep fold. It's through the door and the one who is genuinely the shepherd of those sheep enters through this door, this door. "I am the door", he says. Now, he just didn't tell us that one time when he talked to the Jews. He told us also in the book of Luke, matter of fact, you've got your Bible here. Turn with me to the book of Luke. In Luke chapter 24. Jesus after the resurrection is talking to his own followers. Luke chapter 24. They're on the road to Emmaus. They are traveling because Jesus has died and is out of the picture and they thought he was the Messiah. And they're very disappointed on what's happening in their life during this season. It's not a season of Thanksgiving, it's a season of sadness for them, but Jesus is taking them elsewhere. And in Luke chapter 24, we pick up at verse 25, where Jesus, in His resurrected state, meets them on the road. And he says to them, verse 25, "oh, foolish ones and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, all of it, was it not necessary that Christ should suffer these things and enter into glory? And beginning with Moses, and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself". What he's telling us is, all of the Scriptures are pointing to Jesus being the door, this had to happen this way. The Scriptures tell us and He is the door, because it told us all about me as the Messiah. And looking at how they respond, verse 32, "they said to each other, did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road and he opened the scriptures

to us?" Have you ever had that? Have you ever had that, where the scriptures just like, this is just, this is this, is so good, this, this is so good. And it just has this excitement in your heart.

And I want you to know,

that's available,

in the door,

to the sheep, and it just makes you, it just makes you rejoice. And I want you to know, that is characteristic of a sheep. I really have a concern when I hear and I've heard this on occasion, "I just find the Bible so boring. It's just so boring". You know, I've had people who professed faith in Christ, and they tell me that, it's just so boring. I want you to know that's an immediate alert to me. because something is wrong here. Something's wrong. When this just doesn't elate a heart to joy, a burning heart joy of what we're talking about here. Something is wrong. Yeah, it's the Spirit. The explanation is given here, it's not of change, that he is the door, verse 7, of the sheep. That's what he says. He is the door for the shepherd to the sheep. That's what verse 8 says, He refers to the shepherd now, all who came before me, all who came ahead of me, and they want to stay ahead of me in their position, all who came there are sheep stealers. And they're robbers. They're looters. But the sheep did not listen to them. He's the door of the sheep. He's the door of the sheep for the shepherd to go through to get to the sheep. All who came ahead of Jesus putting him out of his place. They're the thieves. They're the robbers. He's the door, verse 9, for the sheep to the shepherd. And here's where his promise comes in. Look at this, verse 9, He says in verse 9, "I am the door", a second time. "If anyone enters by me, he will be saved". If you come to God through Christ as the way, the truth, the life, no one comes any other way. If you come to him, you are rescued. And he says, you go into the sheep fold, his presence, and you go out and you find nourishment and pasture for your soul. This is the picture of Jesus. This is the explanation of being the Good Shepherd. This is what he presents to us. It's the door of the sheep. It's the door for the shepherd to go to the sheep. It's the door for the sheep to go to the shepherd and into the sheep fold. Have you noticed how different it is, brothers and sisters, to be out in the world amongst unbelievers and then to get with believers? Even during COVID time, you need to get with believers. "Well, I can't be distance, I can't say that", I get that, I get that. We get together in prayer, I want you to know it's one of the most refreshing moments of my week is when the guys come together and we're all at a distance and we all got these masks on, we can only see their eye. But man, the fellowship of prayer. I want you to tell you, Doug Gulley's prayer last week just about sent me to

heaven

listening to it, it was so sincere, so from the heart, so pleading, so on it with what he was asking.

It was like,

this is a breath from heaven, this is a breath from heaven. Now some of the guys come, they're not very experienced in prayer, and it's a blessing to hear them taking steps of prayer. We get some guys over the phone. And you know, though you can't come,

you can get on phone.

You need being in the sheep fold during COVID times..

You need it.

You need to Zoom, you need to Facetime, you need to do something to rub, interaction. I've got a son right now in Boston, who needs to fellowship with the believers in what he's facing, what he's going through, how it's infecting him, infecting him. Did you hear what I said, infecting him? affecting would be true too.

We need this.

We need this. And that's the explanation Jesus gives. And it gives an amplification. The amplification is, this is what the stealers do. They come to steal, kill and destroy. Now, when Jesus is saying this, he is saying this right in the presence of those shepherds of Israel, who wanted to push him out. Don't confess that he's the Christ. If you do, you're out of the synagogue, you're out of God's flock. And Jesus said, those are stealers, those are looters, those are murderers, those are destroyers. And that's you,

that's you, that's you,

when you're trying to push Jesus out of the picture, that's you. And you know just think what they did, they cast out the blind man, they caught the woman in adultery, they threw her in the midst and accused her, boy that was loving wasn't it, the guy from Bethany on the pallet, they got after him for walking on the Sabbath day. Final points, this, how "I am the good shepherd".

When

they understand, you see how "I'm the Good Shepherd". He says this twice. Number one, the explanation, the promise. I came, they came to kill, steal and destroy, I came that you may have life. It's eternal, and just not life, it's a super quality life, He says, it's an abundant life. It's a full life. It's a meaningful life. It's a life that is so so so far above the normal or the common life. It's a life that goes on forever. It's a life that has, it has an abundance of opportunity. It is a super natural life. There's a film called The Ordinary Guy. It's a film that I've watched several times, a Christian film, about a guy who is just going through life, had been saved, but he kind of lost the connection with the Lord, with his people. He was just going through the routine of doing this. And then somebody came along and challenged him, The Ordinary Guy. This verb here, may have life, says it's a possibility that not everybody's going to be there. Because not everybody is going to be going into the sheep fold. They're not going to be going out of the sheep fold characterized by being in the sheep fold. And they're not going to be finding pasture, refreshment nourishment for their soul, that they might have life. Jesus promise is that they might have life and it's a super uncommon quality of life. It's not a ho hum routine, I'm still bored. No, it's not that. It's not that. It's using this, into the sheep fold, out of the sheep fold, with Jesus in the sheep fold, out of the sheep fold, into the world. And it's a super natural quality of life. It's super exceeds what a normal life of a ho hum is. That's his promise that you may have life. And you may have life that's abundant here and now. It's abundant forever. That's his promise. And he bases it on this, which is what he says next, because, verse 11, "I give my life for the sheep, the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep". And then he amplifies this by talking to us about those hirelings. Those hirelings, he says, "those hired hands", those guys, the hired hands, not the shepherd, "he does not own the sheep, he sees the wolf coming, the wolf comes in steals them, he runs away, because he doesn't care about the sheep". And I want you to know, that there are under shepherds today that are the same. And because somebody gets paid for being a shepherd doesn't make them a hired hand. It does make them a hired hand, if they're only doing it for themselves, their position and their money. The Good Shepherd, on the other hand, gives his life for the sheep, he sacrifices it. And the Father, I'm the Good Shepherd, he says, they know me, the father knows me, I know them. Conclusion here, you can anticipate, COVID time, you can anticipate, holiday season, you can anticipate. The Lord's gonna lead us through this. The Lord has purpose in this, the Lord is going somewhere with this. I can get with him, I can hear his voice and I can follow him, trusting him. Going into the sheep fold as I can and out into the world characterized by a sheep and find pasture, I want you to know, that'll help Thanksgiving time.

That'll help holidays in the COVID, that will help. You know there's some opportunities, that group that I told you about where we get together and pray, that group. I've been bringing to them a burden on my heart, they've been bringing their own burdens. I brought this burden that during COVID time, somehow, somehow, we need to penetrate our community for Christ somehow. And we've been trying to pray for them somehow, Lord, use prayer. I want you to know, this past week or so I got a call from the hospital. And they were talking to me about organizing a prayer vigil December 10. Been working on that this week, that we can

pray.

And they asked me, they asked me to kind of be with them in developing pastoral support to the staff at the hospital and to patients who may want, you know, I think that's an answer to prayer. What do you think? What do you think? It's like, Lord, this is, this is finding pasture. This is like so refreshing. And I want you to know, this isn't just because I get this super abundant life. You get it too. I just need to make sure I'm in with a shepherd. And then with the sheep fold, I'm connecting as I can. And I'm out there in the world characterized by being a sheep under the shepherd. Amen? That's what we have. And what we can anticipate is what Jesus must do. He must get those other sheep that aren't of the Jewish fold, that's what he says, "I've got other sheep who are not of this fold", verse 16, "I must bring them too and they will listen to my voice and they will be my flock and they will be one flock with one shepherd". Yeah, I tell you, my heart burns within me. Okay. Amen, Lord, without you.

without you Lord,

we've got nothing. Nothing.

Oh Lord, use this time I pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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