

## I AM: Who is Jesus & Why Does it Matter?

### The Good Shepherd

John 10:11-16

**Intro:** We are in a series that will lead us up to Easter Weekend talking about the identity of Jesus and why it matters. To those of you who are not yet followers of Jesus, I hope this series gives you a crystal-clear picture of the Jesus you are considering, and to those of us who are followers of Jesus, I hope this series clarifies any misconceptions concerning our savior.

*“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’”* **Matthew 16:13-14**

**Making it Make Sense:** Even those who were not followers of Jesus could not deny his impact or influence. The only way they could make sense of Jesus was to claim he was a resurrected form of another impactful person like John the Baptist or Jeremiah. **Today:** No one can deny the impact or the influence of the Jesus of the Bible (BC/AD, 2+ Billion Followers, Cross is the most recognizable symbol in the world, etc.). Yet the way the world attempts to make sense of him falls short just like it did 2,000 years ago. (i.e. moral teacher, good leader, mysterious legend, etc).

*“He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.’”* **Matthew 16:15-17**

**Followers Are Crystal Clear:** Like Simon Peter, those of us who follow Jesus need to have a crystal-clear picture of who Jesus is and why it matters. Last week we looked at our relationship to Jesus with the understanding that we are sheep (dumb, directionless and defenseless), but with one redeeming quality...We have a VERY GOOD SHEPHERD!

*“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. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 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.”* **John 10:11-16**

**Main Idea:** Jesus is the Good Shepherd

**Prop:** Jesus Answers 2 Important Questions About Himself in John 10:11-16

I. **Who is Jesus?** – *“I am the good shepherd...I am the good shepherd.”*  
**John 10:11a, 14a**

**Exp:** In contrasting his own identity with thieves, robbers and wolves, Jesus give us two important words on his identity:

- **Good:** Intrinsically good, beautiful and fair. It is a quality that is unique to God. No other being in the universe is originally good!

*“Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone?”* **Mark 10:18b**

- **Shepherd:** One of the most common references to God in the OT and to Jesus in the NT. It comes from the same word translated *Pastor*.

*“The word shepherd should paint a picture to us of the unceasing vigilance and patience of the love of God; and it should remind us of our duty towards our fellow men, especially if we hold any kind of office in the Church of Christ.”*  
**William Barclay**

**Illus:** *Candid Camera* went to an expensive & exclusive prep-school posing as career consultants for the students enrolled. To “discover” a career path each student would be most suited for, they ran a series of interviews & tests that looked authentic enough. When the “results” were shared, a promising & intelligent young man was told that his personality & aptitude was most suited to being a shepherd. His face (caught on camera) made his feelings clear: He was expecting *scientist, professor, CEO or maybe even President*. Who in their right mind would ever want to be a dirty, poor shepherd?

**Apply:** Who is Jesus? Soon and Coming King? Son of God? Rock of Ages? Lion of the Tribe of Judah? Alpha/Omega? Yes, all of these and more. But, do not forget that he also identifies himself with a less attractive title...

**Main Idea:** Jesus is the Good Shepherd

**Prop:** Jesus Answers 2 Important Questions About Himself: 1) Who is Jesus?

II. **Why Does it Matter?** *“...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. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep...I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 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.”* **John 10:11b-16**

**Exp:** The shepherds of Jesus’ day did not raise sheep for their meat, but for wool. Sheep for butchering would be with the shepherd only 8-10 months. Sheep for sheering would be with the shepherd for a decade or more. Jesus meets multiple needs of his sheep that can’t be met elsewhere.

- **Sacrifices for the Sheep:** 5 times in 8 verses Jesus references the fact that he is going to “lay his life down for the sheep” in contrast to the hired hand who runs away if his role with the sheep puts him in danger. **This doesn’t mean** that Jesus is only *willing* to lay his life down, or that he *unnecessarily* lays his life down thereby abandoning his flock. **This means** that Jesus sacrifices his life for the sheep!
- **Intimate with the Sheep:** As the Good Shepherd, Jesus knows our *names (no anonymous sheep)*, our *natures (prone to wander)* and our *needs (fears, failures & pains)*. There is depth of relationship!

- **Gathers all of the Sheep:** Jesus references *sheep that are not of this fold* in reference to gathering Gentiles (non-Jews) along with Jewish believers to join his flock! He will gather! Salem = Fold, Historic, Worldwide Christians = Flock. Same Shepherd = The Good Shepherd

**App:** There are two really important reasons we need our Good Shepherd

- **Danger from the Outside:** Jesus mentions thieves and robbers who desire to devour the sheep.
- **Danger on the Inside:** Jesus mentions wolves in sheep's clothing and false shepherds who abandon the sheep in times of trouble.

**Main Idea:** Jesus is the Good Shepherd

**Prop:** Jesus Answers 2 Questions: 1) Who is Jesus? He is the Good Shepherd  
2) Why Does it Matter? He Sacrifices, Is Intimate with & Gathers the Sheep.

**Conclusion:** In the old covenant, the way to atone for your sins was to offer a sacrifice on the altar. This was the only way to avoid the wrath of God for your sins. And, in the old covenant, the most common animal that was sacrificed was a young, spotless lamb (or sheep). So, in a very literal sense, the sheep had to lay down its life for the life of the shepherd.

In the new covenant, Jesus Christ is the good shepherd, and he proves this by laying down his life for the sheep. It was described in Isaiah 53.

*“But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”* **Isaiah 53:5**

**In the Old Covenant, the Sheep sacrificed its life for the Shepherd. In the New Covenant, the Good Shepherd Sacrificed His Life for the Sheep!**

*“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”* **Psalm 23:1-6**

**Invitation:** Who is Jesus? He’s the Good Shepherd. Why does it Matter? Because he sacrificed himself for you, he knows you, and he is gathering you to His flock!

#### **Sources and Further Reading Opportunities**

- *Exploring the Gospel of John* – John Phillips (1989)
- *John: That you May Believe* – Kent Hughes (1999)
- *The Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* – Craig Keener (1993)
- *The Gospel of John (Vol 2)* – William Barclay (1975)
- *Faithlife Study Bible* – J.D. Barry (2016)
- *John* – B. B. Barton (1993)
- *The Message of John: Here is Your King!* – B. Milne (1993)
- *John* – K. O. Gangel (2000)

- *The New American Commentary: John* – Gerald L. Borchert (1996)
- *Word Pictures in the New Testament* – A.T. Robertson (1933)
- *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John* – A.H. McNeile (1929)
- *The Gospel According to John* – D.A. Carson (1991)
- *The Light of the World: A Sermon* – Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1916)