

I. Intro

A. Text: **Jn. 10:14-16**

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. (Jn. 10:14-16)

B. Re-Cap:

1. The True Church is Apostolic
 - a. **Jude 3:** "...Contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints."
 - b. The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. (**Eph. 2:20**)
 - c. Revelation of Jesus and His gospel as revealed in the closed canon.
2. The True Church is Holy
 - a. Made up of saints who are being sanctified.
 - b. Actively involved in Discipleship (taking an active role in each other's sanctification).
 - c. Willing and able to discipline when necessary.

C. The True Church is Catholic

1. Catholic: kata (about/throughout) + olos (whole).
2. Catholic Church: Concerning the entire church.
 - a. That which is seen in the local church is also consistent throughout the whole/entire church.

- b. That which is true of the whole church is lived out in the local church.
- 3. What the church has meant by Catholicity for centuries is not what we know as the “Catholic” church today.
 - a. Certainly, the early church that began to use this term was not hierarchical in nature.
 - b. Traditionally, every city church was autonomous (yet cooperative with other local churches in other cities).
 - c. By the 2nd century, a bishop was seen as the overseer of a church in a particular city.
 - i. No bishop was given greater authority than the bishop of the next city.
 - d. Over time, bishops of the largest cities in the empire were given greater honor (because of their city’s importance in the empire), but no greater authority was granted to them.
 - e. Map
- 4. It was in this context that the early church of the 4th Century (325 A.D., 381 A.D.) began to gather together to declare that the body of Christ is Catholic.

We believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds: God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made:

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, The Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen. (Nicene Creed – 381 A.D.)

- a. What the early church meant by “Catholic” is that the Body of Christ is much bigger than what can be seen in a local context.
- b. The church included all those who were born again into this new family by grace through faith in Christ.
- c. Produced a humility in local expressions of the church that God’s plan for His Bride is far larger than what they saw with their own two eyes.

D. Theme Verse

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18)

- 1. Jesus is building His entire (Catholic) church.

II. Body

- A. The Goodness of Jesus Builds/Protects the Entire Church
 - 1. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. (v. 11)

¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (Jn. 10:11)

- a. Unlike a hireling or an imposter. (v. 12-13)
 - 2. The Good Shepherd invites the sheep into a relationship with Him that mirrors His intimacy with the Father.

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. (Jn. 10:14-15)

- a. As the Father knows me and I know the Father... I know my sheep and my sheep know me. (v. 14-15)

- b. As the Father has loved me, so have I have loved you (**Jn. 15:9**)
- c. As the Father loves the Son, so has He loved them (**Jn. 17:23**)

3. As good as the Good Shepherd is to His flock of sheep, He raised the bar on His goodness.

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. (Jn. 10:14-16)

- a. I gave my life for you.
- b. But there are other sheep that I must have.
- c. Several invisible folds that represent the larger flock.

B. The Good Shepherd has never devalued the Local church in scripture.

- 1. Christ promised to build the entire invisible church, but He never omitted the local (visible) church from the scriptural discussion.
 - a. **2 Cor. 1:1:** *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:*
 - b. **Rom. 16:16:** *¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.*
 - c. **Rev. 1:11-12:** Christ was seen walking in the midst of the 7 churches (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea)
 - d. **Acts 20:28:** *²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*
- 2. Some things believers are commanded to do that can only take place in the context of the local church.
 - a. Submit to one another in the fear of God. (**Eph. 5:21**)

- b. Let us consider one another in order to stir up love...
(Heb. 10:24)
 - c. **Heb. 13:7:** *Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.*
- 3. The invisible church can only be made visible by the visible (local church).

C. The Good Shepherd never devalued the Global Church (although largely invisible) in scripture.

- 1. There are some things proclaimed about the church that only the global church can do.
 - a. The Great Commission can never be carried out without the universal church.
 - i. **Matt. 24:14:** *¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*
- 2. The Provocation of Israel (**Rom. 11:1-26**)
 - a. Has God cast away Israel? Certainly not! (**v. 1**)

III. Conclusion: If the local church is Catholic in its view...

- A. Missions
 - 1. International Engagement with those who don't know Christ.
 - 2. Prayer for God's purposes in Israel.
 - 3. Prayer for the move of God in other local expressions of the Global Church.
- B. Cooperation
 - 1. Local Engagement with other churches
- C. Diversity
 - 1. Local Engagement with those in the city who may not know Christ.