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Series: The Gospel of John
Message: The Lord is Our Shepherd

Transcribed Message
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John 10:1-10

It was in my second year of seminary in the second semester that something happened in class that had not happened for the three previous semesters. I had been in seminary for three semesters, probably 15 to 17 classes, and this particular thing had never happened in any of those settings. I was sitting in Dr. Fanning's class. He was professor of New Testament Greek studies, and we were going through the Greek text of Ephesians, and Dr. Fanning called me by name. I had never had a professor in three previous semesters in all those classes actually call out my name. Now, you don't necessarily want to be called out by name and to be known in language classes, but Dr. Fanning called me by name. When I graduated, and we had a brief opportunity to talk again with each other, I told him that. I said, Dr. Fanning, you obviously won't remember this, but my third semester into seminary, you called out my name in class that day, and it, of course, made an impression on me. When someone speaks our name, it's affirming, isn't it? There's something about that that speaks to us about how they see us, how they view us, the fact that they know us.

And so, we come to this amazing and wonderful chapter in the 10th chapter of the Gospel of John this morning, and it is an amazing chapter. I haven't said that before in the Gospel of John, have I? Like every chapter, right? It's amazing. So, here's what let's do. Our big idea this morning, biblical Christianity is nothing less than knowing God and being known by Him. I'm reminded that Paul says in Galatians chapter 4 and verse 19, that it's a wonderful thing that you know God. And then he goes, oh, what I probably should say here is that you are known by God, right? We know God, and that's amazing, and that's wonderful. What's even more amazing and more wonderful is that He knows us. And I just say to you, the essence of biblical Christianity, authentic Christianity, is that we know God, and that He knows us.

Let's look at this amazing truth together. I want to set the stage for this 10th chapter, because there is so much here that we need to know by way of the context to fully appreciate all that's going to go on. The very first thing that I want you to see is the story that we've been looking at for the past few weeks in the 9th chapter just carries right on closely into this 10th chapter. The link is there between these two, and here's how I want you to see that.

I want you to see the linkage between 9 and 10, first of all, because there were no chapter and verse divisions when the gospel was originally written. John didn't come to the end of chapter 9 and go, okay, that's going to be the last verse. Verse 41 of chapter 9, and then to chapter 10, verse 1, truly, truly. There were no chapter divisions. There were no verse divisions. Those were not added to the Bible until the 13th and the 16th century. You realize that in 1560, the Geneva Bible was printed in English, and it was the first English Bible printed that incorporated the chapters and verses that we utilize today. In 1560, the Geneva Bible utilized those, so there is no chapter division. As you do Bible study, and chapter and verse divisions are incredibly helpful, aren't they? We would have a hard time if we didn't have them in a setting like this and in Bible study together. So, we're glad we have them, but as you read your Bible, don't let the thought of the end of the chapter leave you as you go to the next one, unless there's some specific reason for that to happen.

Secondly, the healed man worships in that ninth chapter. The Pharisees are still warring against Jesus, and that's the contrast that John has established in that ninth chapter, and he's going to carry that storyline right on into 10 as well. We'll see indications of that as we go forward.

And then thirdly, the discourse simply continues into the 10th chapter. This discourse continues. If I were to say to you, look at your Bible and tell me what words, what transitional words do you see between chapter 9 and chapter 10? And the answer is, you don't see any, do you? There are no time markers. There's no sense of transition. John is just flowing with his thought from that ninth chapter to the end of it on into chapter 10. Truly, truly. That beginning is never used by John or any other writer of Scripture to speak of

a new point of beginning. It's always within the flow of a discourse and within the flow of teaching.

So, I say to you that when we come to the 10th chapter, it's the same day, most likely. We can't be totally dogmatic, but very likely it's the same day as the end of chapter 9. There's no reason to think that it isn't. It's the same people that are engaged with Jesus that are a part of this conversation, part of this discourse, and they're talking about a lot of the same things. And so there's all of that to be seen here regarding the linkage between 9 and 10.

Then notice point B, secondly. Chapter 10 is going to be the final discourse of our Lord's teaching. This is the final public discourse. We are that close to the cross. When we come into this 10th chapter, we're that close to the cross. This is the final public teaching ministry of our Lord, and how appropriate it is regarding the subject matter that we get to look at for the weeks to come.

Point C, thirdly. The interpreter's task is to understand how the text was understood when it was first given. That's our job. As students of the Bible, our job is to read the Scripture, and it is to say and to think and to pursue, what did this mean when it was first written and first given to the people who first received it? If you're in a Bible study and a verse is read, and the Bible study leader says, what do you think that verse means to you? Get out of that Bible study. No, don't do that. That's not the first question we're supposed to ask, is it? We don't read a verse of the Bible in a setting like this or in a Bible study setting and say, okay everybody, what do you think that verse means to you? It doesn't mean that there isn't meaning for you, but if we're going to grasp the original intent and fully understand what the text is saying, we have to start with, what was the authorial intent to those to whom it was originally written?

Now, this is especially important in this case, because when these original readers, listeners heard Jesus say, I am the good shepherd, they knew exactly what the analogy meant regarding their culture. Everybody that heard Jesus talk about being a shepherd and talking about sheep in that first century culture either knew a shepherd, was a shepherd, had been a shepherd, was a neighbor to a shepherd, right? They knew that culture, they

knew that language, they knew that analogy. If I said this morning, every one of you that has been around sheep for more than ten minutes at the petting zoo, every one of you that has been around sheep for any length of time with any in-depth experience stand, I don't know if we'd get ten people, would we? Maybe we would. Maybe I don't know my flock that well. I don't think that many of us have had extensive opportunity to be around sheep, but these people did. When he speaks to them, he is speaking to them in terms of a language and a situation that they understand. And then you have to add this caveat. Even if we were a room full of shepherds living in America, the way American shepherds take care of their sheep was totally different than the first century.

If you've been around Covenant very long, you know I'm not a big movie guy, but I have to say one of my favorite movies (which is a very short list) is the movie called *Babe*. You know that movie? It's just a fun movie. It's about a pig, and he thinks he's a sheepdog. Now I bet a lot of you have never even heard of that movie. It's just a fun kid movie. But this pig thinks he's a sheepdog, and he talks to the sheep and he rounds them up. There were no dogs in the first century that were rounding up sheep. That's something that happens in Western culture and in our current time. You can go to Israel today. You can go to parts of the Middle East today, and you can see shepherds. When we were in Israel years ago, we'd be driving along and out there in the field, all by themselves, would be a Bedouin tent and sheep. And it's like they live still in the language of the first century, even today. So, this is important that they grasped what Jesus was talking about.

Point D, this is the last thing by way of introduction and context. The Old Testament is filled with imagery of a shepherd. This is so important. This is one of the values, for instance, of reading your Old Testament. One of the values of reading your Old Testament is you build a vocabulary and a background and an understanding of things that are going to be explained in the New Testament. This whole imagery of being a shepherd, all the way through, begins in Genesis, doesn't it? Adam and Eve's second son, Abel. Abel was a shepherd. Abraham had thousands, evidently, of sheep. He in that sense was a shepherd. Jacob was a shepherd. Rachel was a shepherdess. You get into other parts of the Old Testament, and Joseph was caring for his father's sheep. Moses is a Midian, taking care of

sheep. David was a shepherd. And who is the best-known shepherd of all in the Old Testament? Well, it's the Lord Himself. All through the Old Testament, God pictures Himself as being a shepherd to His people. We just sang and read Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd. So, we have all this imagery. That is important as we come from 9 and into chapter 10. All that helps us, I think, understand.

Let's look at the shepherd and his sheep. We'll be in this 10th chapter for a few weeks, but these are all critical things, I think, that will help us understand more fully what's going on. I want to begin by just identifying some of the imagery in these verses. There are five images that I just want to pull out. We're not going to go through verse by verse right now. We will in a moment. But I want to just pull from these opening verses five images and seek to understand what they have in view.

The first one that I look at in verse 1 is this matter of a sheepfold. There is in this story that Jesus is going to tell something called a sheepfold. Now again, here we have a description of something that we need to note by way of what is in view. And a sheepfold was a community gathering point. It was an enclosed structure of some significance and some size that evidently within communities, shepherds would bring their sheep at night, and they would use this shared facility called the sheepfold. And they would bring their sheep in at night, and they would have one that would guard and be there all through the night, and they would leave their sheep there for protection and for care. And so that's what Jesus is going to talk about.

What is in view with the sheepfold? Well, I think it has to be Judaism. It has to be Israel. Israel is the sheepfold. Judaism is the sheepfold. In Matthew, the 15th chapter and verse 24, Jesus said he has come to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. John opens his gospel, remember, in the first chapter, and he says, he came to his own. Who are his own? It's Judaism. It's Israel. He came to his own people, and they did not receive him. So, in the story, the sheepfold is evidently to be understood as Judaism and Israel.

The second imagery is that of the door and the gatekeeper. This is a little more difficult. There's a lot of different ideas about the door and the gatekeeper. I think the one for me that fits the best is seeing this door as being the messianic office. What does that

mean? The door is the messianic office. What does the door represent? The door represents a way to the sheep, right? The sheepfold is Judaism. It's Israel. The door represents access to those sheep. That's who Jesus presents himself to be, doesn't he? He says, I am the Messiah. The Old Testament said when the Messiah comes, he is going to make the lame walk. He's going to enable those who cannot hear to hear, those who cannot speak to be able to speak. And what else? He's going to open the eyes of the blind. That's a part of this storyline, isn't it? Jesus presents himself as the fulfillment of the messianic office, as the one who has the right to come to the sheepfold and to the sheep. Perhaps the gatekeeper in that setting could very well be understood to be John the Baptist. It could be the prophets before him, but very possibly it's representative of John the Baptist who was the one who introduced the Messiah.

Then the third one is thieves and robbers. Thieves and robbers. Jesus says there are thieves and robbers in this imagery. And the thieves and robbers, unfortunately for the religious leaders, are the religious leaders. If you think they got beat up a little bit in chapter 9, well, that's going to continue right on into chapter 10 because Jesus points them out as ones who don't come through the door. They don't come through the legitimate, proper way. They're climbing over the wall. They're trying to get to the sheep in some other way. We think of a thief as someone who often operates out of deception. We think of a robber who probably is using some form of violence to accomplish his end. Either way, both of those pictures represent harm to the sheep. The religious leaders are in for a little more trouble here as Jesus continues in his discourse and he says of them that they will be known as thieves and robbers.

Then the shepherd, of course, is Jesus. That is without question. The shepherd is Jesus.

And then the sheep are going to represent Jewish believers. Be encouraged because when we get to the 16th verse, Jesus is going to say, yeah, there is the sheep fold. There is Judaism. There are the sheep, the Jewish believers, but there are other sheep. That's us as Gentiles. So, we're going to get brought into this as well. But this initially pictures those Jewish believers who respond in faith to Christ.

Now, again, keep the story of chapter 9 going right into chapter 10. Who does this point to? It points to the blind man. The blind man is one of the sheep. He's in the sheep fold. He believes. As John says in verse 12, he came to his own. His own didn't receive him, but to as many as do receive him, to them he gave the right, the power to become the children of God, even to those who believe on his name. And that is exactly what the blind man did.

With that background, let's apply the analogy of this opening group of verses in the 10th chapter. What we're going to see is we're going to have, if you want to put it this way, one illustration, but we're going to have two pictures that are going to be developed out of this. So, let's notice the first one. The shepherd, the sheep, and I'm just going to say it's morning. The shepherd, the sheep, and it's morning. Verse 1. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheep fold by the door, but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.

So here we have this phrase that we've seen many times, right? Truly, truly. Amen. Amen. Pay attention. Pay attention. Jesus is emphasizing that. How instructive is it in this 10th chapter, in the story of the shepherd and the sheep and all that goes with that, how instructive is it that Jesus begins with a warning? He begins with a warning. And he warns them that there are false teachers. Those false teachers are motivated by personal gain. They don't really care about the sheep at all. They're really in it for themselves.

Now, I don't have to make the direct application because you know it and you hear it, unfortunately, too often, of shepherds over sheep today who seem to not care that much about the sheep, but they're really interested in personal gain. They're really interested in personal popularity. They're really interested in getting their name and their face and all of that out there. And they're just simply motivated by something other than the heart of a true shepherd for his people. It's all about them. It's not about the sheep.

And then, of course, the methods that they're using are not biblical. They're trying to get in another way. They're not coming in the way that God intended, the way God ordained, the way God desired and designed. So, some of the strongest language in the Bible, some of the strongest language in the Old Testament is God warning His people

about false shepherds, about God warning His people about false teachers. In Jeremiah 23 and verse 1, woe, Jeremiah says, to the shepherds. Woe to the shepherds. Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, declares the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel concerning the shepherds who care for my people, you have scattered my flock and have driven them away and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the Lord. That whole passage just goes on to speak in language like that. God warning His people and warning His shepherds regarding that.

But the same thing is true in the New Testament. You get into the New Testament, and you get into the epistles, and there's all kinds of warnings for you and for me to be mindful of shepherds who are leading astray, shepherds who are teaching things that are not true, shepherds who have gone away from the Word of God. Just read 1 John, read 2 Peter, read the book of Jude, right? And nearly every other epistle has something to say by way of warning us as the people of God with this regard. So, there are false shepherds.

Secondly, and let me just, before I go to that second point, let me just quote J.C. Ryle. He says, nothing seems so offensive to Christ as a false teacher of religion, a false prophet or a false shepherd. Nothing ought to be so much dreaded in the church and if needful, to be so plainly rebuked, opposed and exposed.

Now, let me just add this. When Jesus says in verse 1, 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. Are we to understand that that warning should be limited only to false teachers, to false shepherds? I think a specific application would be to say to us, anything that takes us away from Christ falls into this category of something that's false and dangerous, right? Something that's harmful. So, we don't want to get just stuck on the fact that there's a false teacher and a false preacher and that's all we need to be mindful of. That's not what's going on in my life, so I'm not worried about that. No. I think the broader application here is anything in our life that takes us away from the Word, that takes us away from the fellowship of God's people, that takes us away from community, that in any way blurs our vision and our passion and our commitment to the things that God has said

we need in our life should be put on this category of warning to us. That could be a lot of good things too, can't it? Because good things can move our passion and our vision and our following away from Christ too. I think that is a part of it.

Just this past week in our staff meeting, we're spending some time and having conversations about our vision statement: to know God, love others, and live the gospel. We're talking about what that means. What does that look like? How do we know as a church? How do we know as a staff that we know God better this year than we did last year? How do we know that we're loving each other better this year than we did last year? How do we know we're living the gospel out better? We're just having that conversation and we started with this first one, knowing God. And here's what they said as we just jotted down some things that cause us to know God better. Daily time of the Word, right? How can you possibly know the voice of your shepherd if you never are in his Word? If you're not praying, if you're not talking with him, if you're not in worship and fellowship with other believers, if you're not encouraging personal discipleship in each other's lives, community groups, small groups, scripture memory, reading good books, all of these things we just talked about and said, yeah, these are ways, these are avenues, these are means to help us to know God better. Well, that's what Jesus has spoken to here. There are in fact false shepherds.

Now notice secondly, the true shepherd calls them by name. I wish we could just take the rest of the morning and talk about this one but look at verses two and three. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. So, the door being this messianic office. He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and he leads them out. What an incredible couple of verses. We're back to the sheepfold and the shepherd comes in the morning and he calls out his own sheep. So that's the point that we have here.

Multiple flocks of sheep are in the sheepfold. The shepherd comes in the morning, and I don't know how he did it. I don't know what he did by way of calling his own sheep. But we know that from the testimony of shepherds even today that practice this kind of shepherding. They know your voice. He calls out and his sheep come out of the sheepfold.

That's the imagery here. That's the picture. John has spoken about this a lot already to this point. And he did so starting in that first chapter when we talked about the fact that he came to his own. His own didn't receive him. But as many as did receive him. Those who believed. Those who truly knew him by name and he knows their name. We see it in the calling of Philip. In the calling of Nathanael right in that opening chapter. Hey Philip, you come and follow me. Hey Nathanael, you're mine now. You come and follow me. Matthew 9:9. Hey Matthew, follow me. Matthew gets up and he follows. We're going to see it in the 11th chapter just the next one over and it's Lazarus literally being called out, isn't he? And he's in that sense of the word a follower of Christ. Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus, you come down out of that tree, and you follow me. So, you have all these examples.

I think we should understand it in two ways. I think there is a general call that goes out to everybody. We're going to see that in verse 9. Look at verse 9. I am the door. If anyone. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved. Anyone. The call goes out to everybody. Every time the gospel is proclaimed, remember, the gospel never does nothing. Anytime the gospel is proclaimed the message goes out and the invitation is given to respond and to believe. It goes to everybody. But then there's the mystery of the effectual call in which the Holy Spirit of God opens the heart to understand the gospel and to understand what it is that gospel means to me and to you personally.

He knows them, he says, by name. He knows them by name. Talk about affirmation! It's a pretty small thing to be sitting in a Greek class and have a professor call you by name. In the big scheme of things that is not very big of a deal. But to know that God, Jesus, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords – he knows you by name. He knows your name. How amazing is that? You talk about the end of the search for significance.

It takes me to Zechariah chapter 3 and verse 19 where it talks about the fact that he sings over us. He rejoices over us. He sings over us. He does that because he knows us by name. He knows you. He knows everything about you. He knows your thoughts before you think them. He knows your words before you say them. He knows you. He's your shepherd in that most intimate way. That's it, isn't it? It's the intimacy. It's the familiarity. It's the love that the shepherd has for his sheep that is in view here.

Then notice the true shepherd leads them out and they follow. Verses 4 and 5. 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 from him for they do not know the voice of strangers. Again, just this beautiful picture of the shepherd and the sheep. I see it as a master Discipleship relationship. I see it as the Lordship of Christ in my life.

Look at the things that he says. They know his voice. Remember back in the ninth chapter we were talking about the blind man. He'd never seen Jesus and then finally he encountered Jesus for the first time. We put that little peg up, and we said remember this when we get into the 10th chapter. He'd never seen Jesus, but he knew his voice, right? He knew his voice and that's what's happening here. We know his voice. We know his voice. He is our shepherd. We follow him. We follow. He calls us out of the sheepfold. We follow him. This blind man refused to follow the Pharisees, but he courageously steps out and he follows Jesus. We just stop and ask, who am I following? Who am I following? The world is very powerful. The world is very resourceful. The world is very influential. We just have to always be on guard. We have to always be vigilant. We have to always be discerning. Who are the voices that I'm listening to?

And then he leads, doesn't he? This isn't a cattle drive. He leads. Shepherds lead. They lead. They don't even have dogs nipping at the heels of the sheep as sheep herders often do today. No, he leads them out. Let me ask you this question. Does this mean that sheep always behave this way? Does this mean that sheep always behave this way all the time? Do any sheep ever veer off? Do any sheep ever fall under the influence of another shepherd, or a voice that they shouldn't perhaps? Well, of course even though Jesus says they know my name and they follow me, remember, we're in an analogy. We're in a metaphor. We can't press every detail to the utmost degree. It's saying typically this is the case. This is typically the way sheep respond to their shepherd. We wouldn't have all the warning passages in the New Testament if every sheep never heard a voice that they shouldn't follow. But it happens and I suppose with what Jonathan said about if we had testimonies this morning and we asked if anybody had a testimony where they were one of

the sheep who stepped away and from following the shepherd at a point in their life. I bet there'd be a lot of us that would say yeah, there was a point in life when I did step away from following the shepherd. But he faithfully calls us back, doesn't he?

Now look at the religious leaders. They don't understand anything at all that he's saying. Verse 6. This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying. Now I don't know about you, but I did not see that coming. Did you see that coming? You're supposed to say yes, absolutely, of course, we saw that coming. They didn't understand anything in the ninth chapter when he went so far as to say plainly and clearly I'm the Son of God. They didn't understand that. How are they going to understand a figure of speech, right? So, we're not surprised that they don't understand what Jesus says here now in verses 7 through 10.

It shifts. We have a shift. The shepherd, the sheep, and the pasture. Now we're at the pasture. In verses 7 through 10 the setting and the imagery shift just a little bit. So, we notice first of all, there's a change in the metaphor. So, Jesus again said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. So amen, amen, truly, truly. Pay attention. This is important. Now the focus moves away from the shepherd, and it moves to the door. Now we move away from the community sheepfold and now we're out in the pasture setting. In the pasture setting, the shepherd would often make a small enclosure out of stones or branches, whatever he could find, and he would build a much smaller enclosure out in the pasture for his sheep where they could come together at various times for rest. And so that's the metaphor that we have here. The sheep enclosure is now out in the pasture and in this enclosure the shepherd literally would become the door. So, if he didn't want the sheep to move out of this enclosure, he would just sit down. He'd lay down. He'd be right by the door. He would be the door. That's what Jesus is saying here.

There's another I am. Verse 7. So, Jesus again said to them, truly, truly, I say to you. I am the door of the sheep. We'll see it again in verse 9. I am the door. Here's something to note in the opening five verses. The personal pronouns are all in the third person singular. It's he. It's him. You get into verses 7 through 10, the personal pronouns shift over and they

are now in the first person. Jesus says I am the door and he talks about me. So, it's very significant.

This brings us to yet another of the seven I am's of the Gospel of John. We have Jesus saying I'm the bread of life. I'm sufficient for everything that you need. I'm the sufficient one. He said I'm the light of the world. So, if you are a people in darkness, come to the light. The light will show you where to go. I am the light. Now He says I am the door. We're going to see this continuing on. It's always the beginning of this imagery. These usages always start with the definite article, don't they? I am the bread of life. I am the light. I am the door

The Old Testament picture. Where do we see a door in the Old Testament? Well, you see one on the ark, don't you? One door on the ark? One way and one way out. One way. You see it in the tabernacle. One opening to move towards the tabernacle and the worship of their God. One place. It speaks of the narrowness of truth. The narrowness of truth. There is one way. It's open to all who will believe, but there's only one way.

When you think in terms of what we have done with that down through the ages of church history, we've added all kinds of doors, confusing people as to what the gospel really is. We've got creeds and confessions and statements. And if you just agree with this, then you're in. You're one of us. We've got things like baptism. There are whole denominations who believe that if you haven't been baptized then you haven't gone through the right door. People add church membership to it. The Pharisees are a perfect example of what has happened in so many churches. We've got lists of personal conduct and personal behavior. And if you do these things, well, then you're in. That's the door.

That is not what Jesus says. He says I am the door. Acts 4:12. There is salvation under no other name for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved. Paul says in 1 Timothy chapter 2 and verse 5, for there is one God and there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. So clearly this is what Jesus is saying.

Then look at verse 8. There are still false shepherds. There are still false shepherds. All who came before me are thieves and robbers. But the sheep did not listen to them. The

key here is the present tense. Who are the Pharisees, the religious leaders? They're still in this place of leading the people astray.

And then notice there is life. Verses 9 and 10. I am the door. If anyone enters by me he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they might have life and have it abundantly. We're going to pick up on verse 10, Lord willing, next Sunday. But I just want you to see in verse 9 these three things that are a part of what Jesus says. There's salvation. He speaks specifically of the fact that you will be saved. You walk through this door. You walk through this door and if you enter by me, you will be saved. But there is also a sense of security because you go in and out. There's freedom. There's liberty. There's joy. And then there is satisfaction in view of the pasture. That's before them. All that is going to be developed in that tenth verse will show us the abundant life.

So, we end where we started. Authentic biblical Christianity is to know God and to be known by him. What do we take away? Think of it in this way. We need to be listening to the voice of our Shepherd, don't we? We need to be listening to his voice. He speaks to us clearly in his word. And I guess the question for all of us is are we listening? I have said before I think sometimes we approach God and we say Oh God, I wish you would speak to me. I wish I could hear from you. God, I want to hear from you. I want you to speak to me. And I can't help but think that God is thinking and maybe wanting to say to us I'm already speaking. You have my word. Right there it is. Are you reading it? Are you listening to it? Are you hearing my voice? That's clearly the way we get to know our Shepherd.

So, let's be people who are in the book. Let's be people who are in God's Word. Let's be people of prayer Let's be people of worship. Let's be people of fellowship. Let's be people of discipleship. Let's be people who love our neighbor. Let's follow our Shepherd and follow his example.

To do that is to step into the abundant life that God intends. So, if you're here this morning, I want to say to you as we close if you've never put your trust in Jesus as your Savior, the call comes to you. Verse 9 says anyone. Anyone who hears this gospel. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And the wages of sin brings death, brings

separation from God. But the way that separation is realized and closed is one door, and that is belief and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Let's pray. Gracious Father, as always we are thankful for your word, for your truth, especially this imagery of Jesus as our Good Shepherd, Lord Jesus, as the door into life of blessing and life that is everlasting. We ask again that we will be people who are obedient to our Shepherd, that we will follow well after you. And, Father, we ask again that you would open a heart of anyone here this morning who is yet to trust Jesus as their Savior, to realize the forgiveness of all our sin, and to receive the gift of eternal life that is right there at the moment of belief. We thank you for what you've done on our behalf. In Jesus's name, amen.