

# **Exposing Wolves in Shepherd's Clothing**

**Jon Benzinger**

**John 10:1-6**

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Hey Redeemer family. It's great to see all of you. Thank you for being here. If you're a guest, I'm Jon, one of the pastors, and if you have a Bible, do you have a Bible? Hope you brought a Bible. Good. Open it to John chapter 10. John chapter 10. Now that is on page 993. So if you have one of the Bibles that we give away, John 10 is on 993. Now while you're turning there, last week I announced the Israel trip. That's coming in November and it's now almost half full in just one week. So if you're thinking about going, you may need to make a decision more sooner than later. Also, if you're watching online, you're welcome to join us. Just email [info@redeemeraz.org](mailto:info@redeemeraz.org) and we can send you a link where you can register. So I can't tell you how much going to Israel impacts your life being in the places that you've read about, maybe some of you for your whole life.

There's just nothing like it, so if you can do it, I highly recommend joining me this November in Israel. Now, if you're able, let stand for the reading of God's word. John chapter 10, drop down to verse 1, all the way down to verse 1, John 10:1. This is the word of the only God that there is. "Truly, truly I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." Hear the word of the Lord. You may be seated, and as you are, let's all pray together.

Father, as we approach your word, we are approaching holy ground. This book is special. This book is different. It's unique because it is your word and because it's your word and your thoughts are not our thoughts and your ways are not our ways and as high as the heaven is above the earth, so is that true. I pray the prayer of Psalm 119:18, that you would open our eyes to behold the wonderful things that are found in your word. I pray that for us, we need you. We need your grace to do that in our lives and they need it at Chandler Bible Church and Pastor Sean is definitely done preaching by now today, I pray that your word through him and the lives of the people that go to church there would bear fruit, that they would see the evidence of your spirit working at that church through the way that the people there follow your word. I pray we would see the same thing here as a result of our time together now in Jesus name, Amen.

So sheep are dumb. They're just the most unintelligent, witless animals on the planet, and because of that, it makes sense that the Bible calls us sheep. You ever heard something like that before? You've seen videos of sheep doing really dumb things. If you haven't, you should go to YouTube. It's pretty funny, but did you know that that's actually not true? Search, "Are sheep dumb," and you'll find a treasure trove of research that shows sheep are not dumb. They are highly intelligent; they learn quickly and they have great memories. They can remember as many as 50 different sheep faces or human faces and remember them for over two years. Even some

scientists say they're capable of sophisticated decision-making. Do you know the Bible never calls sheep dumb and therefore people are dumb. In the Bible sheep are actually evidence of God's grace in your life, his blessing in your life.

The more sheep you have, the more blessed you are. They are a source of food and clothing for people, and sheep provided forgiveness and the removal of sin because sheep were used in the sacrifices. However, it seems that what connects human beings to sheep primarily is our need for a leader. In Matthew 9:36, Jesus had compassion on a massive crowd of people because they were sheep without a shepherd. By themselves sheep are helpless and vulnerable. What they need most is a shepherd, and we're the same way, but it's not that we need a shepherd, whether we realize it or not, we all have shepherds who are already guiding our lives. They tell us what's best and what we should live for and what should be most important to us. They might be a parent or a spouse, a teacher, friend, a mentor could be an athlete or a celebrity or a politician or a pundit. It could just be an algorithm in your social media. But either way, all of us have a shepherd or shepherds and all of us are being shepherded whether we know it or not. The question is, are the shepherds good?

Listen, God defines what's good. What's good is what is consistent with God's character as expressed for us in his word, and nobody embodies what God means by good, better than Jesus, The good shepherd. John 10 is where we get this famous identification of Jesus that he is the good shepherd, but he calls himself this in a very interesting way. He does it polemically, meaning he does it in the midst of a strong critical attack on the religious leaders of his day, and he attacks them for good reason. In John chapter 9, we've been going through John nine recently. Jesus heals a man born blind and the religious leaders, instead of honoring God and following Jesus and loving this man, they attack the man mercilessly.

At first, they didn't believe he was previously blind, like he'd been faking it for all those years, tricking everybody. Then he and Jesus get together and concoct a scam to trick everybody that Jesus is the Messiah with a fake miracle. That's what they think. They even made people choose between them and Jesus threatening to excommunicate anybody who would affirm that he is their Messiah, a fear that the man's parents had. So in his moment of greatest need, his parents abandoned him to these shepherds to interrogate him, they reviled him. They abused him verbally, including insults and theological manipulation right before they excommunicate him, making him an outcast from heaven at least so they thought, as well as an outcast from the Jewish people.

You can follow it in chapter 9. The more they talk to the man, the more they push him away from them and into the arms of Jesus who found him, soon after he'd been excommunicated, he asked the man one question. He made one statement, and at that, the man believed in him and worshiped him. In chapter 9:40, some of the religious leaders heard Jesus talking to the man, and so they asked Jesus if they are spiritually blind.

Take a look at his answer starting in chapter 9:41. "Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no guilt. But now that you say we see your guilt remains. 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. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him, the gatekeeper opens the sheep, hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he is 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." That was his answer to their question back in verse 41. That's the whole answer that he gives them. So today we're going to look at Jesus' answer to their question, are we also blind?

But like Jesus did here, what's going to happen is we are going to expose wolves in shepherd's clothing while we go through this text. Now, to do that, let's look at what Jesus says in verses 1-6 under **point #1), The Comparison Misunderstood. The Comparison Misunderstood**. If you're taking notes, that's point number one. What Jesus says here in verse 6 is called a figure of speech. It's a word that refers to a story with symbolic meaning, a meaning that isn't obvious on the surface. So some would call this an allegory or a riddle because it's cryptic. The meaning is not clear as you're going to see. It takes some digging to get it and some just aren't going to get it, period. What we will find is it is a metaphor. It's a comparison between counterfeits and a true shepherd. So let's dig into the text now for people living more in the country versus the city, more rural than suburb like us, this illustration will make perfect sense.

They will get to the end and they'll go, "Duh. Yeah, that's obvious." For us, it might not be. So let's dig in. There's a sheepfold, a corral, an enclosure that multiple families would leave their sheep in at night. It'd be open to the sky with walls anywhere from three to six feet high and spiky branches on top to keep intruders and wild animals from climbing over and attacking or stealing the sheep. There would be a door or a gate that the shepherds would herd their sheep in and out from. At night an up-and-coming shepherd would be a gatekeeper. They would sleep near the door; some would even sleep right in front of the door so that nothing could get in or out. Shepherds were regarded as inferior part of the lower class, but their job is anything but low class. They needed virtues like courage and diligence. They needed to be dedicated. They needed to care.

So with their bag of food and their sling and their staff for protection and their long hook to grab string sheep and bring them back here, you would have a shepherd spending every single day leading the sheep. Now with that in mind, let's look at 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."

Anyone climbing over the wall, anyone not going through the gate is up to no good. They don't belong there. That's not their sheep. They're not the shepherd. They are there to harm the sheep and as a result harm the shepherd. Anyone reading that would go, "Duh. Yeah, obviously that's what they would be." Just as obvious, who's there to harm the sheep, it's also obvious who is there for the sheep, verse 2. "But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep to him," not to the robbers, "But to him the gatekeeper opens." Shepherd doesn't need to climb over the

wall, right? Doesn't need to do that. Gatekeeper opens the gate for him. He doesn't need to sneak around, doesn't need to approach secretly. He has free access to the flock because the flock belongs to him. It's his. Just in case there's any doubt about that, verse three continues.

"The sheep hear his voice and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he is brought out all his own, he goes before them and the sheep follow him for, they know his voice." So in a large sheepfold, a large corral housing several flocks for the night, when the shepherd makes his distinct call, the sheep recognize it and he leads them out by his voice. There's no force here. There's no coercion here. They just hear the voice and they follow. That's because they are, notice verses 3 and 4, "They are his own." Notice two, "When he calls them out of the sheepfold to follow him," verse 3, he calls them how? What does it say? "He calls them by name," which means he knows each one of his sheep individually.

In places like Israel, sheep were kept for their wool, meaning they would be with their shepherds daily for years. As a result of that, he may give some of his sheep or all of his sheep personal names like Limpy or Lazy Eye or Beardo or Stubborn Stew, depending on something that would make that sheep distinctive, they would often give them a name. Again, only the sheep that belong to the shepherd will come out when they hear his voice, the rest will remain inside. Why? Because they're not his sheep. They don't belong to him. Middle Eastern shepherds are known for standing outside of the corrals in different spots and just shouting their distinctive calls into the massive animals in the fold. Then the gate is opened and one by one the sheep come out and separate themselves and go congregate around their shepherds based on the sound of their voice. Notice verse 4, again, not one of them is left behind. He brings out of the sheepfold, quote, "All his own."

All the sheep that aren't his, obviously they stay behind. Interestingly, unlike shepherds in the west, shepherds in Israel don't drive their sheep from behind using dogs like you may have seen in the video. Instead, verse 4, they go before them walking in front of the sheep who follow their lead being ahead of the flock, he is aware of danger. He makes sure the trail is safe and easy to walk on. He can see all the places they need to go for food or for shelter or for rest. They never go where he hasn't gone first. and he can do all of this because verse four, "The sheep follow him for they know his voice." "The sheep who belong to the shepherd," verse 5, "A stranger they," the sheep that belong to the shepherd, "They will never, not ever follow, but they will flee from him for they do not know the voice of stranger." Sheep know the voice of their shepherd, his accent, his inflections, and they easily distinguish him from every other person on the planet. They just don't follow people that they don't know.

A stranger has no influence on them whatsoever, and people have tried to trick sheep, "Oh, they're stupid. Let's just trick them." So strangers will dress like their shepherd and try to mimic the same words and the same sounds, but all it does for the sheep as it makes the sheep perk up and look at them, and if the fraud continues to try to encourage them to follow him, the sheep do exactly what Jesus says here. They turn in the opposite direction and run away. That's the illustration. That's it. That's the story. Pretty simple comparison between a shepherd and a fraud.

Now, pretty simple, straightforward kind of. But did you notice Jesus starts this whole comparison with the words, "Truly, truly I say to you," which is his way of saying, you need to listen to this. You need to pay attention to this. This is exceedingly worth listening to. It's certain, it's trustworthy. It's true. He starts like this so the Pharisees in chapter 9:40 will pay attention and take it to heart. But unfortunately, notice verse 6, "They did not understand what he was saying to them."

These words were for them and they miss it. They misunderstood him. He wasn't telling them a story. He wasn't making observations about sheep. He was talking about them. He was comparing them to him. They prove here that they really are spiritually blind like they asked about in chapter 9:40. So let's look at the story with this comparison that they missed in mind so that we don't misunderstand what Jesus said here. Let's re-look at this text under *point #2), The Comparison Understood. The Comparison Understood*. Jesus, again, he's not just telling a story about sheep. He crafted a brilliant allegory, a profound illustration to convict, to warn, to confront these religious leaders. So what's going on here?

Okay, well, the sheepfold is not the church. It's not heaven. Why? Because no one can break into salvation or break into heaven and steal people out of it, right? No, the sheep here are individual Jews, and the sheepfold here is Israel. This is consistent with Old Testament teaching six times in the Old Testament, Israel is called, "The sheep of God's pasture." Like sheep, God's people were in need of loving oversight, diligent care, and skilled leadership. What did God do? He sends, they need rescue and feeding. They need cleaning and protection. So God sends his people political and religious leaders. If their leaders were good, if they led them well, the people were safe. If they weren't good, God's people were scattered from God, wandering lost in idolatry, and very often invading armies would come and destroy them.

Well, if the sheepfold is Israel and the sheep are individual Jews, the men who climb over the wall to thieves and robbers, who's that? That's the religious leaders he's talking to. As thieves they steal from the sheep. As robbers they do it with force being mean and harsh with the people just like these leaders in Jerusalem had been with who previously? Oh, the man born blind in chapter 9. On the outside they look like true and respectable shepherds, but the frauds that they really are, that's proven by how they treat God's people. They fleece them for their money and possessions in the name of God rather than shepherding them after God's own heart, the sheep need to be protected from them as they brutalize them with their strictness and their harshness. Ultimately, they steal the Messiah from his own people.

Jesus is the shepherd; the gatekeeper opens the gate to. Now, most of you read anything on this most think the gatekeeper doesn't really correspond to anybody, but I actually think the gatekeeper is a picture of the Father who gives Jesus access to his people, sending him to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Matthew 15:24, Jesus miracles are, they're the proof. They're God's seal of approval that he is with Jesus and sent him to his people. His people are Jesus' people and Jesus words in John 6:37 make this clear. Jesus is talking about individual people in that text and he says, "All the people that the father gives me will come to me."

So they belong to the Father and he gives them to Jesus, the proof is verse 3 of our text. Individual Jews like the man born blind, hear his voice he calls to him and the man comes to him, calls him out by name, meaning he knows him personally and individually. I think that's why John chapter 9, is just one man, because he's illustrating verse 3, "I call them by name." I know them individually and personally, and in the words of verses 3 and 4, those sheep are his own sheep. Think about it. The people are his before he calls them out of Israel. Words of Revelation 13:8, their names were, "Written from the foundation of the world in the book of life." So in the text, because they are his, they know him, because they are his they recognize his voice. If they didn't already belong to him, they would not respond to his voice with obedience, right?

He would be what to them, verse 5. He would be a stranger to them. He has to own them first. However, because he owns them first, he leads them out of Judaism, away from the fleecing, away from the harshness of their leaders. In verse 4, notice he doesn't leave a single one, be kind. He brings out all of them. The words of John 6:39, "Jesus will lose nothing of all the people that the father has given him." He has the rightful authority given to him by the Father to come into Judaism and really to come into every nation, every group of people, every ideology on the planet to come into that and find his sheep. He knows them. He calls them by name, they recognize his voice and they follow him, and after they're all out, verse 4, "Jesus," notice, "Goes before them." He's, their leader. He's, their Lord. He's their good shepherd who doesn't fleece them, cares for them, does what's best for them. He's not harsh with them, but nourishes them and cherishes them, and people follow him thereafter because they know him.

Unlike the strangers, the religious leaders, that one by one people have been fleeing from like this man born blind. Again, if the people didn't already belong to Jesus before he called them out of Judaism, he would've been a stranger to them and they would flee from him, but they don't because they're his. So while we love the shepherd imagery, that's become pretty common in the church, happy Jesus, big smile, butterflies and sunlight in his hair and sheep on his shoulder holding his hand and while they're walking down the road, all of that is very tame and sanitized compared to what we just saw here. This is a devastating rebuke against the religious leaders of Israel.

They're anything but true shepherds after God's own heart. They were the exact opposite. They were wolves in shepherds clothing. They're strangers to God's true people. They steal from them. They're brutal with them. They don't care about them. They rob them of their Messiah. God had shut these religious leaders out of shepherding his people because they'd rejected his son. So he sends his son to them and says, "Get my people out of there." They did not recognize Jesus' voice like his people do. They were not called by him like his people were. They're not let out of the false religion they were peddling with its fleecing and its harshness all because in the words of the text, "They are not his own."

But because Jesus is merciful, because he's gracious, because he's kind to sinners, even though verse 41 says, "They are guilty," because they are guilty, he comes to them again and confronts

them in their sin. He gives them another opportunity to repent of their rebellion against him and their abusive shepherding. But once again, they refuse. Verse 20, calling him demon possessed and insane while others admire him but don't seem to believe in him. So it was act rebellion on the one hand or passive rejection on the other. But either way, Jesus exposes these leaders as counterfeits, but the good shepherd was there. He was there to rescue Jews who would follow him. They're the true Israeli remnant who are faithful to their Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

In fact, Jews have been fleeing from these leaders and to Jesus for a couple years at this point. Jews like his disciples, like the woman caught in adultery and like this man born blind, he came to the sheepfold of Israel and its false religion, and he called his own people out to make new flock without those leaders. He was there to rescue people from them. They never would've imagined that God would send the Messiah to rescue his people from them. But that's what he did. That man is a picture of that. He finds the man after he'd been excommunicated, he finds the man like a shepherd, finding a lost sheep. He hears Jesus' voice and flees to him after fleeing from these leaders and after finding him, Jesus brings him out of Judaism and into his love and eternal fold. That is because he's the good shepherd that God promised the Messiah would be.

Micah 5:2, the Messiah would not only be born in Bethlehem, but he would, quote, "Shepherd my people Israel." Ezekiel 34:23, "God will set over his people one shepherd, my servant David," that is David's descendant, the Messiah. "He will feed them. He shall feed them as their shepherd and be their shepherd." New Testament writers, they pick up on this idea, right? Peter who may have been there hearing these words with his own ears, Peter says this about Jesus, 1 Peter 2:25, "He is the shepherd and overseer of your souls." So Christian, you have a soul, and Jesus is the shepherd of your soul. He guides your soul. He oversees it. He protects it. He cares for it. He moves, seeks to move it in the direction that he wants it to go. It's because 1 Peter 5:4, he is the, "Chief shepherd." He's the high shepherd. All pastors are under shepherds of the great shepherd, the chief, and he's even called the Great Shepherd in Hebrews 13:20 the, "Great shepherd of the sheep."

In Revelation 7:17, it says of Jesus that, "He will be their shepherd and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." He's everything the Jewish leaders of his day weren't, everything the Jewish leaders of his day would never want to be, and he is everything, everything that his people need him to be.

Now that we know what the comparison means, let's see **point #3), The Comparison Applied. The Comparison Applied.** What are you and I supposed to do with the scathing rebuke of leaders that have been dead for 2000 years? How should we respond to this? Don't forget the opening words in verse 1, "Truly, truly I say to you," this is important. You and I, need to listen to this too. We need to learn from this. We need to pay attention to this. So I have three points for us to consider after Jesus scathing rebuke of these leaders. The first one is this, Jesus is the model shepherd for all true shepherds, all true pastors to emulate.

Like Jesus, pastors must be calling people to Jesus, not to themselves. They must never fleece the flock. They must never see people as a source of their benefit using them for anything,

including money. They must never be harsh and brutal with the flock entrusted to their care like these religious leaders were doing with the Jewish people in Jesus' day. They must know the flock. They must be around them. They must lead them in truth and love like Jesus does. They must follow Jesus themselves so that when God's flock entrusted to their care follow them, they're simply following the good shepherd through following them. They must care for the flock and protect them from religious thieves and robbers and strangers who are not really following the good shepherd. Now, listen, that's not just how pastors should be. That's how all of us should be. What do I mean?

Well, men, you're the shepherds of your homes. Colossians 3:19 says, "Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them." Moms and dads, you are the shepherds of your kids. Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers do not provoke your children to anger." Be like the good shepherd with them. Bosses you're the shepherds of your employees. This image of a shepherd over sheep extends far beyond pastoral ministry. So you should never be harsh with the people under your leadership, your influence. You should care for them; you should love them. You should treat them the way that Jesus, the good shepherd treats you.

He's never harsh with you. He never takes advantage of you. He only always has your good, your blessing, your best in mind because he loves you. That is how we should be in every area of our lives where we can influence the direction of people. Second, just as in Jesus' day, there are wolves in shepherds clothing in this day. They're false prophets, false teachers, scoffers, liars, deceitful antichrists who promote ideas that contradict the truth of God's word. See, in the Bible a false teacher is different than somebody who teaches say like atheism or Hinduism. In the Bible, that would be considered an idolater. A false teacher is someone who teaches lies that send people to hell while posing as a Christian. You see the difference there?

The New Testament says they look like Christians, sound like Christians act like Christians, at least publicly, definitely not privately, and they do that why? To trick you, to trick you, to make you think that they're a Christian, while on the inside, they're ravenous wolves in disguise. Ravenous meaning their appetite cannot be satisfied and their favorite dish on the menu is Christian. They want to devour you, your life, your possessions, your time, your eternity, everything. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies into your life. Their goal in doing that is to exploit you, harm you, lead you astray, draw you away from the truth so that you desert God, leave the truth, turn to a different gospel, trust in that, thus embracing a false Jesus who will not save you. They pretend to be for you when their goal is to destroy your soul.

Here's the thing, 1 John 2:18 says there are many of them, many. Let that word sink in. That's why I said last week that you should treat every teacher with a Bible as guilty until proven innocent of being a heretic, every single one, myself included all of us. Why? Because there are many of them out there, which means that you and I, need to be where? We need to be on guard. We need to watch. We need to know the truth well enough to spot the counterfeit. Then the New Testament says on top of all that, we need to avoid them and shun them and expose them because when we expose them, we protect other people from them. Why do we do that? Because



people are sheep. We are helpless and in desperate need of leadership, but not just any leadership. We need the leadership of the good shepherd, which brings me to the third Jesus.

Everyone has a shepherd. The question is, is your shepherd a good one? You are constantly being led, constantly being told what to do, what to think, what is good, what is right, what is cool, what to love, what to commit yourself to, what to shun, how to be loved, on and on and on and on constant all the time. There is even an inner counterfeit shepherd inside of you doing that all the time, talking to you, telling you to do this, and not that. Like we saw today, not all shepherds have your best interests in mind, but Jesus does. Jesus does. That's why he is the good shepherd. He is good to his people. He has always only ever had your best in mind. He may not be calling you out of Judaism, but could he be personally calling you by name out of Mormonism or out of paganism or out of materialism or out of trying to earn your own salvation with your good works out of me-ism, out some anti-Christian ideology or maybe just out of pride in arrogance like you know the truth and that's not Jesus.

Could he be calling you out of all of that in the words of the text here to bring you out and bring you to him? If you hear his voice, do not harden your heart. If he's calling you to come out from whatever that is, do it. Do it. Listen, respond, turn from everything that would keep you under the influence of lying counterfeit shepherds and keep you from what has always been best for you, which is Jesus. Come to him. Believe in him and worship him like the man born blind did. He's the good shepherd and he will stay close to you. He will care for you all because he really loves you. He is united to his people, bonded to us and will never ever let even one of us go, ever.

Now, if you already have come to him, the idea then is to follow him. In other words, live how your good shepherd wants you to live. Don't stray from him. Stay behind him. Go where he wants you to go. Do what he wants you to do. How do I know what he wants? Well, his sheep hear his voice. Sometimes we just know what he wants us to do, but if we don't know or we need to check that, then we also have his word that tells us clearly in black and white, this is what's pleasing to him.

May the truth that Jesus is your good shepherd, may that truth be more real to you than any trial, any pain, any disappointment, any anguish. May that truth filter your thoughts from any anger or hesitation towards him. He would never leave you. He is always with you. He is doing what is best. Stay close to your shepherd. Trust him. Also, sheep run herds. The lost sheep, the alone sheep, that's the dead sheep. So do you have a herd? Do you have a group of Christians who we're walking through life with who know you, who love you, who encourage you, who tell you the truth when you need to hear it? If not, we have tons of ministries, tons of different herds all over the place at this church for you to attach your life to other sheep who are seeking to follow the good shepherd.

So in the end, when we tell someone about Jesus with the hope of seeing them saved, whether we do it here, we do it somewhere on the other side of the world, all that we're doing is bringing the good shepherd to people, seeing if he will call them out and call them to himself. That's all

evangelism. That's all missions really is. In fact, I want you to see an example of this. Turn to Acts 18, just one book to the right, John then Acts. Acts 18, after Paul leaves Athens, he goes south to the City of Corinth and he finds himself telling Jewish people about Jesus and their synagogues and there's response. People are getting saved and people are being baptized. Then one night Jesus actually came to Paul in a vision Acts 18:9, and he said this to him, listen carefully.

Acts 18:10, three commands, do not be afraid in verse 6, he'd been opposed and revived by people who are rejecting Jesus. So Jesus says, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking," and third, "Do not be silent." Then Jesus gives three reasons, why should I do that? "For I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you," and watch this, "For I have many in this city who are my people?" The Good Shepherd had many sheep in Corinth, even though no Christian had ever been to Corinth. Jesus encourages Paul to keep telling people about him, to not be afraid even if people attack him. No one is going to attack you to harm you. I'll protect you because I already have people here, so what you're going to do is going to be successful. Just keep telling people about me. At the end of the day, that's all evangelism, all missions is. It's going with love and courage into the sheepfold of this world and finding Jesus' sheep by telling people about him.

Was it successful? Yes, Paul was there. That was interesting. Paul was there for 18 months, planted that church, wrote letters to them like, "Yeah, that was successful." You know what? Revelation 5:9 says, there will be people in heaven, quote, "From every tribe and language and people and nation," because his people just told people about the Good Shepherd and the Good Shepherd brought his people to them. So don't be afraid to tell people about Jesus. Keep going, keep doing it. Don't be silent. He is with you. He will guide his sheep to you as you faithfully bring the good shepherd to the people that you know and love. I hope that gives you courage to speak when you're afraid. I hope it gives you courage to push through that fear and talk to whoever you need to talk to about Jesus. All you're doing is holding him up and he's the one brings his sheep to him. That is good news. We're going to sing about that in just a minute. But before we do, let's pray.

Jesus, there is a lot of truth in this short illustration that you gave. There is a lot of truth to consider. There is a lot of truth to apply to our lives. I'm grateful to you, I'm grateful for this image of a good shepherd. I pray that you would use that truth in the lives of your people, to help us trust you, to help us live for you, to walk away from the things that would take us from you, that we would stay close to you because you're good. For others who inside they're believing things about you that aren't good, that an image like this will dispel those lies, expose them for what they are, that they would come out of whatever it is that is keeping them from you, that they'd come out because they see that you're good. Use your word in all of our lives, I pray. Amen.