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The Good Shepherd's Love

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **April 30, 2017**

Worship with us at 3201 Mary St until we rebuild our sanctuary at 15th & State.
...We're located just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas...

John 10:1-15

Introduction: Chapter nine ended on a theme of judgment (John 9:39); and here the deserved judgment of the **evil shepherds** is uttered.

John 9:39-41, And Jesus said, For **judgment** I am come into this world, that **they** which SEE NOT **might see**; and that they which SEE might be **made blind**. And **some** of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we **blind also?** Jesus said unto them, If ye **were blind**, ye should have **NO SIN: but now** YE say, **We SEE; therefore YOUR SIN remaineth.**

"Jesus swiftly turned the tables on his judges and sentenced them. The controversy that erupted over the miracle dominates the first 21 verses, as evidenced by "Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?" (John 10:21). The expression, "Verily, verily," is one which is **not used** at the commencement of a discourse"; and Robertson said, "The words do NOT ever introduce a fresh topic." Further evidence for the unity of the two chapters (John 9-10) is in Jesus' presentation of himself as the **divine Messiah** under the **metaphor** of the **"Good Shepherd,"** contrasting with the evil shepherds who had **cast out** the blind man.
(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bcc/john-10.html>)

John 10:1-4, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He** that entereth NOT by the **door** into the **sheepfold** (place where sheep are collected or confined), but **climbeth up** some other way, the same is a **thief** and a **robber**. But he that entereth in by the **DOOR** is the **shepherd** of the **sheep**. To him the porter (gate-keeper) **openeth**; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his **OWN SHEEP** by **name**, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his **own sheep**, he **goeth before them**, and the **sheep FOLLOW him**: for they **know his VOICE**.

NOTE: The sheepfold amongst the Talmudists is some **enclosure** or **pen**: wherein, **I.** The sheep were all gathered together in the **night**, lest they should **stray**; and where they might be **safe** from **thieves** or **wild beasts**. **II.** In the day time they were milked: as, The Trojans, as the rich man's numerous flocks, Stand milked in the field. **III.** There the lambs were tithed. "How is it that they **tithe** the lambs? *They gather the flock into the sheepfold*; and making a **little** door at which **TWO** **cannot** go out together, they number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and the **tenth** that goes out they mark with red, saying, **'This is the tithe.'** The ewes (female sheep) are without and the lambs

within; and at the bleating of the ewes, the lambs get out." So that there was in the sheepfold one **larger door**, which gave ingress (entrance) and egress (act of going out) to the flock and shepherds; and a lesser, by which the lambs passed out for tithing. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jlc.html>)

NOTE: Sheepfold – At night the shepherd gathered his sheep to a **safe** place and kept watch (Luke 2:8). A **shallow cave** was a good place of safety, and a wall was often built partly across the cave mouth to form an enclosure in front of it. The wall was made of local stones and was topped with **thorns**. It was in such a cave the King Saul went to sleep (1 Samuel 24:3-4). If there was no cave, a palisade (**fence**) of stones was made out in the open, thorns being substituted for stones if necessary (Ezekiel 34:14).

The shepherd lay down across the opening, effectively becoming a door for the sheep. A **watchman** was SET to guard the flock. Jesus referred to this kind of setting when he said that **thieves** and **robbers** do NOT use the door but climb over the wall (John 10:1-3, 10). The current criminal practice was to climb over the wall, slaughter as many sheep as possible before detection, and throw them to accomplices outside.

Good shepherd – Living and working with sheep in isolation leads to a **close** relationship between shepherd and sheep. The shepherds know their own sheep so well that they respond to them instantly. The shepherd has a **name** for **each sheep**, the significance being that the name says something about the sheep's individual character and mannerisms. (Source: *The New Manners & Customs of Bible Times*)

John 10:5, And a **stranger** will they **NOT follow**, but will **flee from him**: for they **know NOT** the voice of strangers.

NOTE: In the **common sheepfolds** of ancient times, the shepherd merely gave his distinctive call and HIS SHEEP came out from the OTHERS, following HIM **out of the sheepfold**. **Sheep are experts at discerning their shepherd's VOICE.**

i. During World War I, some Turkish soldiers tried to steal a flock of sheep from a hillside near Jerusalem. The shepherd, who had been sleeping, awoke to find his flock being driven off. He couldn't **recapture them by force**, so he called out to his flock with his **DISTINCTIVE call**. The sheep listened, and returned to their rightful owner. The soldiers couldn't stop the sheep from returning to their shepherd's voice.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/guz/john-10.html>)

John 10:6, This **PARABLE** spake **Jesus** unto them: but **they understood NOT** what things they were which he spake unto them.

NOTE: This parable ... The word thus rendered here is [paroimia], sometimes translated "proverb"; but it may be logically viewed as an extended **metaphor**, or **comparison**. The Pharisees whom Jesus had already called "blind" (John 9:39f) did NOT have the slightest idea about what Jesus meant by these teachings. Two months later (John 10:24) they seem to have caught on to at least a part of what Jesus meant...

John 10:24-25, Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou **be the Christ**, **tell us plainly**. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed NOT: the WORKS that I do in my Father's **name (authority)**, they **bear witness of me**.

...but in THIS SCENE they remained oblivious (lost) to his meaning, even after he repeated the metaphor and embellished (settled [ascertained {stated}]) it.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/john-10.html>)

John 10:7, Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **I AM the DOOR** of **the SHEEP**.

NOTE: The **shepherd lay down across the opening**, effectively **BECOMING a door** for the sheep. (Source: *The New Manners & Customs of Bible Times*)

John 10:8, All that ever came before (superior, ABOVE) me are thieves and robbers: but the SHEEP did NOT hear them.

Thought 1. So, we can see the key to understanding what Jesus meant is to further define the word “before!” He did NOT mean that all that came PRIOR to him were thieves and robbers! Although this is a valid definition of the word “before!”

If we only looked at Abraham, who came before Jesus was born, we could NOT agree that he was a thief and a robber! It’s written that Abraham was “**a friend of God**!” (James 2:23) In addition, Jesus said Abraham REJOICED to see his day! (John 8:56)

But, all who came, and made themselves ABOVE: SUPERIOR to Jesus, and therefore **REJECTED** him, and the word of God from him, are in fact “thieves and robbers!” Because Satan was able to lift them in PRIDE, this refers to most Scribes and Pharisees!

John 10:9, I am the door: by ME if any man enter in, he shall be saved (protect), and shall go IN and OUT, and find pasture (feeding).

NOTE: I am the door: by me if any man enter, come for salvation to God, through Christ, shall obtain it: he shall be saved—he shall have his sins blotted out, his soul purified, and himself preserved unto eternal life. This, the scribes and Pharisees could neither promise nor impart.

Go in and out This phrase, in the style of the Hebrews, points out all the actions of a man's life, and the **liberty** he has of acting, or not acting. A good shepherd conducts his flock to the fields where good pasturage is to be found; watches over them while there, and brings them back again and secures them in the fold. So he that is taught and called of God feeds the flock of Christ with those truths of his word of grace which nourish them unto eternal life; and God blesses together both the shepherd and the sheep, so that *going out* and *coming in* they find pasture...

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* <http://www.studylight.org/com/acc/>)

John 17:9-11, I pray for them: I pray NOT for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep (watch [protect]) through thine own name (authority) those whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE, as (like) WE ARE.

John 10:10, The THIEF cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Thought 1. Once we understand this simple truth, our TRUST for Jesus and our Father grows. And this continues to happen as we GAIN more knowledge about both of them.

2 Peter 1:2-3, Grace and PEACE be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power HATH GIVEN unto us ALL things that pertain unto LIFE and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue...

1 John 5:10-13, He that believeth on the Son of God HATH the witness IN himself: he that believeth NOT God hath made (appoint [determine by agreement]) him a liar; because he believeth NOT the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God HATH given to us eternal LIFE, and this life is IN his Son. He that HATH the Son HATH LIFE; and he that hath NOT the Son of God hath NOT life.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may **KNOW** that **ye HAVE eternal LIFE...**

John 10:11, I am the **good shepherd**: the **good shepherd** **giveth** his **LIFE** for the sheep.

NOTE: The **faithful** and **true shepherd**, **WILLING** to do all that is necessary to **defend** and **save** the flock.

Giveth his life - A shepherd that regarded his flock would **hazard his own life** to defend them. When the wolf comes, he would still **REMAIN to protect them**. To give his life, here, **means the same** as NOT to fly, or to forsake his flock; to be willing to **EXPOSE** his life, if necessary, to defend them. Compare Judges 12:3; "I put my life in my hands and passed over," etc.; 1 Samuel 19:5; 1 Samuel 28:21. See John 10:15. The **Messiah** was often **predicted** under **the character** of a shepherd.

(Source: <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bnb/john-10.html>)

Judges 12:2-3, And **Jephthah** said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me NOT out of their hands. And when I saw that ye delivered me not, **I put my LIFE in my hands**, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me?

1 Samuel 19:4-5, And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his **father**, and said unto him, Let NOT the king **sin** against **his servant**, against **David**; because he hath NOT sinned against thee, and because HIS WORKS have been to thee-ward **very good**: **For he did put his LIFE in his hand**, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou **SIN** against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

John 10:12, But he that is an **hireling (wage-worker)**, and NOT the shepherd, whose **OWN** the sheep are NOT, **SEETH the WOLF coming**, and **LEAVETH the sheep**, and **FLEETH**: and the **wolf** catcheth them, and **scattereth** the sheep.

NOTE: The carelessness of the **unfaithful shepherd** described (v. 12, v. 13); he that is a hireling, that is employed as a servant and is paid for his pains, *whose OWN the sheep are NOT*, who has neither profit nor loss by them, *sees the wolf coming*, or some other danger threatening, and **leaves the sheep** to the **wolf**, for in truth he **careth NOT** for them. Here is plain reference to that of the idol-shepherd, Zec. 11:17.

Zechariah 11:17, Woe to the **idol (good for nothing)** shepherd that **leaveth** the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye...

Evil shepherds, magistrates and ministers, are here described both by their **bad principles** and their **bad practices**. a. Their *bad principles*, the **ROOT** of their bad practices. What makes those that have the charge of souls in **trying times** to **betray** their trust, and in quiet times NOT to mind it? What makes them false, and trifling, and **self-seeking**? It is because they are **hirelings**, and *care NOT for the sheep*. That is, (a.) The wealth of the world is the chief of their good; it is because they are **hirelings**. They undertook the shepherds' office, as a **trade** to live and grow rich by, **NOT** as an opportunity of **serving Christ** and **doing good**. It is the **love of money**, and of their **own bellies**, that carries them on in it. Not that those are hirelings who, while they *serve at the altar, live, and live comfortably, upon the altar*. The labourer is worthy of his meat... (Source: *The Matthew Henry Concise Commentary on the whole Bible*)

Isaiah 56:11, Yea, they are greedy **DOGS** which can never have enough, and they are **SHEPHERDS** that **cannot understand**: they all **LOOK** to their **OWN way**, every one for **his gain**, from his quarter.

NOTE: The sheep needed constant **protection** because in Bible times there were plenty of dangers to the flock from the wild animals that came up from the jungle surrounding the Jordan river gorge. **Lions** and **bears** were common (Judges 14:8; 2 Kings 2:24), and David's adventures in protecting his own flock were commonplace (1 Samuel 17:34-36). Amos tells of a shepherd who actually tried to take a sheep from a **lion's** mouth (Amos 3:12). The shepherd had to **fight** back, because he had to make good any losses to the **owners** (Genesis 31:39; Exodus 22:10-13). Any **hired help** the shepherd might have used did NOT have the **SAME kind of commitment**.

(Source: *The New Manners & Customs of Bible Times*)

1 Samuel 17:34-36, And David said unto Saul, Thy servant **kept** his **father's** sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and **smote him**, and **delivered it** out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and **smote him**, and **SLEW him**. Thy servant **SLEW both** the **lion** and the **bear**: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be AS (like) one of them, SEEING he hath **defied** the armies of the **living God**.

Acts 20:28, Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers (bishop [pastor, shepherd])**, to **FEED** the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Thought 1. Pastors should never let themselves say, "MY church", nor should they say, "MY people." As pastors (shepherds), our job is to FEED God's sheep knowledge and understanding, and protect them from lies. Jer. 3:15, 23:4. We are to preach and teach God's word: making it CLEAR to the best of our ability.

Acts 20:29-31, For I know this, that after my departing shall **grievous wolves** enter in among you, **NOT sparing the flock**. Also of your OWN SELVES shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to **WARN every one** night and day with tears.

Thought 2. So we see the sheepfold is also the local place of worship. A wolf can't enter the "spiritual body" of Christ. But, he can enter the gathering place!

1 Peter 5:1-4, The **elders (Christian "presbyter [pastor])** which are among you I exhort (encourage, to embolden, to cheer, to advise), who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ...

Thought 3. Notice that, Peter is speaking to encourage the pastors. So, it's clear that while they do God's work, pastors also NEED to be encouraged.

...and also a **partaker** of the **glory** that shall be revealed: **Feed** the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; NOT for **filthy lucre** (gain in money or goods; profit; usually in an ill sense), but of a ready mind; neither as being **lords** over God's heritage, but being **ensamples** to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd (*that's Jesus*) shall appear, **YE** shall **receive a crown of GLORY** that fadeth NOT away.

John 10:13-14, The **hireling fleeth**, because he is an **hireling**, and **careth NOT** for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and **know my sheep**, and am known of mine.

Thought 1. Another ERROR some have about shepherds is the belief they "break the legs" of disobedient sheep to train them to NOT wander off. Below, is the error, then, the truth.

NOTE: "The CROOK or STAFF has TWO purposes, ONE to draw the sheep back and the second to **break the leg** of **disobedient sheep**. A sheep who **KEEPS leaving** the

flock. The shepherd would **BREAK the leg** of the sheep so **it COULDN'T run off**, and carry it on his shoulders while the sheep healed, caring for the sheep and building a bond with the sheep, so the sheep would love the shepherd and **NOT leave him**.

Thought 2. If this was the TRUTH, then NOBODY would ever “depart from” or leave Jesus. But, according to scripture, in more than one place, SOME will depart!

1 Timothy 4:1, Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **SOME** shall **DEPART** from **the FAITH**, giving heed to seducing spirits ...

Hebrews 3:12, Take heed, brethren, lest there be IN any of you an **EVIL heart** of **unbelief**, in **DEPARTING** from the living God.

Thought 3. Now, let's look at the truth about what the shepherds of Old did do.

A Shepherd **NEVER breaks the leg** of **ANY of his sheep**. He tends to about 1,000 to 1,200 sheep at a time. Devoting most of his time on one with intentionally broken legs is detrimental to the entire herd. A shepherd will **"BRAKE" the leg** of a constantly **wayward lamb** by **placing** a **WEIGHT** on the **leg** so that the sheep is **slow to wander off**. Once the shepherd TEACHES this lamb to stay WITH the herd, the BRAKE comes OFF.

Apparently, the first pastor to teach this sermon in 1957 misunderstood this concept and has been spreading this lie ever since. Even good, strong Christians have bought into this load of HOOEY (nonsense, bunk [*Dictionary.com*]). — Preceding unsigned comment added by 70.208.133.209 (talk) 02:43, 7 Feb. 2014 (UTC)” (*Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Shepherd>*)

John 10:15-16, *As the Father knoweth me, even so I know the Father: and I lay down my LIFE for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are NOT of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be ONE fold, and ONE shepherd.*

NOTE: Detailed knowledge enabled the shepherd to separate the sheep into different flocks, if he was responsible for more than one village, and to be able to return them to the individual families. By calling, and by the use of **stones** in a sling, the shepherd was able to keep the sheep together (Ezekiel 34:1-3), although **dogs** were used by some men (Job 30:1). When a shepherd led the flock (Psalm 23:3), the dogs always brought up the rear, ensuring that the sheep were NOT attacked by wild animals and that they **KEPT up** with the **shepherd**. (Isaiah 52:12 sees God in a **double relationship** to his people. He **LEADS** them from the front and **GUARDS** them from behind.) (*Source: The New Manners & Customs of Bible Times*)

Isaiah 52:12, For ye shall NOT go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go BEFORE you; and **the God of Israel** will be **your REReward** (The rear guard of an army, *1913 Webster's Dictionary*).

John 10:17-18, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

Thought 1. This tells us that Jesus was commanded by his Father to lay down his life and to receive it again! He did NOT volunteer to lay it down, as is commonly thought.

NOTE: ...this is a reason why he so readily exerted his power, both in laying down his life, and taking it again, because it was his **Father's COMMAND** and **WILL**, and which **he received FROM him**, with the utmost pleasure... (*Source: The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible*)