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October 11th 2026

Scripture: John 10: 1-42

Sermon Title: Jesus the Good Shepherd

John 10

Jesus the Good Shepherd

10 “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

7 So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me[a] are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 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 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this

reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 18 No one takes[b] it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

19 Again the Jews were divided because of these words. 20 Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?” 21 Others were saying, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

22 At that time the Festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24 So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah,[c] tell us plainly.” 25 Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name testify to me, 26 but you do not believe because you do not belong to my

sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.

28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will

snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, in regard to what he has

given me, is greater than all,[d] and no one can snatch them out of

the Father's hand. 30 The Father and I are one."

31 The Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32 Jesus replied, "I

have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of

these are you going to stone me?" 33 The Jews answered, "It is not

for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy,

because you, though only a human, are making yourself God." 34

Jesus answered, "Is it not written in your law,[e] 'I said, you are

gods'? 35 If those to whom the word of God came were called

'gods'—and the scripture cannot be annulled— 36 can you say that

the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world is

blaspheming because I said, 'I am God's Son'? 37 If I am not doing

the works of my Father, then do not believe me. 38 But if I do them,

even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand[f] that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” 39 Then they tried to arrest him again, but he escaped from their hands.

40 He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there. 41 Many came to him, and they were saying, “John performed no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true.” 42 And many believed in him there.

Prayer...

This morning we are exploring the metaphor of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. This is the fourth I AM Statement of Jesus in the Gospel of John. The third I AM statement is also in our passage when Jesus says, I AM the Gate of the Sheep. How might we find encouragement from our reading today?

When you think of a shepherd many of us might think primarily of Scripture, since most of us do not regularly relate to the agrarian role of shepherd. I know some of you do understand this role, since we are in rural Oregon. At least one family in this congregation has goats. Others of you may have grown up on farms and done some shepherding, but probably most of us do not relate to this role firsthand.

I remember in seminary, one of my friends was a guy named Moses Pulei. He had grown up in Kenya with the Mosai tribe and literally worked as a shepherd. He even could tell real stories of protecting his sheep from lions, kind of like King David.

My experience with shepherding is limited to visiting a few farms and petting sheep. I have held a few lambs before, which was fun. I also remember traveling in Ireland, England, and Scotland and seeing sheep. Once on the island of Iona in Scotland, Karen and I witnessed about one hundred sheep walk over the Iona island golf

course. They never had to mow the grass at the golf course because the sheep would eat the grass and keep everything well trimmed.

Although we may have some experience with shepherds and farms, this reference to Jesus as the Good Shepherd probably made more sense in Jesus' day. How might we then learn from Jesus's words?

I want us to reflect on three aspects of Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

First, as the gate and Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus helps provide pasture for us.

Second, Jesus is the one who offers protection for the sheep.

Third, Jesus lays down his life and provides abundant life and salvation.

Let's begin with the idea that Jesus is the gate and shepherd who provides pasture for the sheep. This part of our passage connects to our Old Testament Psalm reading- Psalm 23 attributed to King David,

“The Lord is my Shepherd I Shall Not want, he makes me to lie down in green pastures.”

For me this part of our text, reminds me of our Newberg Peace Garden, with its beauty and restful atmosphere. I also enjoy the meadows and vineyards of our own Willamette Valley here in Oregon. I also think of going on hikes through woods and coming into a clearing or meadow. The meadows always are so beautiful after you spend time trekking through dark woods.

The image of a meadow also reminds us of how Jesus provides everything we need in life, both our food and drink and our peace of body and mind.

Where do you need Jesus to be your provider? How might you ask Jesus to provide you a meadow in which to find rest. Jesus is both the Gate and the Shepherd who helps us find pasture in the midst of our weary lives that often have us longing for rest and good provision. Like our song said today, And I trust in you alone. We can

find rest and trust in God as we rest in his presence and in beautiful pastures provided by Jesus.

Let us now look at Jesus the Good Shepherd who seeks to protect us. Have you ever seen a video of a sheep dog gathering sheep from a meadow? Within only a few minutes a sheep dog can run around a large group of sheep and quickly bring them through an open gate and then into a sheep pen.

Jesus as the Good Shepherd provides protection from the sheep as they come in from the meadow. Our text reminds us that Jesus lays down his life for the sheep. He protects his sheep from wolves and thieves. Whereas the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, Jesus offers protection and abundant life.

Some of you know that as part of my experience, I have attended and served in more charismatic ministry settings. When you serve in a church that is more charismatic, you notice that these folks really take evil seriously. This passages about Jesus' protection reminds

me that God seeks to protect us from evil. He is the safe Shepherd we can trust, who protects us from the evil one.

When I think of protection from evil, I also am reminded of the Lord's prayer, where Jesus say lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who seeks to deliver us from evil and to provide us protection from any spiritual attack in our lives. By the way, if you ever feel yourself sensing that you are unsafe or under a spiritual attack of some kind, remember to call on the name of Jesus. Know that you have authority to call on the name of Jesus and to ask the Holy Spirit to come and provide you both protection and peace. I often even pray for angels to surround me when I am under spiritual attack. Also, if this concept of being under spiritual attack is new to you, let me know and we can discuss what that feels like.

We have thus far looked at Jesus the one who offers us pasture, Jesus the Good Shepherd who protect us, and now we come to the reminder that Jesus offers us life and salvation.

Jesus offers us abundant life. He lays down his life for the sheep.

Here in John's Gospel we are reminded of the coming sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. We understand symbolically here that Jesus is the Shepherd who ultimately gives his life on the cross and provides his followers with the gift of salvation. Jesus shares in our passage that those who are his followers know his voice and listen to him.

We are invited in our reading to open our ears to listen for the voice of Jesus. Some may ask us why do we follow Jesus? Why do we trust him? One possible answer may be, because we know his voice and trust his voice. We know he is our Shepherd and can be trusted.

In verse 27-30 of John 10, we read, 27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My

Father, in regard to what he has given me, is greater than all,[d] and no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 The Father and I are one."

Notice that Jesus again says that he and the Father are one. We can trust Jesus because he is the Son of God. He and his Father are one, along with the Holy Spirit.

Although the religious leaders in our story are opposing Jesus, he knows that his true followers know his voice. Earlier he mentions that others will be added to his sheep, which refers to those who come to be followers of Jesus in the future both who are Jews and Gentiles. We are reminded that all who open their hearts to listen to Jesus may find eternal life and salvation.

Our job as the Christian Church is to continue to spread the good news of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We together seek to bring in sheep to the sheepfold and to provide life and protection in a world that is vulnerable.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, but he needs us as his sheep to continue to share about his love and salvation because so many people feel lost and afraid without a peaceful pasture to call their home.

For me personally, I am reminded that as the pastor of our small church, I am asked to be a Shepherd to this flock. One of the reasons we take time every Sunday to hear our praises and prayer requests is so that we all can be aware of each other's needs. We all need Christian community, a safe place to share our needs, while seeking comfort and healing. I do my best to be a Shepherd for each of you, but we all serve together in making sure we each find a home here in our congregation.

Jesus is the ultimate Shepherd who provides for what we need and gives us the green pasture we desire, the gift of abundant life and protection from evil. May we be faithful to share the good news of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and may we welcome all those who

may find this church home a place of rest. May we be restored in this community and sent out to look for any lost sheep as well as any who may need to hear the voice of the Shepherd for the first time. May we share the good news of God's love.

Let us pray...