

Daily Bible Study Commentary by Pastor Steve

We're excited to have you digging deeper into the Word. The best way to use this study guide is to read the Bible verse(s) first, then Pastor Steve's commentary. God bless you.

John 10:6

v6: Jesus had explained to a group of Pharisees how to identify a God-appointed spiritual leader. To do that He used an illustration of a shepherd coming to a sheepfold and calling his sheep, but for some reason his listeners didn't understand what He was saying. At one level His meaning was easily understood. Shepherds calling their sheep out of a sheepfold was a common occurrence in that day. But it was obvious that Jesus meant His words to be interpreted as one would interpret a parable. Each element contained a deeper meaning, so Jesus began to explain the key elements of His teaching. But as He did so, He added new information. He moved from talking about the requirements for good shepherds to talking about the requirement to become one of His sheep.

John 10:7-9

vs7-9: He said, "Amen, Amen, I say to you that I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me he will be saved, and he will go in and go out and find pasture" (literal). In the earlier illustration of the sheepfold (vs1-2), Jesus portrayed Himself as the true shepherd who entered by the door rather than breaking in by some other way. He will soon openly declare Himself to be that "good shepherd" (vs11, 14), but first He introduced Himself as the door of the sheep." In other words, people must come into God's sheepfold through Him. It is through Him that people are saved, and it is through Him that people receive God's care. If the "doorway" through which the true shepherd must pass is that He must die for God's sheep, then the "doorway" through which God's sheep must pass is by placing their faith in the death and resurrection of God's true Shepherd.

John 10:10

v10: Over the course of Israel's history there were many false prophets, wicked kings and men who falsely claimed to be the Messiah. And many of these tried to teach the people a way to God other than through the sacrifices that God ordained (v8). These were not simply leaders who were confused; they were men who were being used by the devil to steal the people's resources, kill their followers by leading them into foolish wars and uprisings and destroy their hope for eternal life. By contrast, Jesus came to lay down His life, thereby providing the one atoning sacrifice that the Father could accept for the sins of the world. He came to provide the sacrifice to which all the true sacrifices, by God's people, pointed, from Adam and Eve onward. And He came to provide the sacrifice on the cross in which all believers thereafter would place their faith. When Jesus said, "I came so that they (God's sheep) may have life, and they may have it abundantly" (literal), He was declaring that His death would make it possible for humans, regardless of whether they lived before or after Him, to be given eternal life.

John 10:10-11

v10 (continued): By adding the statement that His sacrifice would provide "abundant" life (more life than people could possibly use), He was pointing to the glories of the new age (Eze 34:25-31). But since it's possible to experience those glories here in this life, His words encourage us to expect an abundance of His presence, as well as the blessings His presence brings to us. **v11:** This verse holds the key to understanding this entire passage. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life on behalf of the sheep" (literal). It would be His death and resurrection that qualified Him to be the true shepherd of God's sheep. What separated Him from all other religious teachers and leaders is that He alone was qualified to become the sacrifice for the sins of the world. He alone is the divine, sinless Son of God who became a man in order to die as our substitute. There never has been, or will be, another. That's why there is only one true Door through which humans, from every age of earth's history, must pass. All must come to God by faith in Jesus' death and resurrection.

John 10:12-13

vs12-13: At this point in His explanation of the shepherd and the sheep Jesus introduced another figure: a person who is hired to guard the sheep. In order to explain why He was willing to die to save His sheep, Jesus contrasted Himself with someone who is not willing to die for the sheep. Hired shepherds run away when they see a wolf coming because they fear for their own life rather than the lives of the sheep. And the reason they don't care for the sheep is that the sheep don't belong to them; they belong to someone else. In this way Jesus was explaining why He would not run from the cross. He was willing to die to protect His sheep because they belonged to Him.

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John 10:14-15

vs14-15: He pointed to a very deep bond between Himself and God's people. He said that bond is as deep as the bond between Himself and the Father. He said, "I know the ones that are Mine, and the ones that are Mine know Me, in the same way as the Father knows Me and I know the Father" (literal). Whatever else He meant by that statement, to say that our relationship with Him is comparable to His relationship with the Father is absolutely amazing. The knowledge that is shared between the Father and the Son is complete. It is unbroken; it is full of love, respect and honor. To say that He knows us like that is easier to accept because we understand that He has all knowledge and loves us with a perfect love. But for Him to say that we know Him that way reveals an astounding depth of relationship with Himself which He has made possible for us. We can have an intimacy with Him in this life which is heavenly.

John 10:14-15

vs14-15 (continued): And by that statement Jesus was also speaking of the relationship we will have with Him when we see Him face to face, either after our death or, if we're still alive, when He returns to rule the earth. Paul described that day this way: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I have been fully known" (1Co 13:12). So in order to explain why He was willing to die for God's people rather than protect His own life, He pointed to the relationship His death would make possible. Having a relationship with them as deep as His relationship with the Father was a prize worth dying for. Jesus wasn't a hired servant tending someone else's sheep; He was rescuing His own.