

(John - Part 40): The True Shepherd vs. the Hireling

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the stark contrast between the true shepherd and those who exploit the flock for personal gain.

Duration: 49:41

Scripture: John 10:10-12, John 10:14, John 10:16

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of the thief, the hireling, and the good shepherd as described in the book of John. The thief represents those who come to steal, kill, and destroy, while the hireling is someone who works for the shepherd but does not truly care for the sheep. The preacher emphasizes the importance of the good shepherd, who is willing to lay down his life for the sheep and knows them intimately. The sermon also mentions the existence of other sheep that the good shepherd must bring into one fold.

Transcript

In the 10th chapter of John, verses 10 to 16, the thief cometh not but to steal and to kill and to destroy. I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, he seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

Now, this is, you might be surprised to hear me say, a difficult chapter to preach from. The reason is not what one might suppose. It is not to find truth here, but to make a selection of truth at any given time.

Because of the excessive plenitude of truth in this chapter, every verse, every phrase, almost every major word is a text. We feel that we are walking in molten gold, that we are in a diamond mine, with diamonds jutting out everywhere, to be picked up basketfuls of diamonds. So tonight, I have almost arbitrarily

arranged it like this, to talk about the thief, and the hireling, and the wolf, and the other sheep, and the imperative of finding them, and the time when there shall be only one fold and one shepherd.

Now, verse 10 is not a pleasant verse, not at all a pleasant verse. The thief, he says, cometh not but to steal and to kill and to destroy. So there we have a picture of the thief.

He sneaks into the fold, and his purpose in coming in is to steal sheep, and to kill some sheep, because he wants to eat, and wantonly to destroy the flock. That is, the destroying is not apart from the stealing and killing. The stealing and the killing is the destroying of the flock.

Now, this thief is an enemy to the sheep, and he is also an enemy to the true shepherd whose sheep they are. Now that's a solemn, if beautiful, or beautiful if solemn truth. If we simply leave it there, unconnected with any modern situation.

But we don't dare do that, because this truth is for us today as well as for them back there. And the simple truth is here that we have pictured the religious racketeer, the person who comes in under the guise of religion, and who is not there to help the sheep but to fleece the sheep, and to steal from the sheep, and of course to kill, only that he might eat the sheep. It's not wanton killing, it is killing for the sake of the food.

So this thief is in there to get what he can for himself from the sheep. He is the slick confidence man of the kingdom. He can smile, pray, quote a text, and be a villain still.

Now, they don't hesitate, these religious racketeers, which our Lord tells us about. Now this is not I introducing it. I'm finding it here.

They don't hesitate to use sacred things. I have some respect for the highwayman who goes out at the risk of his own skin and holds up a man on the highway and takes his money. I certainly have some respect for him.

He's putting his own life in jeopardy, because it has been known that the highwayman with his gun was not fast enough, and the other man shoots first. So many a highwayman has lost his life. It's dangerous.

Robbery is dangerous. And for a man to go out and rob like the traditional robber and take the risk of having his own brains beaten up, at least you can say, well, he's a bold man. But this thief is not a bold man, because he does not put himself in any jeopardy at all.

He uses religion as his disguise. And under the cloak of religion, he becomes a racketeer. And seeing that he's a cynical, bad man, deeply depraved, he doesn't hesitate to use any sacred thing.

For instance, healing of the body. He will take healing of the body and make a racket out of it. And they have done it and are doing it.

There are healing men who hire people to come and pretend they're sick, and they pray for them and they get up and praise the Lord. That's well known. I've got that documented.

That's a fact. That's known, that they hire people. I have hired people and otherwise persuaded them to lie down and pretend they're sick.

A man who was healed after eight priests had given him up, eight priests had given him up, he was instantaneously healed with the touch of Jesus Christ. So necessarily, he believes in divine healing. He

went to a healing campaign where one of these men was operating.

A little boy, six years old, was prayed for. He was blind. He couldn't see, of course, being blind.

And when they were through praying, the evangelist says, Now can you see? And he said, Yes. And he followed the evangelist around over the platform to prove that he was healed and could see. And my friend, who had been healed after eight priests, had given him an extreme unction and given him up as dead.

And he was converted and became an Alliant preacher now. But he went up to the little boy and he said, Sonny, were you blind? He said, No, sir. He said, Were you ever blind? He said, No, sir.

He said, I'm in school. He went to the mother and said, Is that your child? She said, Yes, that's my child. He said, Mother, was that boy ever blind? She said, No, sir.

He was never blind. It was a racket they were running, and of course the crowd went into hysterics and praised the Lord and wept and clapped their hands and went on big. But this thief was in there to get the money of the people and to steal a reputation at their expense and to live off the most sacred emotions of the human breast and to fatten himself on the woes of mankind.

That man is a thief, and whoever operates like that is a thief. And he is thoroughly bad. He's depraved more deeply than a highwayman.

And the man who holds up this store and robs it is a gentleman because he's putting his life in danger. A policeman may see him come out and put a bullet through him, but nobody's there to put a bullet through this racketeer who is paying people to say they're blind when they're not. He's a thoroughly depraved liar and child of sin, and yet he can smile and pray and quote a text and pretend to be deeply in love with the poor, sick world.

Then missions are also used as a racket. I think that the healing of the human body, salvation of the human soul, and the work of divine missions, foreign missions, those are so sacred we ought to speak of them only in hushed voice. And yet there are those who can, with open eyes, cynical souls of the kingdom, they can enter and use foreign missions as a means of getting popularity and making money and lots of it.

And there are those who have learned that if you touch the tender cord of foreign missions, that God's good, innocent, generous people will shell out of their money largely. And so they have it arranged so that they can get to the money of the people and can have a good cut out of it and can live well and drive big cars at the expense of God's simple-hearted, honest people who gladly and joyfully give of their money because they think they're giving it to a good cause. And one fellow is claiming that he's broadcasting behind the Iron Curtain.

Somebody told me in Virginia he said it's a well-known and provable fact that all he has is a half-hour radio program once a week. But over in this country the big ads indicate that he's doing a tremendous job over there. Now, it is the business of the shepherd to warn against that kind of thing and to warn God's people against it.

And some people don't like to hear it and they'll be mad, and some won't come back here and they'll say, that man poses a scoundrel because he dares to talk about healing and missions and things like that in such a bold and terrible way. Well, I read in the book of Ezekiel where God says they feed themselves and

don't feed the flock, and they rob and they kill and they get fat on the flock, and God says, I'll fix them. And I'll send true shepherds out that will round up my flock and bless them.

And we also have men who live off our love for our dead. The love we have for our very dead is used sometimes by these false shepherds, these thieves. And money is taken and popularity is received.

Now, that's the thief. And if you think for a minute that Christian charity would pull a veil down over that thing, you don't know what Christian charity is. When a man is honest and fair and bold and tries to tell the truth, there's always some tender-minded and simple-minded saint that's ready to run up to him and say, now, wait a minute, let charity cover a multitude of sins.

If any of these thieves would repent, I'd be one of the first ones to shake their hand and say, all right, bud, I'll pray for you now, start straight and try to give that money back and live like a man from now on. And I'd be one of the first ones to help him. But love cannot cover a thief when a thief is battenning and getting himself a wad of money in the holy precincts of the sanctuary.

And then, verses 12 and 13, we come to another fellow, not as bad as the thief. He's the hireling. There's almost a streak of humor here, and there's a kind of a sardonic humor underneath this one.

He says in 12 and 13 that the hireling, who is not a shepherd, whose only sheep are not, he sees the wolf coming. And, of course, he ducks out. He leaveth the sheep and fleeth.

And the wolf catches them and scatters the sheep. And the hireling flees just because he is a hireling, and he doesn't care for the sheep. Now, who is the hireling? Well, he certainly is not as depraved as the thief because he doesn't come into the sanctuary and pretend to be anything.

He doesn't deceive. He's not a racketeer. He's just a hired man.

One of the commentaries says that this word here, the only word we have in English for a hireling properly, is the tramp laborer. The fellow who loafs around, floats around, gets a job, works for a few months, and gets himself a little wild, and then goes his way, spends it, and then when he needs another little bit of money, gets another job. And so here's your hireling.

Now, he doesn't deliberately destroy, and he isn't a thief, and he does do an honest day's job, but he's not a shepherd. He only works for the shepherd. He's a hired man.

He doesn't owe him anything. He just works there. And he has no love for the great shepherd.

He has no interest in the sheep. And he does what he does for a living. Now, there's your Christian leader, who is simply doing what he does because he knows that it pays him, and it's a rather easy living.

Now, I like that word living I've used there because, did you know that in ecclesiastical history, you can find it, you don't have to go way back, you can find in recent ecclesiastical history, that the word living is used of a pastor. A young fellow comes out of the seminary and gets his degree, and his bishop says to him, well, now, young man, I think I can find a living for you. So he gets in the church, and he calls that his living.

Can you imagine that? Now, I, for my part, I can't imagine it. I realize that the ox that treads out the corn has to be fed, or you won't have any ox very long. I realize that he's worthy of being fed.

I realize the old priests of Israel used to live off of the tithes of the other eleven tribes. I realize that our Lord himself was fed by the generosity of the people to whom he ministered, and Paul said that was all right. And I realize that, that's part of the order of God, that those who give full time to the Christian work should be supported by those who cannot give full time to it, but are perfectly willing to share in the support of those who do give full time.

The missionary that goes to the field can't also labor and have a job. He has to be free, so we turn him loose and pay him. That's perfectly all right.

But there's a different approach to it, you see, my brethren. Take such a man, say, as R.S. Roseberry, who has spent his lifetime in Africa and has put the whole continent in debt to him. He's had to live on what the people sent him, of course.

He couldn't have a job in an office or a factory. He's had to live off the generosity of the people. But the idea that mission work was a living for him would be so shocking to him, I think he'd drop dead if anybody even suggested it.

And so any other man who is an honest man, who is an under-shepherd, and who loves the shepherd, his embarrassment will be that he has to take anything. He won't accept his work, his spiritual work, as a living, as a way to get along. He will accept it as a joy, a privilege, and then rather embarrassingly say, well, I suppose I'll have to take a salary.

I can't work in a factory and do my work for the Lord. But whatever you say, I'm not laying any law down and asking for anything. I don't want any raise.

I just want whatever you want me to have. It's all right. It's the only way the man who loves the sheep and loves the shepherd can ever serve God.

But as soon as he makes a living out of it, he's a scoundrel. And just as soon as he becomes a hired man, a cramped laborer, oh, what sardonic humor there is there. These cramped laborers.

And you know, we've got a lot of these fellows traveling around putting on one-night stands. They start in California and go to Maine, or else better, they start in Minnesota and go to Florida. And I notice that they don't start in Minnesota in May.

They start in November. And they're called to the Lord down where it's warm. And we've got so many of them.

We had a church in Southern California that was without a pastor. And the home secretary said he got 14 applications from brethren who felt instantly called to the Lord to go to California, where the mockingbird singeth all the day long and the skies are always bluest. And it's very lovely and nice.

And people want to have fun, and so they start. And they're right ahead, and I get the letters. I'd like to be at your place Wednesday night for thus and thus, because I'm on my way to this and that.

And they're having, why don't they bum their way instead of bumming their way on the churches? Better bum than bum, I would say, wouldn't you? And yet these hard tramps who come in and put on one-night stands, and the sheep get down on their knees and let them hear them. Don't shear them all over. They just take off a little chunk.

But by the time they've reached Florida, they have quite a bag of wool. And they can live down there until the mockingbird nests and the sun hath returned to the north. Well, the harling and the thief, God help us preachers.

We walk between the nether and the upper millstone, to mix up a figure, and we can become rascals without anybody finding it out. Pray for us, brethren. Pray that we'll be holy and clean and sacrificial and good and right and humble, because there are more temptations for a minister.

It's easy to fool the public. I can stand up here and fool you people, and you will think I'm a saint, and I can be a devil underneath. And you are saying this in good heart, and you won't find it out for five years.

Pray for the ministers of the gospel. Pray for the leaders. Pray for the missionary promoters.

Pray for those who promote the work of God, that they won't degenerate into thieves and harlings and use the church of God as a way to make money. Well, then there's the wolf. And I think I ought to say, I want you to hear me say, that there are a wonderful bunch of good, godly, honest fellows.

I meet them wherever I go. Good, honest men that would die for Christ at the drop of a hat, that would serve him. One man, a nephew of mine by marriage, told me about Hyman Appelman.

Why, he said, you know, Uncle, Hyman Appelman, he's a song leader, he said, that Dr. Appelman prays long hours and prays and lies and prays and calls on God long hours. He closes on Sunday one place and opens on Monday another place and never takes a vacation and continues to drive on. And I said, tell Dr. Appelman he'll kill himself.

He'd better quit it. And the fellow said, he's been doing it for 25 years. I said, my objection is overruled.

A man can do it 25 years, can suffer like that and pray like that and labor like that. He's got my respect. There are a lot of good men, and I'm even prepared to say that the majority are.

But God warns against the thief and the hirely. Look out for the hired tramp who's only working for the shepherd and who hasn't any interest in the flock nor any interest in the shepherd. Then there's the wolf, verse 12.

Satan is that wolf, of course, and the thief and the hireling are enemies of the sheep and they're friends of the wolf. Because after the thief or the hireling has gotten in and scattered the sheep, the wolf finds it very easy to go in and get himself a nice meal of mutton. As long as the sheep are gathered around their shepherd, sure of themselves, poised and careful, they're safe.

But as soon as they go wild and start to bleat and run all directions, all the wolf has to do is just wait till one passes him and pounce and he's got it. So there's the wolf. And now this hired man sees a wolf.

And again, I find a certain amount of dark complexion humor here. He says that the hireling sees the wolf coming. And he says to himself, now I'm working here, but I don't see why I should take any risk with the fangs of a wolf.

So he just disappears. He hears the sheep bleating and he looks back over his scared shoulder and sees them down and being torn, sees the blood flow. But he doesn't care.

He's just working for the shepherd. They're not his sheep and he isn't attached to them and they don't know his voice and he doesn't know their name. He never patted their heads.

He never held them in his arms when they were lambs and he never mended their legs when they were broken. He just works for a while for the shepherd. So he doesn't care what happens to the sheep.

He just doesn't want to get torn by the fangs of the wolf. So the last picture we have of the hireling is that he's got his hat in his hand to make good time. He's getting out of that region immediately.

He may not even come back for his pay. Though the chances are knowing him, he'll likely be around Monday morning for his pay. And then Trampone someplace else.

Now isn't that a ghastly, terrible description? I didn't make that description. Jesus did. He put it here.

And ecclesiastical history is replete with that kind of thing. Why? Because it's a fallen world and we're bad people and we need God. It's what might be expected in a bad world like this.

Ah, the contrast. The next point. I'm the good shepherd.

He'd come all the way down and been incarnated that he might be a good shepherd. And he didn't care for himself at all. You notice that he never performed a miracle for himself, never one.

His miracles were always for somebody else. He never asked anybody for anything for himself except that woman when he said, Will you give me a glass of water? And I'm not sure that he didn't ask for water in order to get her into conversation or that he might win her to himself, which he did. He never asked for anything.

A selfless man, a man who doesn't ask for anything but who lives for the sheep and finally he dies for the sheep. He cares for the sheep, this good shepherd. He was there when they were born and he picked up the little old scrambled lamb, all tail and legs and appetite, and started it off right and taught it its first little how to get its meal.

And if it got in trouble, he found it and he taught it his voice and he carried it when it got lost on his shoulder. He loved the sheep and he was the good shepherd. What a contrast.

Thieves and harlings and wolves and then standing over against it is the great good shepherd of the sheep. How we ought to love the Lord Jesus. How precious he ought to be to us.

This shepherd that proved that he loved us even unto death. And what can you do more for anybody than to die for them? You can help them all well and good, but maybe not at your own inconvenience. You can give them a good deal, but maybe not at your own loss.

You can sacrifice something for them, but you will still have something left. But when you give your life for them, you don't have anything left. So when Jesus our Lord gave his life for his flock, he didn't have anything left.

There was the good shepherd. How we ought to sing about that shepherd. This is my favorite picture of Jesus, that of the shepherd.

He has many, many names and he appears under many, many figures and metaphors, but that of a shepherd is the sweetest of them all. This good shepherd who found the lambs. And there isn't a Christian here tonight, but the good shepherd didn't find you.

Lost and undone, he found you, he found you. Here's the good shepherd. Now, I notice again another point, the other sheep, verse 16.

Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Now, he has other sheep beside Israel he met. Israel, even Peter, found this very hard.

They had gotten the idea that they were the favored of the Lord. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and David and their Bible and their language and their temple and their city and their priests and their ritual. They had come pretty much to depend upon themselves as being the very favored of God.

And yet here was this good shepherd saying, I have other sheep that are not of this fold and I know how they looked at each other. Is not he the king of Israel? Are we not of the seed of Abraham? What does he mean, other sheep? And they had a hard time believing that Jesus meant that there were any other sheep beside Israel. And even Peter, when he was full of the Holy Ghost, didn't believe it.

That is, he couldn't grasp it. He wasn't doubting it, but he just didn't grasp it. So one day when it was time for prayer and he was morally able to receive it, the Lord let down a great big sheep.

One of these parachutes, you drop out of an airplane, what do you call those things? Parachute in reverse, upside down, in it. In it there were all sorts of unclean beasts. There would be an anteater and an elephant and a pig and a lot of things that they weren't supposed to eat in Israel.

They were unclean. And Jesus said, Peter, get up and eat. And Peter, even after Pentecost, he talked back to God.

He said, Lord, excuse me, but there's a mistake here. I'm a Jew and I have never eaten anything unclean. He said, look at these lips.

He said, nothing that wasn't kosher ever passed these lips. And the Lord said, Peter, when I call it clean, don't you call it unclean. Now get to the Gentiles.

Off Peter went and opened the door to the Gentiles, opened the door to the Samaritans. And Peter learned that the Lord had come for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. There were other sheep that were not of that fold.

Now we find it just as hard as Peter found. Of course, in our Christian Missionary Alliance, we're taught from our childhood up that the Lord has other sheep. But there are some churches where as soon as you talk about other sheep, they say, why don't you deal with the heathen at home? And then, of course, they never do anything about it.

Theoretically we believe in the other sheep, but practically we tend to forget the other sheep. I hope this church will never forget the other sheep, that there are other sheep that are not of our fold. Oh, there are a lot of applications here.

There are sheep that are not of our Alliance fold. I believe that. I believe that there are Christians that are not Alliance people.

Don't you? Doesn't matter to me. I believe it. There are other sheep that are not of this fold.

Thank God. You know, they don't like to have me talk like this, because it's hard on the morale of our society. But morales stagger along somehow.

We love God's other sheep, all of God's other sheep. The Nazarene sheep, and the Pentecostal sheep, and the Baptist sheep. Wet as they are, they're God's dear sheep.

The Presbyterian sheep, educated sheep. And the Episcopal sheep, the very high-brow sheep. But as long as they're the Lord's sheep, they belong to me, and I belong to them.

And I belong to all the churches there are. Every church is my church. And they can throw me out if they will, but I still belong to the fold.

Other sheep that are not of this fold. I want you to get broad-minded. I got a hat here the other day.

And the first thing I did, I got something on it, tried to clean it, and it was no good. So I took it down to somebody down here who's supposed to clean hats. And I got it back in three or four days, shrunk, until I'd have had to go to Borneo to have my head shrunk to fit it.

So I took it back to the man that I'd bought it from, and I said, Mr. Balleen, I had this hat cleaned. And look at it. It just sat up on there like a comic character in a show.

And well, he said, you'll have to leave that here. He said, if you'll leave it with me, I'll dance on the leather band, and then I'll put it down on this thing. And showed me the stretcher, one of those affairs, and two hats with a screw.

And you put the hat on, and then you turn the screw. And every hour or so you come give it a little turn so it won't break or tear. Keep turning it, keep turning it, and finally it gets as big as your head.

But that's the stretcher. Oh, how I'd like to see all of you people stretch until your heart's big inside. Be ye also enlarged, says the Holy Ghost.

And Augustine said, narrow is the mansion of my soul, O God, enlarge thou it. Alan Redpath, preaching down the loop. Somebody said to me, what do you make of Brother Redpath? I said, listen, I'd preach in a Jewish synagogue if they'd invite me.

I'd preach down there. They hadn't invited me, but I'd preach down there. I'd go to a Christian science temple, anywhere and preach the word of God.

I'd say, let me preach what I want to preach. Oh, so in place of blaming Redpath, I think he's doing a fine job. Let him preach down there.

If they don't like what he preaches, kick him out, and he'll be happy. But this little narrow man. Is he an Alliance man? I don't know whether he's an Alliance man or not.

The Alliance is only 70 years old, and Christianity goes back to Pentecost. What's the difference whether he's an Alliance man? The word of God tells us that God has other sheep, other sheep, and they're lovely sheep, and they're his sheep. And they don't belong to this fold, and he's bringing them in, and there'll be a day when they'll all be one fold.

But now, they're all scattered around. And then there are the lost sheep of the foreign lands. I was in a meeting last night.

We were sending a Greek over to Greece to preach the word over there. Chris Pappas. If you ever heard Chris Pappas, you heard somebody.

You put the needle down off, Chris goes and preaches the word. The busiest man I know. I said, Chris was jet propelled.

And I'm only a propeller job and can't keep up with the power. But away he goes just like a jet propelled Greek, and he's going over there to preach the gospel. Now, I believe in that.

And I believe that there are other sheep that don't belong to this fold. Sheep that haven't a white skin, and sheep that haven't eyes quite the direction our eyes go. You think that when the Lord died, he only died for blondes? Or that he only died for pinkish, brownish people like most of us? We call ourselves white men.

There isn't a white man here tonight. Not one. There isn't a white woman here tonight.

We're all spotted and freckled and funny looking, aren't we now? Look at yourselves, sister. And praise God for grace to stand a shot. If you think you're a white woman, you're mistaken.

You're not. When you die, you'll be white. But as long as there's blood in your veins, you won't be white.

You'll be a sort of a very red, very mild, very light. And we, God, you think the Lord looked at the skin of the man he was dying for? No, he looked at his heart. You think he looked which way his eyes went? Oriental's eyes slope this way, and ours go straight across.

Who's to say which is the better looking? You're just used to yourself, that's all. If your eyes had been born slanted, and every time you looked in the glass, which is frequent, you'd seen your eyes going this way, you'd got used to that, you'd have said, they're pretty, aren't they? And the fellow that came along with straight across eyes, you'd have said, isn't that a weird looking outfit? It's just depending upon what you're used to. You think the Lord looked at the direction your eyes run when he died for you? No, he died for your heart, not for the slant of your eyes.

So there they are behind the Iron Curtain. There they are in North Korea. There they are in many of the lands in Asia and in Europe.

And they're waiting quietly the hour when the chains will be broken, political chains, and they can hear the gospel preached one more time. If you want to read something encouraging, get a copy of the World Report, United States News and World Report for last week, and read the report of that priest who came over here, who was driven out of Moscow, you remember? Well, he was interviewed by the press, and he tells the story about how they packed the churches out there, not sitting but standing. They have no seats.

And stand! Only one Catholic Church, but he says the Orthodox Church, the Baptist Churches. They fill them up behind the Iron Curtain. Over there where they throw their weight around, and the secret police are looking to get their men.

Still there are sheep, God's sheep. God's black sheep in Africa. God's copper-colored sheep in South America.

And God's yellow sheep in Asia. He has his other sheep. And I pray that this Church will never forget.

I pray that we'll never, never, never forget. And that we will see to it that as we come up soon to the missionary convention, that we'll have upon us a sense of alertness and interest and keen desire for the lost sheep and the other sheep that are not of this whole. Then I notice here the imperative.

He says, them also I must bring. I must bring. I want to bring, no.

I hope to bring, no. I must bring them. It is the imperative of Christian mission.

We must make some radical changes, we white people, so-called, and begin to think differently. We must begin to remember that we're no dearer to God than the colored races. We must remember that we haven't exhausted the grace of God.

When the Lord blessed us, he didn't exhaust his fount of mercy. But it's an infinite fountain. And while there are, as the brother prayed, about a billion people in the world who haven't heard the gospel, that billion is a limited number.

You can put it down on a blackboard. Or put a one and then put nine ciphers after it, and you've got a billion. But there's no limit to the grace of God.

You can put down a one and then start writing ciphers after it and keep on for a million years, and you're no nearer to exhausting the grace of God than you were when you started. If all the stars in the heavens were ciphers, or all the grace hands by the seashore innumerable were ciphers, and you had a blackboard as wide as the sky, you could write down ciphers and run up where not even mathematicians know what to call it, up and up and up beyond all human thinking. And when you put a period, you'd still be finite.

But the grace of God is infinite. It goes on and on and on beyond. So God's not exhausted his grace yet.

Don't you worry about that. There's lots of grace for all the people in the wide world. Now he says, them also I must bring, and I want to know how he brings them.

And the answer is, they shall hear my voice. That is, they hear his voice in the voice of his messengers, the voice of them that go. Now here's a little confusion of metaphor, but I want you to put this down in your mind and remember it.

He finds his lost sheep by sending his found sheep. That's the way he finds them. He sends his found sheep to find his lost sheep.

And while the figure shows us the shepherd going after the sheep, what doesn't say there is that the shepherd is also the priest at the right hand of God, and that when he goes after sheep, he goes after sheep in the person of his under-shepherd. And his under-shepherd, as it says in Ezekiel, my sheep are men. So he sends his found sheep after his lost sheep.

And it's by means of his found ones that he finds his lost ones. And this obligation lies on us. I don't like it that our missionary offering isn't increasing very much.

It's a little, but not enough. We ought to boost it and boost it. And it ought to go way over the top.

We ought to be doing something about this. We ought to pray about this. And we ought to remember there are other sheep, and that he's seeking to find them by means of those whom he has found.

And we must not fail him. We must not fail him. I'm a little bit afraid in this church that we're enjoying our religion rather than imparting it.

Suppose when our Lord fed the five thousand, it had worked like this instead of the way it did. Suppose our Lord had given each of the apostles a basket, broke the bread and gave them each a basket, and said, Give ye them to eat. And they were all sitting down in fifties on the green grass, hungry and weary and tired and faint.

Suppose the Lord had turned his back. And when he turned his back, the apostles slipped up a ravine among the trees and sat down and had a seat. And the poor, hungry multitudes were where they had been before, sitting there, still faint, still hungry, still weak, still sick.

And the shepherd would look around, wonder what had happened to his under-shepherds. Where are they? Here are my sheep unfed. Where are my found sheep? Off somewhere gorging themselves on the food that was given to them for others.

That's what we've done in the United States. That's what we've done in Protestantism. And you consider the Christian Missionary Alliance has 730 missionaries and we're sixth largest in the world.

Imagine that. Southern Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, China Inland Mission, two others, three others larger than us, and then, two others, then we come sixth and we've only got 730 missionaries. That includes, the listings include the Baptists with their millions and the Presbyterians with their millions.

Still, we are sixth with only 60,000 members. What a shame. What an absolute shame that we can live in the lap of luxury and let the world go.

Other sheep I have, said Jesus, and them also I must bring. And he finds his lost sheep by sending his found sheep. And he can only send his found sheep as we make it possible for them to go.

Then he says, There shall be one colt and one shepherd on that great getting up morning. No more struggling flock here, no more struggling flock there, but one great immortal victorious flock in one glorious colt presided over by one shepherd. Nobody will say, what's your denomination? They'll say, what's the good word this morning? What did you find out new about Jesus in the last 24 hours? What new streak did you find in heaven that you didn't know yesterday? Now, what's your denomination? Are you colt? Or are you an Armenian? Are you pre-millenarian or post-millenarian or an all-millenarian? We invent terms to divide the sheep.

You lie over there. You lie over there. You chaw your coot over there.

You usually lie over there and divide up the sheep for the Lord over little things. You baptize by sprinkles, you lie over there. You by mercy, you lie over there.

You poor, you lie over there. You can walk around near the line, little flock, little flock, looking out of the corner of their eyes at each other. Some old ram comes down the aisle, and he doesn't belong to any of those flocks, so he starts one of his own.

Dear God, what a mess we're in. How foolish we are when they're all supposed to be one flock and one shepherd and one fold and one Father and one Lord and one Holy Ghost and one baptism and one hope of his coming and one bond of peace. The people of God are looking forward to that great getting-up morning.

Someday he'll find his last lost sheep, and when he finds his last lost sheep, there'll be nothing to prevent him from coming back, and he'll return. Could that last lost sheep be you? He says they shall hear his voice. Have you heard his voice? Have you heard his voice calling you in? I don't know where you heard it.

Maybe you heard it in a hymn, a song, testimony, the voice of a friend, a sermon somewhere. But if you heard his voice, you could be the last lost sheep. And when that one's in, then the wheels of prophecy will begin to spin and the wonders of revelation and the wonders of Daniel and the wonders of the prophetic scriptures will begin to unfold before our eyes as swift as the return of the sea.

And there'll be one fold and one shepherd. I'm glad I'm a Christian, aren't you? Glad I'm a Christian. Sometimes I wish I could get converted again, just for the joy of becoming a Christian.

But I'm already in. You can't get in twice, so here I am. God bless you.

Are you one that's lost? Are you lost tonight? If you are, the Lord's looking for you. And he says they shall hear my voice and I must bring them. I must bring them.

You heard him? God help you. Let's pray. O thou shepherd of Israel, thou shepherd of the sheep, the Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leads me to the quiet waters by. O Lord, thou art the shepherd of thy sheep.

We're so pleased with the arrangement. We're so glad it worked out that way. We're so glad that thou didst so have it.

We wouldn't have felt comfortable if thou hadst made Moses our shepherd. Do you remember Moses broke some rocks one time? Smote another rock. Killed a man.

Wouldn't have been comfortable if thou hadst made Elijah our shepherd. Because Elijah called down the fire. O Lord Jesus, we're comfortable having thee as our shepherd.

We're relaxed and restful. For thou art a good shepherd and a great shepherd. An understanding, sympathetic, loving shepherd.

We thank thee, Lord Jesus, for being our shepherd. Thank thee for David. But we're glad he's not our shepherd.

He didn't like a man, he ordered his head off. But O Lord, we thank thee thou art our shepherd. Now we pray thee for any who may be lost this night.

For Jesus' sake we pray before the lights go out in this building. They may have found the shepherd, or the shepherd found them. Grant it for Jesus' sake.

Enlarge our hearts. Make us big inside, bigger inside than we are outside. Make us as big as the world.

Make us as big as the whole Church of God. Inside, big enough to contain everything. Let thy mercy be over us now.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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