

John 10:1-6. the Parable of the Good Shepherd.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus is the true shepherd who guides and cares for his flock, leading them to salvation and eternal life.

Scripture: Psalm 23:1, Psalm 142:3, Psalm 143:8, John 10:1, Revelation 7:17

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Shepherd Leadership"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the Pharisees' misunderstanding of Jesus' parable of the good shepherd, likening them to thieves and robbers who cared more about their own gain than the souls of God's people. Jesus, the true shepherd, enters by the door, openly declaring Himself as the Son of God, and leads His flock by calling them by name and going before them. His sheep hear His voice and follow Him to green pastures, finding rest and safety in His guidance, even through the valley of the shadow of death, knowing He will lead them to Mount Zion in heaven.

Transcript

The Pharisees had understood the meaning of the Lord when he spoke of blindness, but they did not understand the parable of the good shepherd. Had they known that they were represented under the figure of thieves and robbers, how great would have been their indignation! Yet such indeed they were, because they robbed God, for they destroyed the souls of his people by their false instructions. They loved to feed on the flesh, and to clothe themselves in the fleece of the sheep, but they cared not for the flock. They sought their own gain, and their own reputation, but not the glory of God.

What is meant by their climbing over the wall into the sheepfold, instead of entering by the door? The door represents Christ. The Pharisees did not come in by the door, for they did not believe in the Savior. But who is the shepherd of the sheep? How many little children could answer, "Jesus is the good Shepherd!" Some could say, "He is my shepherd." They know He is their shepherd, because they love him.

How did Jesus show he was the true shepherd? By his manner of coming in to the fold, and by his manner of going out. He did not climb over the wall, as thieves and robbers do, but entered by the door, openly declaring that he was the Son of God. "To him the porter opens." Does not the porter represent the prophets? Christ was the Shiloh of whom Jacob had spoken nearly two thousand years before, and the Lamb of God to whom John the Baptist had lately pointed.

He showed he was the Shepherd of the sheep by his manner of going out. He led his flock. He called them by their names, according to the custom of shepherds in the East; when he called them, he went before them. None but the true shepherd could lead the sheep; strangers would have been forced to drive them. It is very interesting to behold an eastern shepherd going before his sheep and leading them to their pastures. His flock know the voice of their own shepherd, and would not obey the call of any other.

Nathanael was one of the sheep of Christ. When Jesus saw him, he said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit." Thus he showed he knew him. He was like a shepherd calling his sheep by its name. Did Nathanael hear the shepherd's voice? Yes, he replied; "You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." The man born blind was another of Christ's sheep. When the shepherd said to him, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" he soon replied, "Lord, I believe." Have we heard the voice of the shepherd, calling us to follow him to the green pastures? None but his sheep hear that voice. They hear it sounding in the depths of their hearts, saying, "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." They listen to the voice, and say to their own souls, "Return unto your rest, O my soul." They feel safe while they follow their Shepherd. Each says to Him, "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk." (Ps. 143:8.) The poor helpless sheep cannot tell which is the path that leads to glory, but his shepherd can. After passing through some dark valley, the sheep says, "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, you knew my path." (Ps. 142:3.) The further the sheep goes in the way, the more trust he feels in his shepherd; and when he comes to the edge of the last valley he is able to say, "Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." We know what lies beyond that valley--Mount Zion. It is to that fair mountain the shepherd conducts his flock.

But while other shepherds are of a different nature from the sheep they tend, the good shepherd has taken on him the nature of his flock. "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." (Rev. 7:17.) Having fed, and led them upon earth, he will feed and lead them in heaven. We shall never cease to require a shepherd's care. It is a delight to those who love Jesus to think that He will always be their shepherd and they his sheep.

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