

and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (Quality: Very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 December 1965

Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[0 : 00] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I will bring our attention to a subject in the Gospel of John, chapter 10, the second half of the fourth verse.

And the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Chapter 10, the Gospel of John, second half of the fourth verse.

And now some of you might think, in announcing a subject like this, I expect the pastor is going to preach us a baptizing sermon or something of that nature.

But, while I may refer to things to do with following the Lord Jesus in the way he himself trod as verily man, there is much more besides going down into the water to follow him.

There is your life to live afterwards. And that is a great matter to contemplate as grace is given in everyday life.

[1 : 30] And mark how it is worded. And the sheep follow him. What think ye of Christ?

What saith the Scriptures? In giving attention to this or that, in the duties and difficulties of everyday life, am I following him in doing it?

Can it be seen that I have been with Jesus if I do it? And now I want to work out a line of things on my mind.

And I would look at the subject from two or three viewpoints of it. And as the subject is to do with sheep, which is very familiar to you all, and it is very striking how the Holy Spirit uses sheep to illustrate the things of God.

And this is the word of the dear Good Shepherd himself, when he said, And the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

[2 : 48] And now, strictly speaking, making a profession of the name of Jesus, having your name inscribed on a church roll, is just this, when it is reduced to practice, follow him.

You will find, if your eyes are opened, and your ears are intent to know his voice, that in the things that come into your life, although they may often be things which are hard to be understood, things that you wonder it may be, when they come, first of all, at the why and the wherefore.

But if you do belong to the sheep, you will find, in the ultimate working out of the dealings of God with you, he is simply saying to you, follow me.

Ask no questions. Why or wherefore? Follow me. And they that taketh not up his cross, and followeth after me, cannot, mark that word, cannot be my disciple.

And now let us look then, at just three or four sheet marks, and then, as the Lord shall help me, I will show, something of what it does mean, to follow him, what is involved in it.

[4 : 26] And, how glad those of us who try to preach, especially pastors, who preach to the same people all the year round, how glad we are, that there are these illustrations.

And now, regarding sheep, and sheep marks, it is not enough, to have just the fleece, of a profession, of the name of Jesus, because it might be possible, to be either sprinkled, baptized, or confirmed, and have such a name, and yet be dead.

And the word of God, does say, which I think, is a terrifying, scripture to contemplate, having a form of godliness, and no power.

There is nothing, of the life of God in it. It is a form of godliness, a name to live.

And now, you and I, as grace is given, we want to be delivered, from living, such a life. We want reality, in our religion, our profession, of the name, of Jesus.

[5 : 45] We do indeed, want, to be, sheep, or lambs, as it would be, with many of you, dear, young people, asking the way to Zion, with your, faces, thither, ward.

And it says, in a lovely scripture, in Isaiah, he shall feed his flock, like a shepherd, he shall gather, the lambs in his arms, and carry them, in his bosom.

What a beautiful picture, word picture, that is. And you know, you dear children, in the Sunday school, I believe sometimes, you sing a little hymn, and there is a question, in it.

And you might think it over, at this time, and see what the answer is. Am I now, a bleating lamb? Wonderful mercy, if that, is what you, really are, before God, with whom you have to do.

Not as yet, made manifest, as a grown up sheep, yet, one of the little ones, of whom it is said, these little ones, which believe, on me, a bleating lamb, not able to say much, about the things of God, at all, yet in your heart, you ponder these things, you think on them, and sometimes, you try to pray, as well as you can, before God, with whom you feel, that you have to do, the Lord, bless you, as a bleating, lamb.

[7 : 44] And now, let us look, at these sheep, marks. You find, in Old Testament, times, that, the sheep, was acceptable, as a sacrifice, because, it was accounted, a clean, creature.

And now, I want to dwell, a little while, not long, because of the time, on that word, clean. And that brings us, back to godly fear, of whom I said, just a little, in the morning, sermon, they that have, this godly fear, as an unctuous light, to what is right, and a bar, to what is wrong.

The fear of the Lord, is clean. I remember, when I was young, in the ministry, I went into, a godly farmer's home, while I was waiting, for him to come, I picked up a book, on the table, to peep inside it, and it was called, Bibby's Annual.

And I opened it, on an article, which was headed, like this. Clean land, clean food, clean sheep.

And I thought, there is something, underneath, that, that the man, who wrote the article, maybe, did not know about.

[9 : 15] But that is, what it must be, in living the life, of the righteous, in a church state. Clean land, clean food, then you get, clean sheep.

But, come back to you, as sheep, and this adjective, clean, it means, that, first of all, your great concern, is when born again, not till you are, create, in me, a clean heart, O God, and renew, a right spirit, within me.

Everything, originates, in the life, of the righteous, from, a clean heart, first of all. Then you get, clean eyes.

And you can feel, like John Flable, the Puritan, when he said, O may mine eyes, kept closed be, from that, which it concerns me, not, to see.

And the Selmist said, turn away mine eyes, from beholding, vanity. You know, dear friends, you inside the church, as well as those out, a great deal of, mischief, has come into our lives.

[10 : 37] The life, of the righteous, that we do desire, to live, it has come in the eye gate, things that your eyes, have lighted upon. And, it works, covetous desires.

And you need, this godly fear, to be an exercise, that you may have, clean eyes, and clean ears, too. Regarding, what you hear, what you hear, yes, much that you hear, as you journey about, in the world at large, or as you labor, to earn the bread, which perisheth, in everyday life, is that, which is not, at all, to your soul's, good, or edification.

And you need, to keep, ear gates shut, as it were, as the Lord, enables you. And godly fear, will help you, to do it.

And now, you do need, a clean tongue. So that, the words, that drop, from your lips, should be, words of soberness. Words, of truth.

Words, that should do, other people, good, in listening. And not, that, which is just, what the Savior, declares. I have looked, at that word.

[12 : 01] And you look, at it. For every, idle word, that men, shall speak, they, shall give, an account, thereof, in the day, of judgment. And you think, what idle words, do drop, from our lips, often.

Words, that are just words. Job said, to one of his friends, I think it was, Bildad, the words, of thy mouth, are like wind.

There is no substance, in what you say. No purpose, no profit. Yes. And you and I, do need, this godly fear, to help us, and help us, especially, to think of that, beautiful petition, of David.

Let the words, of my mouth, and the meditation, of my heart, be acceptable, in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my, redeemer.

Clean. Then, if you are a sheep, not only, will your tongue, your eyes, your ears, be clean, and you desire them, to be kept clean, but there will be, your hands, which refers, to your, actions.

[13 : 21] I remember, seeing, in the daily press, a man's will, and it was so many, thousand pounds. And then, there was this comment, which was made in his will, by the man himself.

There is not one, dirty shilling in it. It was all done, by his hands, being, clean. He had a good conscience, as to how the money, was made.

And that is worth, thinking about. Not that you want, to make much money, but, your actions, the word of God, says, by him, actions, are weighed.

And you do want them, to be, clean. Just another thought, it affects our feet, you want clean feet. And that regards, our walk.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed? And now, the great thing is, in this subject, and the sheep, follow him, you, follow him, because you are, in agreement, with God, in how he is, ordering your life.

[14 : 36] And you desire, to go along it, as he sees fit, to order it, to be. Oh, it is a wonderful mercy, to find this, blessed, holy principle, godly fear, clean principle, living within, your breast.

And do you, dear friends, young and old, seek divine aid, not only to possess it, but always, but always, to obey, the dictates, of it.

So, that a sheep, is a clean creature. The next thing is, they desire, pure food. And there is a word, I like to look at, in, Isaiah, which speaks about, clean provender, winnowed, with a shovel, and a fan.

And now, that is to do, with how they lived, in those far back days, in the land of promise, when things, were very old fashioned, and, how the land, was worked, and, husband men, had to live.

But, the illustration, is very plain. Clean provender, winnowed, with a shovel, and a fan. And now, that is a word, first of all, for those, who preach the gospel.

[16 : 01] That when they preach, they should, be able to say, that which we have tasted, handled, and felt, of the good word of life, declare we, unto, you.

It really means, an experimental, ministry. So that, you can, hear the gospel, preached, by one, who is ordained, to preach it, and not only, hear it, but, while you hear it, eat it.

Do think about, that, viewpoint, of, the subject. The meek, shall eat, and be satisfied, and be glad, in the Lord.

Yes, Jeremiah said, thy words, were found, and I did eat, them, and thy word, was unto me, the joy, and rejoicing, of, my heart.

Yes, and do you, take heed, to what you hear? And the sheep, follow him, and where they, gather together, they do want, they do want, to graze in, green pasture, margin reading, pastures, of tender grass, oh, they want, that, which will, do their souls, good, and build them up, in our most, holy faith, and to be able, to say, I rejoice, I rejoice, in thy word, as one, that findeth, great spoil, but then, another sheep mark, is this, that they flock together, a flock of sheep, is a phrase, well known, and the dear, saviour, said, fear not, little flock, for it is, your father's, good pleasure, to give you, the kingdom, and now, the great thing is, that as they, flock together, where do, they flock together, and now, the word of God, tells us, in all places, where I record, my name, there will I come, and bless thee, and you, even this Sabbath, afternoon, a flock together, drawn thither, we humbly hope, with a hope, within, that you will get, in touch, with him, who is the sinner's friend, and be, helped with a little help, and participate, in the favour, that he bears, unto his people, oh they do, flock together, not only, in numbers, making up, a congregation, but there is, a flocking together, in our souls, affections, so that, when they, that fear the Lord, speak often, one to another, and that may be, only two, or three, yet, there is, a flocking together, in their souls, exercises, and, they feel, to be, one, in Christ Jesus, and it is, a very sweet, evidence, yes, by this, shall all men, know, that ye are, my disciples, if ye have love, one to another, and John Bunyan, tells us, saints fellowship, if it be managed, well, will keep, the saints awake, and that, in spite of hell, and the sheep, follow him, and now, the next sheep mark, is very important, and I was going to say, and I will,

[20 : 00] I sometimes feel, it is very scarce, at least, it is not often seen, but it must be known, and felt, some when, as you journey, on through life, and now, a sheep, is a meek creature, as a sheep, before her shearers, is dumb, so he opened, not his mouth, is said of Jesus Christ, and there is, that scripture, in the minor prophets, seek the Lord, seek meekness, as though, meekness, summed up, everything, to do with, religion, that God, is the author of, meekness, and now, what do you, and I know, about it, the Savior said, blessed are the meek, it means, that in the dealings, of God, you were favored, to humble yourself, under his mighty hand, and accept, all his dealings, with you, and to be able, to feel, thy ways,

O Lord, with wise design, are framed, upon, thy throne above, and every dark, and bending line, meets in the center, of thy love, God, but this, sheep mark, of meekness, will be more, plain, for you, to understand, if I call, your attention, to the next, sheep mark, and now, I said, at the outset, that, the sheep, being regarded, by God, as a clean, creature, it was acceptable, for a sacrifice, and now, there was something, like that, which must come, into our lives, if you and I, are sheep, every, one of us, has got a niche, in life to fill, a sphere, of usefulness, that God, ordains, and, you cannot, render service, to God, without, sacrifice, in doing it, and I'm thinking, of the,

Ethiopian, eunuch, and Philip, who went to him, as the eunuch, was riding, in his chariot, and, it has often, much impressed me, where, he was reading, the prophet, Esaias, and what was he reading, the place, of the scripture, which he read, was this, he was led, as a sheep, to the slaughter, and like a lamb, done before, his shearer, so opened he, not his mouth, and now, this dear, Ethiopian, eunuch, was concerned, to enter, into the things, of God, by a gracious, experience, and God, ordained, that Philip, should be, his instructor, in righteousness, and it says, then Philip, opened his mouth, and began, at the same scripture, and preached, unto him,

Jesus, what a sweet, picture it is, and as they, went on their way, they came, to a certain water, and the eunuch, said, see, here is water, what doth, hinder me, to be baptized, and Philip, said, if thou believest, with all thine heart, thou mayest, and he answered, and said, I believe, that Jesus Christ, is the son of God, and he was baptized, but the point, I want you, to think on, is this, that, as Philip, opened his mouth, and began, at the same scripture, and preached, unto him, Jesus, he would have, made plain, in simple language, to that Ethiopian, eunuch, that in the dealings, of God, with him, as he lived his life, henceforth, if he was, indeed, a follower, of the meek, and lowly, Jesus, then, as it was said, of Jesus, and like a lamb, dumb before his shearer, so opened he, not his mouth,

Philip, would have said, to the eunuch, it means, that you, likewise, must not open your mouth, to complain, or murmur, or fret, or rebel, but, go forward, in that way, that God, ordains for you, to go, asking not the why, and the, wherefore, open not your mouth, to speak, concerning, the way, itself, being what it is, through much tribulation, but simply, be like the sheep, and the sheep, follow, him, and, what did I read, to you, in the, morning, service, from the, epistle, of Peter, it needs, thinking, over, praying, over, for even, even here unto, were ye called, because Christ also, suffered for us, leaving us, an example, that ye should follow, his steps, and now, think, let us look, at that viewpoint, of it, you, as a sheep, in living your life, in serving, the Lord Christ, will ever have, to do it, at some cost, and you will be, asked to make, a sacrifice, and do it, for Jesus, you say, because you belong, to him, as the, good shepherd, and here it is, set, before you,

[26 : 29] I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies, of God, that ye present, your bodies, a living, sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God, which is, your, reasonable, service, a living, sacrifice, you must, be like, David, regarding, the building, of the temple, when he bought, the site of it, from Arona, the Jebusite, Arona said, I give it to you, David, David says, no, no, I will not, give to my God, that which cost me, nothing, and you must not, do it, either, the sheep, follow him, and that means, there are some things, you have got to leave behind, and press on, in following him, and not, turn aside, and the sheep, follow him, but let us look, just a little, at what that really means, and the sheep, follow, him,

I know, it means, that they follow him, in making a profession, of his name, and good it is, when those, who are so, wrought on, by the spirit of God, that they can do, what you read about, in Bunyan's, Pilgrim's Progress, where there was, the man, a man of God, sitting at a table, and there came, one, who decided, to go on pilgrimage, and the man, at the table, had got the book, to write down, those who decided, to do so, and the man, who was concerned, to go on pilgrimage, said, put my name down, sir, yes, we do like, you dear people, to be helped, to do that, you dear, young people, who have got, your lives, yet to live, and we hope, to live for God, for his honour, his glory, and, his people's, good, oh, it is, so, desirable, when out of the abundance, of the heart, the mouth, can speak, and you can, appeal to God, and say, to his servant, put my name, down, sir, and you take, up your cross, and like the sheep, follow him, it is a wonderful life, to live, and when you get, to the end of it, is some of us, to come in, down to the end of it, it is wonderful, to look back, and see the help, that God has given, and afforded, to us, when from our youth, upward, we did indeed, desire, to follow him, and though, so often, it has been, with us, like Peter of old, when he followed, afar off, yet here we are, in life's evening time, and we are still, following, on, to know, the Lord, yes, and the sheep, follow him, and then, it is not only, in having your name, on a church roll, and putting, the things of God, first of all, in your life, leaving all, to do with, this lifetime, things, to take second, place, but, there is a following, him, in his sufferings, and now, that, is a very deep down, experience, and not to be, thought about, lightly, when you think, of the sufferings, of Christ, you really, should take your shoes, off your feet, in a spiritual sense, of the word,

I mean, and remember, the place, where on you stand, is holy ground, and it says, it is enough, for the disciple, that he be, as his Lord, and now, if you belong, to the sheep, or if you should, be a lamb, be sure, that, the way you go along, in life's journey, will entail, suffering, and whatever, the nature, of that suffering, may be, you will find, if you look, into the word of God, and see, the suffering life, of Christ, that he lived, you will count it, to be, an honor, to tread in his steps, and follow him, in the way, in which he trod, with holy feet, and as he trod, that way, with holy feet, you, in your sufferings, get sanctification, and your soul, gets good, and you can declare, it is good for me, that I have been afflicted, that I might learn, thy statutes, and you feel, did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine, his way, was much rougher, and darker, than mine, and the sheep, follow him, and you find, each one, has a cross, and whatever, you do, if God has given, you a cross, do not ask him, to change it, you will make, a tremendous mistake, if ever you do that, and you will be, tremendously, sorry, that you have done it, too, what you need, is more grace, and sometimes, you do get, more grace, and you get, an opening up, an unfolding, of the why, and wherefore, that God has, given you, just the cross, which you are, carrying, day by day, and then, you can feel, 'tis my happiness, below, not to live, without the cross, but the saviour's, power to know, sanctifying, every loss, and the sheep, follow, him, yes, and then, there is a following, him, in his providential, dealings, providence,

I have told you often, is a wonderful word, I might say also, it is a word, very frequently, much misunderstood, providence, understood, or right, is a beautiful word, and it means, that the hand of God, is overruling, your life, so that all that comes into it, however hard to be understood, it may be, is all dovetailing, into a pattern, a divine pattern, and that is, to make you meet, for the inheritance, of the saints, in light, what do you sing, sometimes, through sufferings, perfect, now he reigns, and feels, these tempted, members pains, and whatever, your sufferings, may be, and in the providential, dealings, of God with you, there is, the spirit of Christ, to be known, and felt, so that you are, well content, do remember, what the preacher said, well content, to follow him, because, because the Savior said, he that hath my word, let him, follow me, and, where I am, there also, shall my servant be, oh there is, a wonderful ending, in serving, the Lord Christ, yes, much might be said, under that heading, but when you follow him, in his providential, dealings, the psalmist, will help you, to understand, how it is done, who so is wise, and will observe, these things, even they, shall understand, the loving kindness, of the Lord, and in that understanding, you will confess, it is the right way, though dark, and rough, mysterious, yet it is plain enough, and if our souls, the end can view, we then approve, the pathway, too, and the sheep, follow him, and they follow him, in submission, to his will, the will of the Lord, be done, said Paul, on one occasion, and that is just, what it really is, to follow him, whate'er thy sacred, will ordains, oh give me strength, to bear, and let me know, my father reigns, and trust, his tender care, and remember, what Paul said, to the Hebrews, for ye have need, of patience, to wait the working, out of God's purposes, for you, that after ye have done, the will of God, you will not know it, before, after ye have done, the will of God, ye might receive, the promise, and the sheep, follow him, willingly, where e'er, the good shepherd goes, there they follow on, yes, it means obedience, obedience, to the good shepherd, and then, in this following hymn, there will be, this characteristic of it, the word of God says, bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill, the law, of Christ, and it means, for you, to do what good you can, as every opportunity,

is afforded you, yes, to do good unto all men, especially they, that be, of the household, of faith, and what a good life, it is to live, when you can look back, with some, sweet confidence, that God, has numbered you, in his sheepfold, and brought you, to pass under his hand, as you read, in the old testament, they shall pass again, under the hand of him, that telleth them, when you see, the hand of God, is upon you, for good, in all his dealings, with you, when you look back, over the way, you have come along, and you have to confess, thou hast dealt, well with thy servant, O Lord, and you say, with Jacob, I am not, worthy, of the least, of all the mercy, and all the truth, which thou hast shown, unto, thy servant, oh, to follow him, like that, and the sheep, follow him, then there is just, this viewpoint of it, as I come, to the, amen, how do they, follow him, they follow him, faithfully, and remember, what I said, about, as a lamb, before a shearer's, is dumb, so he opened, not his mouth, it means, that you, follow him, and ask no questions, why should this be, why should that be, and now, that religion, dear friends, is very scarce, with many people, taught of God, most of us, preacher, and people alike, must all plead, guilty, here, because, when God, says to you, this is the way, and it is a way, which the, coward flesh, starts it taking, you wish deep down, in your heart, it could be, altered, rearranged, no, no, you must, follow him, this is the way, walk, ye, in it, all it means, to follow him, faithfully, and to follow him, in your soul's, desires, prayerfully, loyally, willingly, yes, and it means this, to follow him continually, sometimes, you get help, and comfort, in, being, able to, feel, that God has, helped you, hitherto, to follow him, and not, to leave you, to give up, and go back, and walk no more, with him, and the sheep, follow him, for they know, his voice, and now, dear friends, dear young friends, too, this subject, is very familiar, to you,

[40 : 27] I know, but, I wish I could, bring home to you, oh, that God would do it, the unspeakable, importance of it, because, you see, everything hinges, on you, and I, being found, among, the sheep, otherwise, it will go, ill with us, at, the last, there is, that word, where it says, when the son of man, shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels, with him, then shall he sit, upon the throne, of his glory, and before him, shall be gathered, all nations, and they shall separate, them one from another, as a shepherd, divided his sheep, from the goats, and they shall set, the sheep on his right hand, and the goats, on the left, oh, dear friends, do prayerfully, think on it, because you and I, will be there, and we shall be either, on one side, of the good shepherd, among the sheep, or alas, be counted out, among the goats, and that could be done, before next Sabbath day, dawns, with some of us, then shall the king, say unto them, on his right hand, come ye, blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom, prepared for you, from the foundation, of the world, you see, no preacher, can tell you, how unspeakably, important it is, that you and I, should possess, these sheep marks, and be numbered, amongst, these sheep, and be found, at the last, at the good shepherd's, right hand, oh, that the Lord, would help you, to ponder, these things, in your heart, and help you, to hoard up, the sacred word, and feed there, on and grow, go on, to seek, to know the Lord, and practice, what you know, amen, amen, amen,